



# GLAD

## TO BE IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Worship Resources from the GLAD (Gay, Lesbian, and Affirming Disciples) Alliance

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### National Coming Out Day—October 11 or Solidarity Sunday—Sunday before October 11

National Coming Out Day was founded by Robert Eichberg and Jean O'Leary on October 11, 1988 in celebration of the second national march for equality for persons of all gender and sexual identities in Washington D.C. a year earlier. The purpose of the march and of National Coming Out Day is to promote public awareness of gay, bisexual, lesbian and transgender rights and to celebrate gender and sexuality as a good gift. Solidarity Sunday was initiated in 1995 by DignityUSA, a group of Catholics working for the full inclusion of LGBTQI folks within the church and society. In order to seek forgiveness and reconciliation for sins against LGBTQI persons and to stand in solidarity with persons of all gender and sexual identities, the church is urged to observe Solidarity Sunday on the Sunday preceding October 11 or with a special, ecumenical community service on October 11. These worship resources are designed to assist in the planning of such a service.

#### GREETING

We gather in the name of the One who Creates,  
the One who liberates,  
and the One who heals.

**Amen.**

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

Jesus invites us to worship.

“Come to me, all who are tired, weary, and worn,  
and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you,  
for I am gentle, and humble of heart.”

**God, we come before you,**

**bringing who we are,**

**all that we are,**

**denying nothing,**

**seeking your wholeness and blessing.**

Receive us as we are

and teach us to welcome all to Christ's table

as you have welcomed us.

#### PRAYER OF INVOCATION/COLLECT

Gracious God,  
in your goodness you have made all things  
and proclaimed them good, indeed, very good.  
Through the power of your Spirit,  
open our eyes, our ears, and our hearts  
to the goodness of all that you have made  
and teach us to be good stewards of all that you have made  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

#### INVITATION TO CONFESSION

We have denied the presence of God in ourselves and others;  
we have abused God's good creation.

Let us confess our sin.

#### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Holy One,  
you have created all things  
through the power of your steadfast love,  
proclaiming all that you have made good, indeed, very good.  
As human beings, we bear your Divine image,  
the reflection of your creativity and diversity.  
Sadly, we have denied the goodness of your creation,  
and our own goodness as persons made in your image.  
We have abused your good creation,  
wounded and rejected each other,  
and mistreated ourselves.  
Forgive us, Merciful God.  
Give us the courage to embrace ourselves,  
each other, and all that you have made.  
Teach us to be better stewards of your good creation  
following the example of Jesus Christ  
through the power of your Holy Spirit.**  
**Amen.**

#### ASSURANCE OF FORGIVENESS

Though we have sinned,  
there is nothing in all creation that can separate us from God.  
The steadfast love of God endures forever.  
Through Jesus Christ we are forgiven of all our sins  
and through the Holy Spirit we are reborn  
and given the courage to accept ourselves and each other.  
Let us live in peace as we strive to follow faithfully in the way of Jesus.

**Amen.**

#### SUGGESTED SCRIPTURES

Genesis 1.26-31

Isaiah 56.1-8

Isaiah 25.6-10

Ruth 1.6-18

1 Samuel 18.1-5

2 Samuel 11.17-27

Psalm 139-1-18  
Galatians 3.23-29  
Ephesians 2.11-22  
Acts 8.26-40  
Acts 10.9-16  
Revelation 7.9-17  
Matthew 8.5-13  
Matthew 19.1-12  
Luke 6.37-42  
Luke 7.1-10

#### AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We believe in God,  
who creates all things and proclaims them good, indeed, very good,  
who creates us fully and completely in God's imagine,  
with each and every part of us,  
including our sexualities and genders,  
reflecting the Divine image.

We believe in Jesus, the Christ,  
who embodies the love and justice of God,  
who models good stewardship of all that God has made,  
calling us to live fully and completely,  
embracing all that God has entrusted to us.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the power of God at work in the world,  
giving us the courage to love ourselves and others,  
tearing down the walls that divide us,  
making of us a new and inclusive community of faith  
committed to transforming the world  
to reflect the values of God.

We believe in the Church,  
the body of Christ,  
called to be a welcoming community  
reaching out in healing love  
to welcome all to Christ's table  
as God has welcomed us.  
Amen.

*or*

We rejoice in God  
who makes all things  
and proclaims them good, indeed, very good.

We recognize Jesus Christ,  
who reconciles us to God  
and to each other,  
who teaches us to love and accept all people  
as beloved children of God.

We receive the Holy Spirit  
who tears down every wall that divides,  
creating one new humanity  
at peace with itself and with all that God has made.

We recommit ourselves to the Church,  
the body of Christ,  
and seek to transform it into a more just, welcoming,  
and inclusive community of faith.

Amen.

#### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Holy One,  
you create the world in all its beauty  
and humanity in all its diversity  
even as we reflect your undivided image of love.  
Offering you our gratitude for all that we have and all that we are,  
we also recognize our brokenness and the brokenness of this world.  
Forgive us for the ways in which we have dishonored your image within us,  
within others, and within your good creation.

*Silence for personal reflection.*

Hear our cries for healing for all that you have made.

We pray for your creation...

Open our eyes to the goodness that is woven into the very fabric of this universe  
and teach us to honor all that you have made by being good stewards.

We pray for your church...

Open our arms to reach out in love and embrace those who yearn for community  
and give us the courage to embody the love and justice of Jesus.

We pray for the leaders of this nation and every nation...

Open our minds to envision the world that you are creating  
and give us the wisdom to craft policies  
that honor the inherent worth and dignity of every person  
and respect the integrity of your good creation.

We pray for our communities...

