



## Welcome Invocation

Welcome.

Welcome to all our ages and body types and how these bodies have arrived today. Welcome to our tiredness and our energy, our aches and pains, our sources of strength. Welcome to the way we already love our bodies and the way we aspire to love them more.

Welcome to our genders, our sexualities, our relationships—longed for and realized. Welcome to where our hearts are open and where they're closed right now. Welcome to how we stand in community and how we seek solitude.

Welcome to our cultures and ethnicities, to those close at hand and those removed by history. Welcome to our roots in Africa, Asia, Europe, Oceania, the Americas, to any passages through enslavement, colonization, diaspora, genocide, immigration, assimilation, asylum. Welcome to our responsibility to address the impact of trauma we ourselves never intended. Welcome to the joy of traditions and rituals, to our capacity to heal and transform as individuals and as groups.

Welcome to our varied experiences and beliefs, to our commitments and the way we align ourselves, to our values and needs that drive those commitments. Welcome to the fierce and tender places when we take sides, when we can't open our hearts to those we oppose. Welcome to our "other" who might be in this space with us today. Welcome to the courage of remaining present in the face of loss and fear. Welcome to the hope we have for finding our common humanity and discovering an active and engaged peace.

Welcome to our richly designed and woven identities, including all the strands we have not named.

Welcome.