



# NATIONAL LGBTQ COMING OUT CELEBRATION

Tuesday October 11 2022 6 pm

## Welcome and Announcements:

Opening Songs: *(Sing along)*

*I Am What I Am*

*Gloria Gaynor (on screen)*

*All Are Welcome in this Place*

*CCS 276 Beyond the Walls*

*Choristers (on screen)*

## Opening Call to Worship:

Leader: God is calling us out of the places we hide, out of insecurity,  
Out of shame, out from under that which silences love and justice.  
Come out, people of God!

People: **Though we may be afraid, though we will be at risk**  
**Though our honesty may be viewed as a threat**  
**God calls us to courage!**

Leader: Our God is a god of resurrection. Of new life and new creation.  
Of hope in the face of evil.

And so we dare to proclaim, with pride and faith, our truths:

People: **We believe in the power of love.**  
**We believe in solidarity with the suffering.**  
**We believe we are each valuable.**  
**We believe that our togetherness is transformative.**

Leader: The world is longing for Holy Truths that reveal, voices that speak  
real words of hope. Come out, people of God!

## Sharing the Peace:

Presider May the goodness, strength, and peace of God be with you all.

People And also with you.

*The people greet each other with signs of peace (handshakes, namaste, peace signs, hugs, fist bumps)*

## Opening Prayer:

Leader: Let us pray as we acknowledge this 2022 National Coming Out Day.

**ALL: Loving God, in your wisdom, you created a world rich with diversity. We give thanks for the gifts of sexual orientation and gender identity. We celebrate with our queer, transgender, bisexual, lesbian, and gay siblings who choose to come out, and honor those who do not.**

Today, we say “yes” to the diversity among us—within ourselves, our families, our neighbors, and our communities. We claim that diversity as we come before you and as we go out into the world.

At times, we turn away from this diversity, fearful of its transformative power. We reject that which is different, force it to be silent, or pretend that it does not exist. We participate in systems that privilege sameness and uproot difference.

Give us the courage to live boldly into the mystery of diversity, the strength to persevere in the face of adversity, and the power to love in ways that go beyond understanding. Help us create a world where all queer, transgender, bisexual, lesbian, and gay people can flourish. Amen.

## Readings from Holy Scripture: *(Please be seated)*

**First Reading:** A reading from the book Genesis (1: 26-28a, *The Message*)

“Then God said, “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.”

So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. And God blessed them.”

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to us.

People: Praise to the Holy Spirit.

Psalm 104: 1-5, 24-26, 30-31(*Contemporary English Version*) (Read aloud in unison)

1 Let my whole being bless the Lord!

Lord my God, how fantastic you are!

You are clothed in glory and grandeur!

2 You wear light like a robe;

you open the skies like a curtain.

3 You build your lofty house on the waters;

you make the clouds your chariot,  
going around on the wings of the wind.

4 You make the winds your messengers;

you make fire and flame your ministers.

5 You established the earth on its foundations

so that it will never ever fall.

24 Lord, you have done so many things!

You made them all so wisely!

The earth is full of your creations!

25 And then there's the sea, wide and deep,

with its countless creatures—  
living things both small and large.

26 There go the ships on it,

and Leviathan, which you made, plays in it!

30 When you let loose your breath, they are created,

and you make the surface of the ground brand-new again.

31 Let the Lord's glory last forever!

Let the Lord rejoice in all he has made!

*Gospel Anthem*

*Don't Worry, Be Happy by Bobby McFerrin (On Screen)*

### **Gospel Reading:**

Reader

The Good News of Jesus Christ according to Matthew (6:25-26)

(*The New International Version*)

People:

Thanks be to God

“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?”

Reader This is the Good News of Jesus Christ

People Praise be to God

*Gradual Song* “Him” by Sam Smith (on screen)

## The Reflection: “God is Non-Binary” by Rev. Allison

**Statement of Belief:** From the United Church of Canada, revised

*(Said aloud by all, in unison)*

We are not alone, we live in God’s diverse world.

We believe in God:

....who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh,

....to reconcile and make new,

....who works in us and others by the Divine Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:

....to celebrate God’s presence,

....to live with respect in Creation,

....to love and serve others,

....to seek justice and resist evil,

....to proclaim Jesus, God in human form, our example and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. We are not alone.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

## The People’s Prayers:

Leader: God of Creation, we pray for our queer, transgender, bisexual, lesbian, and gay siblings, as we mark this National Coming Out Day,

**People:** That we may have the strength to claim your experience, God; the space to be imperfect, vulnerable, and in process; and the courage to embrace your power.

**Leader:** We pray for all who feel desperate or alone, especially all queer, transgender, bisexual, lesbian, and gay people who lack community,

**People:** That we may know the company of loving friends and supportive family, and that we may have the creativity and fortitude to envision new spaces and give birth to chosen families.