Open our hands to do the hard work  
of building more just, equitable, and sustainable communities  
where all people are free to embrace themselves  
and live openly without fear.

We pray for our families and friends...

Open our hearts to forgive each other when we have been wounded  
and to risk being hurt again by loving as recklessly as did Jesus.  
Open our hearts also to receive the families of choice you are creating among us  
and give us the compassion to welcome into our families all who seek love.

We pray for those who struggle and suffer...

Open our lives to share their struggles for hope, justice, and wholeness;  
give us the courage to live our prayers  
as we strive to embody the healing offered to all through Jesus, the Great Physician.

We pray for those who have gone before us.

Open to us the way of those  
who have embodied the strength and courage of Jesus,  
who have accepted themselves and those around them  
in a loving, all encompassing embrace  
that has broken down barriers

and given us a foretaste of the beloved community of your reign.  
Unite us with them and with all your beloved children  
as we prepare for the great feast that will mark the consummation of your rule  
through Jesus Christ  
in the power of your Spirit.  
Amen.

#### INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

Embraced by God  
and loved for all that we are,  
let us embrace the Church and the world  
as we share what we have  
to bring God's love and justice to all.

#### PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION

Gracious God,  
you create all things and proclaim them good, indeed, very good.  
We give you thanks for your beautiful, diverse creation,  
those with whom we share in its beauty,  
and, above all, for your steadfast love  
embodied in Jesus, the Christ,  
who reconciles us to you and to each other.  
In gratitude for all your gifts to us  
we offer you all that we have and all that we are  
as a living offering of your love for all  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord,  
and your Holy Spirit, our strength and courage.  
**Amen.**

#### INVITATION TO THE TABLE

So many of us know the pain of rejection  
at the hands of family, friends, and faith communities.  
There is no rejection at this table,  
for we welcome all to Christ's table as God has welcomed us.  
Come, for this table is open to all.

#### THE GREAT THANKSGIVING/COMMUNION PRAYER

[God be with you.

**And also with you.**

Open your hearts.

**We open them to God and to one another.**

Let us give thanks to the God of all.

**It is right to give God thanks and praise.]**

Holy One,  
you call the universe into being with but a word,  
creating worlds filled with beauty and variety,  
yet we reject the diversity of your creation,  
refusing to accept that you rejoice in all that you have made  
and continue to proclaim it good, indeed, very good.  
You are not willing to let us reject your good creation so easily,  
in your great love you send prophets, pastors, and teachers  
to challenge us to openness.  
Still, we resist.

Still, you persist.

We give you thanks and praise from the core of our being.

[Joining our voices with those of every time and place  
who have sung a song of love and hope, we sing

**Holy, holy, holy God. You are Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.  
All that you have made proclaims the goodness you have instilled.**

**Hosanna in the Highest!**

**Blessed is the One who embodies love and justice!**

**Hosanna in the Highest!]**

In the fullness of time, you came to us in Jesus, the Christ,  
defying the boundaries between sacred and secular,  
embodying respect and honor for all that you have made.

In Jesus, you confronted the powers that deny the goodness of creation,  
you challenged the status quo that seeks to keep things hidden,  
you commanded your children to love and to be loved.

For this daring ministry, Jesus was crucified and died,  
but remained faithful to the point of death.

Though Jesus was killed,  
your steadfast love could not be killed.

You raised Jesus to life again within the community of the faithful,  
transforming those who would follow Jesus into the body of Christ.

[Remembering the life that could not be destroyed,  
we remain steadfast in our hope:

**Dying, Christ destroyed death.**

**Rising, Christ restores life.**

**Living, Christ will make all things new.]**

Through the power of your Holy Spirit,  
make these gifts of bread and wine signs of the living Christ  
that we might become the body of Christ for the world,  
life blood poured out for the healing of all.

Open our eyes, our ears, and our hearts to the goodness that is here  
and teach us revere all that you have made and are making  
through the love of Jesus, the Christ,  
and the life giving power of your Spirit  
at work in your holy church.

**Amen.**

PRAYER FOR COMMITMENT (after communion)

Gracious God,  
you have welcomed us to this table  
as your beloved children  
and nourished us with the love of Christ  
embodied in bread and cup.  
Strengthen us with courage  
as we leave this table  
to embrace all whom you love  
as beloved children.

May your love through us  
bring healing and wholeness to them and us  
in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord  
and through the power of your Spirit.

**Amen.**

## BENEDICTION

As we leave this place,  
we leave knowing that we are God's own children.  
All that we have and all that we are is a sacred trust from God.  
From this moment on, let us live with gratitude for who we are  
and commit ourselves to honor each person as a beloved child of God.  
May the blessing of the God of ALL:  
the One who creates,  
the One who redeems,  
and the One who sustains,  
go with us and guide us every step of the way.  
**Amen.**

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Unless otherwise indicated, these resources were written by the Rev. Wes Jamison, Chair of the Open and Affirming Ministries program of GLAD (Gay, Lesbian, and Affirming Disciples) Alliance. These resources are for use by congregations of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and our ecumenical partners. They may be reprinted and used in bulletins and other non-saleable media as long as proper credit is given. For more information contact Wes via email: [WBJamison@gmail.com](mailto:WBJamison@gmail.com).

For more information, visit:

<http://www.dignityusa.org/solidarity>

[http://www.welcomingresources.org/A\\_Place\\_in\\_Gods\\_Heart.htm](http://www.welcomingresources.org/A_Place_in_Gods_Heart.htm)

<http://www.welcomingresources.org/liturgies2.htm#comingout>

<http://www.mlp.org/staticpages/index.php?page=more-light-sunday>

