**PRESBYTERY OF LAKE ERIE**

**COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY**

**POLICY ON COMMITMENT TO INCLUSIVENESS**

Re-adopted by COM February 18, 2020

COMMUNICATION means paying attention not only to what we say and intend but also to what others hear, understand, feel when we speak.

LANGUAGE does more than communicate ideas and information: it reflects the assumptions and values we share with others in our culture; it shapes the way we understand ourselves and organize our world.

In our WORDS about God, we are called to include the richness of who God is – freeing the image of God from human limitation while maintaining the names and images of God as revealed in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

In our WORDS about persons, we are called to be inclusive so none are excluded because of our chosen words.

Inclusiveness means not only “Jew or Greek, slave or free, male and female,” but also accepting, celebrating, and loving all person regardless of color or race; regardless of their physically or mentally challenging, disabling, or other abling conditions; whether they are poor or wealthy; if they are part of the ordered ministries of the church or not; if they are single, married, widowed or divorced; embracing them fully no matter their sexual orientation or gender expression; respecting them no matter where they live, whether it in a rural or urban environment; and regardless of their age. Inclusiveness means valuing the whole person: their experiences, history, gifts and abilities, and including them fully in the life of Christ’s Church.

BY ADOPTING THIS COMMITMENT, WE COVENANT TO:

* Work toward creating a faith community that reflects the social, racial and ethnic diversity of our community.
* Be committed to teaching inclusiveness in the entire life of the church and modeling inclusiveness in the spectrum of church activities and government.
* Seek to use a variety of images of God to more fully express the richness of God’s nature, taking care to reflect the triune nature of God.
* Seek to use inclusive language in reference to human beings in the worship life of our congregation.
* Be open as listeners to the variety of perspectives that enrich the body of Christ.
* Be intentionally open and inclusive in our employment practices.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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