**Leader:** For all who come out only to face rejection, discrimination, or persecution,

**People:** May we know the care of a compassionate neighbor, may our wounds be given the time and space to heal, and may our hearts be comforted by the presence and pursuit of justice.

**Leader:** For our faith community, as we strive to do the ongoing work of welcome and solidarity,

**People:** That we may be a community that honors the journeys of LGBTQ people, nourishes all our spirits, and celebrates our unique gifts.

**Leader:** For our world, that all may acknowledge the gifts of LGBTQ people and be transformed by them.

**People:** That we may create a society rooted in love, grounded in justice, and strengthened by difference.

**ALL:** God, hear our prayers and deepen our willingness to show up with and for one another, sharing in each other's burdens and working for one another's protection and care. Amen.

## Giving back to God:

Presider: Because God has been so good to us, let us with open and grateful hearts give back to God in thanksgiving.

*Song during Offering*

*Proud - Heather Small (on screen)*

## The Lord's Supper

Presider The Holy One be with you

People **And also with you**

Presider Open your hearts to the One who is Love

People **We open our hearts to you, O God**

Presider Let us give thanks to God who sets us free

People **It is our joy to give God thanks!**

*Presider Continues*

Indeed, we give you thanks, our Divine Creator. You declared from the beginning that we were created in your image, a reflection of what is good and holy, each, in our own way, a glimpse of you. We praise the works of your creative hand that fills our life with beauty. Every flower that blooms, every animal that delights, every body of water that sustains our life – all part of your good works.

Despite the abundance of life around us, often we still turn to destruction. Each in our own ways, we have failed to embrace you by failing to embrace all your people, especially those different than us. We have, at times, sided with political and religious powers that refuse to recognize your image in all people.

And so we praise you joining our voices with angels, archangels and with all the company of heaven who forever sing to proclaim the glory of your name:

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might.**

**Heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.**

**Hosanna in the highest.**

And we turn to Jesus, who showed us what it looks like to live into our true selves as people of God. He was humble yet grounded in your love for him. He

sought out the despised and made them friends. He confronted every power that belittled, marginalized, and oppressed. His commitment to living out the image of God in human form could not be swayed, even in the face of death.

On the night of his arrest, he gathered around the table with his companions. He took bread, blessed it, broke it, gave it to his followers and said, “This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

He did the same with the cup of wine after the supper, saying, “This cup that is poured out is the new covenant in my blood. Whenever you drink of it, do this in remembrance of me.”

Even in death, O God, your love prevailed. Through you Spirit, Christ was raised from the grave. No person, no institution, no force of evil could extinguish the work of your hand.

And so, by the same Spirit, bless these gifts of bread and cup (+) that they may be the living Christ within us today (+); compelling us to be agents of love, uncompromising in our commitment to protect every one of your creatures and creations.

And the people of God said:     **AMEN!**

## **The Breaking of the Bread:**

*(Presider breaks the consecrated bread)*

**Presider:**     Just as the grain that was used to make this bread was once scattered over the land and then gathered together to make this one bread, God, gather your people together from all over the world into your one holy and eternal community.

**People:**     **Happy are we who share this holy meal of bread and wine.**

## **Invitation to Communion:**

**Presider:**     This is not my table, this is not St. Stephen’s church’s table. This is Christ’s Table. Jesus invites you to come forward and receive the bread and the wine in this place.

*Please come forward to the rail and stand or kneel. Put out your hand to receive the bread,*

hold onto the bread if you also would like wine from the chalice. Please dip/intinct the bread into the wine and then consume it. If you do not wish to have the wine, you may eat your bread when you receive it. You may instead of receiving the bread and wine, receive a blessing by crossing your arms over your chest. After receiving communion or blessing, return to your seat.

Communion Song

*Lord of All Hopefulness (on screen)*

## **Prayer after Communion:**

Presider: *Let us pray:*

**All:** God, we give you thanks for the invitation to your Table. No matter who we are, no matter our struggles or regrets, we are never turned away. Like all the gifts you give us, may we never be content with keeping them to ourselves. May this meal compel us to invite others – especially those who are turned away from the tables of their families, their churches, their communities – to our own tables, overflowing with love and nourishment in abundance. **Amen.**

## **Benediction:**

Presider: Go in the companionship of the Spirit and be a light to the world and to all who are yearning to be free. Embrace your own difference, celebrate the difference of others, and proclaim the Good News: God's love does not conform to the binary expectation of our culture. It is without boundary. It extends to all. And the blessing of God: Creator, Sustainer, and Reconciler be with you now and always. **Amen.**

Closing Song:

*I Want to Break Free—Queen (on Screen)*

*Refreshments in the Parish Hall following the service. Please join us.*