

ASSESS & ACT

An Inclusive Church Checklist

Do you want to make sure that your church is inclusive for all people of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions? This checklist is a place to help you take the pulse of your community and will provide you with a few areas where you can begin to make small but impactful change. Visit www.queertheology.com for even more resources.

- ◆ Make sure there are safe bathrooms. Make sure there are gender neutral bathrooms that are within easy access of the main parts of the church (meaning, don't make the gender neutral bathroom impossible to find, tucked into a closet in the basement, or completely out of the way.)
- ◆ Use inclusive language to talk about family: some families have two moms, two dads, one parent, or many parents. Some families have grandparents raising grandkids. Create space for all families in your church to participate.
- ◆ Have a place or time when people can indicate their preferred name and pronouns (a place on their nametag, etc.)
- ◆ Respect people's pronouns and names.
- ◆ Offer rituals and observances for transition: Name change ceremonies, rebaptism, transition ceremonies, etc.
- ◆ Include pictures of LGBTQ people and families in all areas of church publications... Not just the LGBTQ group.
- ◆ Are LGBTQ people part of your church staff? Board of elders and deacons? Pastoral team? Do LGBTQ people have a say in decision-making? LGBTQ people bring valuable insight into the life of the community and the faith community, make sure they are represented in leadership!

- ◆ Make sure if you have gender specific groups that they are open to ALL people who identify with that gender. Consider starting new groups that are not gender specific.
- ◆ Tell the stories of trans* and gender non-conforming people from the pulpit. (There are even trans* and gender non-conforming people right there in the Bible!)
- ◆ All types of people have sex (or don't), want to get married (or don't), have gender identities ... Issues of sexual and gender are important to everyone, not just LGBTQ people. Make them a mainstream part of the church.
- ◆ Make sure church volunteers are trained in gender identity issues. Make sure church nursery workers and Sunday school teachers are trained to respect and celebrate gender diversity in children.
- ◆ Buy a copy of My Princess Boy by Cheryl Kilodavis for your church library and church nursery. Read it to the children.
- ◆ Start to de-gender your church. Meaning, start eliminating things that make people choose a gendered space. Make sure that there are groups for folks who don't identify in a binary manner.
- ◆ LGBTQ people are also musicians, women, people of color, unemployed, passionate about social justice... Invite LGBT people to get involved in all areas of the church, recognize that they already are, and be mindful of how LGBT experiences might intersect with other important issues. Talk about that too.
- ◆ Make sure that parents groups and opportunities are open to same gender parenting families.

Need support in creating an inclusive experience at your church? Queer Theology offers consulting, facilitating, and workshop services. Visit queertheology.com/leaders for a free consultation.