



07/17/2025

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Community Leaders React to Planned Protest of Drag Show During Rehoboth Beach Pride Weekend

A counter-protest is planned with broad community support

Rehoboth Beach, Delaware: In a strong display of unity and support for our local LGBTQ+ community, a counter-protest is set to take place in response to a planned protest of the Drag Show at Goolee's Grille. The counter-protest, which coincides with Rehoboth Beach Pride Weekend, emphasizes the community's commitment to inclusivity and love, rejecting the intolerance aimed at the local establishment.

Members of St. Ann's Church in Bethany, announced their plans to protest the drag brunch in their newsletter. They describe the protest as a "peaceful and Legal Rosary Rally in Protest and Reparation for Goolee's Grille Rehoboth Beach hosting "Drag Brunch" to normalize transgender and variants."

The counter-protest is organized by a coalition of local organizations including Sussex Pride, Indivisible Delaware, Speak Out Against Hate, CAMP Rehoboth, Rehoboth Beach Pride, and the Delaware Anti-Violence Project. These organizations will gather on Sunday July 20th outside Goolee's Grill, located at 11 South First Street in Rehoboth Beach. The rally is aimed at showcasing the overwhelming support for Goolee's Grill, a beloved small business that has stood as a beacon of diversity and acceptance in the Rehoboth Beach community.

Allan Slan from one of the sponsoring organizations, Speak Out Against Hate (SOAH), stated "SOAH is an ardent supporter of all of our First Amendment privileges, including those of speech and peaceful assembly. However, when such speech and assembly generate discrimination, bias and hate, we believe the First Amendment no longer shrouds those words and deeds with protection and that is particularly true in these divisive times."

David Mariner, Executive Director of Sussex Pride, believes that it is important to not allow these members of St. Ann's Church of Bethany speak on behalf of all people of faith. "As we celebrate Rehoboth Beach Pride, all LGBTQ+ people, but particularly LGBTQ+ Youth, should know that there are many faith communities here that love and accept us exactly as we are. These members of St. Ann's Church of Bethany do not speak for everyone"

The Rev. Shelley D. McDade, Rector of the Parish of All Saints' Church & St. George's Chapel states: "As a perpetual student of Jesus Christ, my faith has always taught me to love my neighbor, offer myself to the stranger, and reach out to those living on the fringe. To walk in love is to see through God's eyes the full equality and acceptance of all people. Thank you, Goolies, for continually serving up an authentic dish of love, acceptance and fun."

This year three churches will be participating in the Rehoboth Beach Pride Festival as vendors: Community Lutheran Church of Frankford, Grace of God Lutheran Church of Millsboro, and the Metropolitan Community Church of Rehoboth Beach. The Festival takes place on Saturday July 19th from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM at the Rehoboth Beach Convention Center. Delaware is home to many LGBTQ+ faith leaders, and many LGBTQ+ faith communities.

For more information about the Rehoboth Beach Pride Festival, visit our website at sussexpride.org/rehobothbeach

About Rehoboth Beach Pride:

Rehoboth Beach Pride is an annual celebration in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware, that seeks to promote acceptance, unity, and inclusivity within the LGBTQ+ community and its allies. Through a variety of events, including the Rehoboth Beach Pride Festival, Rehoboth Beach Pride Weekend aims to celebrate love, foster understanding, and address the unique issues faced by the LGBTQ+ community.

About Sussex Pride:

Sussex Pride works to celebrate, strengthen, and support the LGBTQ+ community in Sussex County and the state of Delaware, working through a social justice lens. We focus on arts & culture, health & wellness, social and support groups, and advocacy for our community.