

Welcoming Week 2026 Proclamation

WHEREAS: Welcoming Week, observed September 10 through September 19, 2026, brings neighbors together to find common ground, seek similarities across different cultures and perspectives, and deepen our commitment to building a stronger and more resilient community; and

WHEREAS: This year's theme, "Stories We Share: The Courage to Connect," invites community members to approach one another with curiosity and courage, learn from each other's experiences, and stand up for and with one another; and

WHEREAS: Somerville is stronger when we embrace both our similarities and our differences, creating opportunities to connect and build lasting relationships through food, music, art, conversation, storytelling, and shared traditions; and

WHEREAS: Somerville has a long history of courageous welcoming, including becoming the second municipality in Massachusetts to declare itself a Sanctuary City in 1987 and continuing that tradition by standing with our neighbors, local businesses, and surrounding communities; and

WHEREAS: Mayor Jake Wilson declared 2026 the Year of the Neighbor, recognizing that strong communities are built when we look out for one another, make meaningful connections, and ensure that every person feels they belong; and

WHEREAS: Welcoming Week offers an opportunity to pause, reflect, and plan for the next phase of Somerville's welcoming work, while reaffirming that welcoming is a core part of who we are and a commitment we carry throughout the year; and

WHEREAS: Somerville will continue to choose connection, courage, and love over division, fear, and hate, working together to create a community where people of all backgrounds feel welcomed, valued, and connected;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Jake Wilson, Mayor of the City of Somerville, do hereby proclaim September 10 through September 19, 2026, as Welcoming Week in the City of Somerville, and call upon all community members to share their stories, learn from their neighbors, and join together to build a stronger and more welcoming Somerville.