



Moving Toward Harmony

Isaiah 43:18-19

*¹⁸Do not remember the former things,
or consider the things of old.*

*¹⁹I am about to do a new thing;
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?*

As the merger of Gay and Lesbian Acceptance (GALA) and Welcoming Congregation Network (WCN) comes to completion, we wish to take this time to reflect on the past work that has brought us to this moment. Many times we've heard the passage from Isaiah Verse 19, but many don't always add Verse 18 with it. Most likely because it asks us something very difficult.

Yes, there is sadness, and even the process of grieving, for the organizations of GALA and WCN. These organizations are filled with memories and stories of those who worked passionately to speak for those on the margins. They are the stories of struggles, pain, anger, the death of friends and loved ones, reconciliations, and most importantly... love.

Many of us may remember those who struggled with the denomination becoming Community of Christ. We know many who struggled with the idea of National Conferences. We also know the struggles of those before, during, and especially after the votes on the issues of LGBTQ+ within the denomination. These organizations not only were a part, but an important part, in these moments.

So, here we find ourselves at the end of what we knew. Many of us wouldn't be here if it wasn't for these organizations. They gave us a safe place to understand who we are called to be in the invitational wholeness of the Divine. They allowed us to reach out to others who were hurting, and searching, to share a place to feel safe. We were able to help empower others to create safe spaces for all. GALA and WCN need to be, and will be, honored, and remembered.

The future invites us to experience a "new thing." We find ourselves wondering, and hoping, what this organization might become. We are inviting everyone to view this merger as a resurrection. Just as Jesus was transformed after his resurrection, we are being transformed. Reflect on the stories of those who knew Jesus, but did not immediately recognize the resurrected Christ. It may take us awhile to recognize our new selves and understand our new life, but that is the blessing of journeying together. We get to be present as this new life is springing



forth. It may also take others time to recognize this new organization as well, but they will know that our core values were birthed from GALA and WCN. This is our hope, our prayer, our reflection, our pledge. Please join us in being fully present in this moment, so we can travel, and grow, with love and compassion.

“So may you accept the past for what it is. May you celebrate what needs to be celebrated, and grieve what needs to be grieved. And then may you receive from God a new spirit. One for here... now... today.”

– Rob Bell “NOOMA 18: TODAY”

With gratitude,

Your Surviving Board of Directors