

COMMUNITY RALLY TO OFFER SAFE SPACE FOR LGBTQ

For Immediate Release

KITCHENER- With marchers readying for Thursday's Count Me In rally, many are still gripping with the tragedy this past weekend in Orlando.

"While the I Choose Dignity Count Me In rally is a celebration of our whole community, we want to encourage commemoration of the lives needlessly lost. We are inviting the LGBTQ community to see how many allies they truly have," notes rally organizer Kim Sproul.

"We still want to deeply celebrate our diversities, and we want to offer a safe space for those who need to mourn and grieve."

Thursday's rally includes a lantern, lit and carried, in memory of the 49 victims killed in Orlando. A moment of silence will be observed and a book will be available for those who might want to write or draw their thoughts and feelings.

Of the vigils planned this week, the Count Me In rally and the Waterloo Region Candlelight Vigil are on the same evening. Organizers of the Count Me In rally will be providing bus transportation from Kitchener City Hall to Waterloo Town Square in time for the 9pm vigil start.

The Count Me In Rally begins at 5pm at 91 Moore Ave. Kitchener, and will continue on to Kitchener City Hall for 7pm. The Waterloo Region Candlelight Vigil begins at 9pm.

For more details, visit www.ichoosedignity.com

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About the Count Me In Rally:

"We're asking the community to take more responsibility for including people with a disability and others who are marginalized, by recognizing that each person's presence is integral", says Maria de Boer of Extend-A-Family Waterloo Region. Joining her and more than 300 guests at Carl Zehr Civic Centre, will be MPP Catharine Fife, Cornell University's Carol Blessing and House of Friendship's John Neufeld. Among other local dignitaries, each will share stories of belonging and inclusiveness. This free open-air family event offers a light dinner from Fo'Cheezy and dessert from Fro-zen Trolley, as well as face painting, arts and crafts from the Kitchener Public Library, Artshine and Bre Ceative. Jump at the chance to participate in Artist in Residence's Sarah Granskou's latest project, a felt-tree built from the leaves made by Count Me In ralliers.

About I Choose Dignity:

I Choose Dignity is a movement born out of a wish to share with the community all of the wonderful skills and talents each citizen has to contribute. With our fellow community members, together we say, "Here we are. We want to contribute. We are part of this community and we have a lot to offer." We want to celebrate your gifts and ours. Championed by Extend-A-Family Waterloo Region.

Related event link: <https://www.facebook.com/events/852042134924103/>



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