

Northfield clergy honored to be part of Pride in the Park

To the editor:

As clergy serving faith communities in Northfield, we were honored to participate in this year's Pride in the Park celebration. We were there because of our faith not in spite of it. Our shared spiritual and moral convictions compel us to affirm the dignity, worth, and belovedness of every person, especially those who have too often been excluded from or harmed by religious institutions.

We are deeply mindful of the real and lasting damage that has been done to LGBTQ+ individuals and communities in the name of religion. We carry that awareness with us and seek to embody a different witness, one rooted in love, humility, and repair.

The prophet Micah asks us, "What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8). That call leads us to stand alongside the LGBTQ+ community with joy and conviction.

We want to be clear: we do not condone or support violence in any form. We reject the verbal violence directed at LGBTQ+ people and allies by members of Old Paths Baptist Church. At the same time, we also denounce the recent vandalism of their meeting place. Harassment and vandalism are not the tools of justice - they are symptoms of the same cycle of harm we long to break.

As clergy, we are committed to the faithful work of building communities where all are safe, seen, and celebrated.

With peace and resolve,

The Rev. Lauren Baske Davis, First United Church of Christ;
The Rev. Cassandra Cook-Quarry, All Saints Episcopal Church;
The Rev. Jonathan Davis, St. John's Lutheran Church;
The Rev. Donna Dempe-Wolf, Northfield United Methodist Church;
The Rev. Pam Fickensher, St. John's Lutheran Church;
The Rev. Inger Hanson, Bethel Lutheran Church;

The Rev. Cindy Maddox, First United Church of Christ;

The Rev. Cody Maynus, All Saints Episcopal Church;

The Rev. Ben Schori, Bethel Lutheran Church;

The Rev. Sara Smalley, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Northfield