

AM I WELCOME AT YOUR CHURCH?

convictions | confessions | commitments

Every now and then, we get this question: *“I’m gay (or I’m a lesbian, etc) and need to ask: Am I welcome at your church?”*

In a word, *“Yes!”*

The bottom line is this: you are absolutely welcome and wanted at Heartland. In fact, our mission (*“building a church for the unchurched”*) declares that we are for anyone and everyone who wants to belong. Period. So we invite you to attend, join a group, take communion, dedicate a child, get baptized, and serve within the church. These are available to all.

Now, the fact that someone would even need to ask if they are welcome tells us that, broadly speaking, the Church has gotten something tragically wrong. Let’s face it, it’s easy for churches to either avoid this question or to approach it in less than loving ways.

So as you consider further whether we could become your spiritual home, we’d like to offer you more of our heart through a few convictions, confessions, and commitments:

CONVICTIONS

- Our primary conviction is to love – which includes offering you the dignity of knowing a fuller depth of our beliefs up front.
- We believe that God designed sex for a marital relationship between a man and a woman. (*Thus, pre-marital sex, cohabitation, adultery, same-gender sex, etc are all a sin & do not reflect God’s best.*)
 - We would not put a practicing LGBTQ+ person in leadership. (*Nor a chronic gossiper, etc.*)
 - We do not believe that same-sex attraction is a sin. (*We’re all born with broken desires. It’s what we do with them that matters.*)
 - We would not officiate or host a same-sex marriage. (*But we may attend one.*)

CONFESSIONS

- These conversations are deeply personal to us. Many of our leaders have kids, family, or dear friends who are in same-sex relationships.
- We don’t have this all figured out. We are simply trying to be faithful to our God, His guidance, and His heart- as best we understand it.
- For far too long, we have wrongly emphasized some sins over others. This has caused much pain for those God deeply loves. We are very sorry.
- We all don’t believe exactly the same thing. We are a diverse community and land in different places on this conversation and in many others as well.
- These conversations can be scary. They make us all feel vulnerable.

COMMITMENTS

- We will never make disparaging comments about you, nor the LGBTQ+ community. You are not an issue or a burden. You are a child of God.
- We will never single you out.
- Where there is biblical injustice against you, we want to join you in righting it.
- We will never try to force change upon you. That is never the church’s job. Real change happens by the work of God’s Spirit in us.
- Our goal is *not* that you’ll become straight. We want more for you than that.

I hope you hear in all of this that we’re for you and we’re committed to embracing *all* that God is offering us – the parts that we like and even the parts that we don’t. So, again, you are welcome here and let’s pursue healing, flourishing, and wholeness together.

Peace,

Dan Deeble, Lead Pastor
on behalf of our leadership

Got questions? [Check out our FAQs HERE.](#)

For a more thorough explanation of our heart, please [click HERE for our Guiding Letter.](#)