

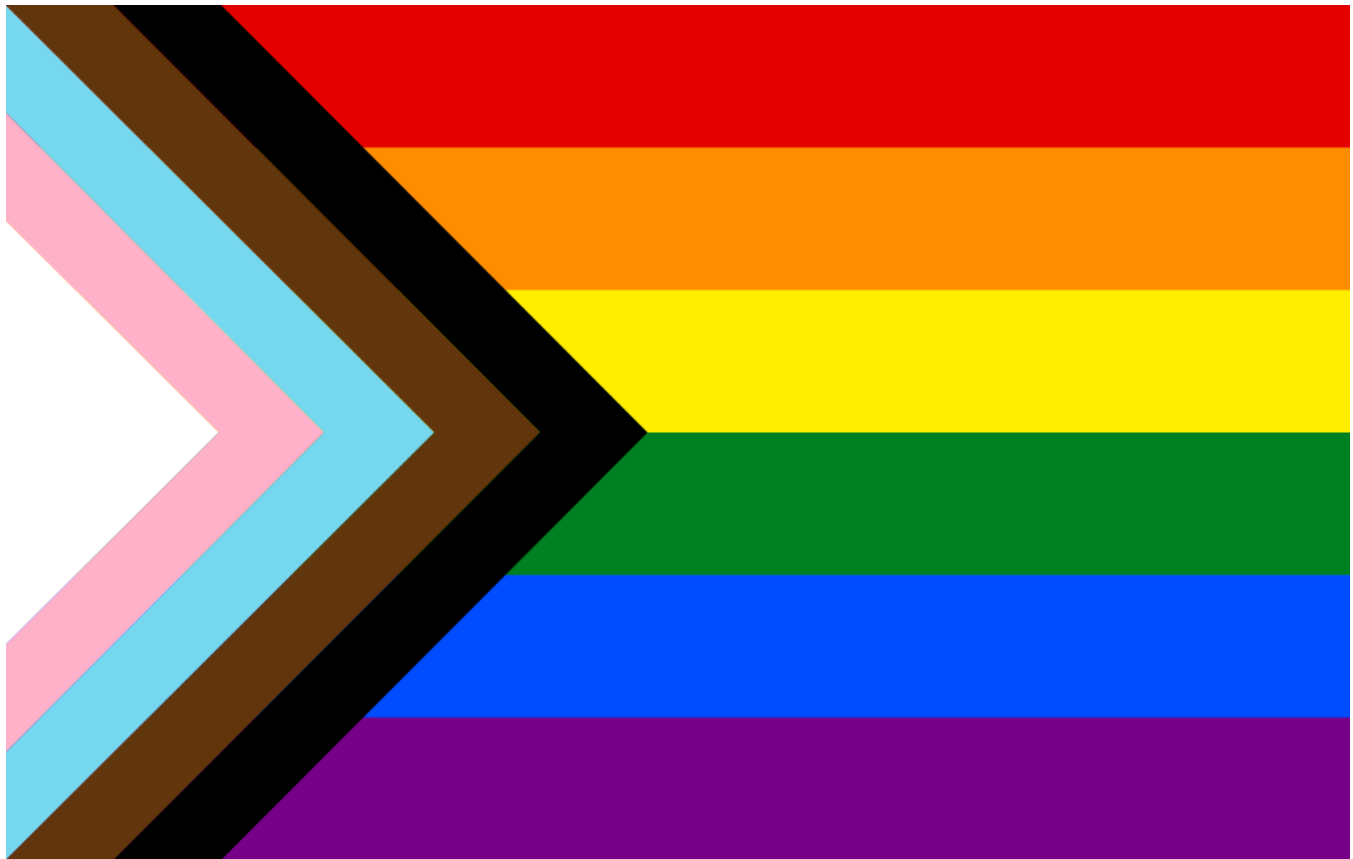
SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

October 8, 2022



“The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, his mercies never come to an end”

~ Lamentations 3:22 (NRSV)



We should maintain our composure in the face of difference and live our lives in awe of the diversity of humanity.

Gathering as the Body of Christ

CENTERING SONG

“QUEERLY BELOVED” vs. 1 & 2

AMANDA UDIS-KESSLER

(SEE PAGES 7 & 8 OF THIS BULLETIN)

GREETING

*CALL TO WORSHIP

We must shine.

We must shine now.

This is the goal toward which we stretch,

Step by step,

In our own time, at our own pace.

As our beauty unfolds, and our hearts open,

We become gentler and more compassionate,

Yet brighter, more empowered, and fearless.

We have been holding on, holding back,

Playing small, hiding our light under a bushel.

Enough of that.

It is time to let go.

We are needed now, all of us.

All of us together.

**All those who feel a calling to be who we are to the fullest,
make a difference, to give it all we got. Amen.**

*OPENING HYMN

“GUIDE US TO OPENNESS”

W. ROBERT MARTIN, III

Sung to "Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

Guide us to openness, Spirit of mercy,

Aid us in seeking God's justice and grace.

Move us to show Christ's compassion through witness,

Love first to offer and hate to erase.

REFRAIN

Guide us to openness! Guide us to openness!

Let no one ever be shunned or denied.

Make of the Church a bold place of compassion,

That all who seek You may come and abide.

Spirit of tenderness, impart Your presence,
Fill both our hearts and our hands with Your care.
Let no one suffer or grieve unattended,
Grant us Your kindness and warmth here to share. REFRAIN

Though there are those who would limit Christ's graces,
Still we refuse to believe in such lies,
For in this time we have made a commitment
Never to limit love's power or size.
That all who seek You may come and abide. REFRAIN

© W. Robert Martin, III

***CONFESSION & WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

[All are invited to turn toward the Baptismal Font.]

The baptismal font reminds us of God's promise of cleansing and forgiveness. In that confidence, let us lift our voices in a prayer of confession.

God of Justice, God of Compassion, God of Sacred and Scandalous ways, We have so much still to learn.

By your grace, we have come to know love more deeply than once before – its mess, its complexity, its stubborn and tender truths transform us more each day. Through fires that refine and valleys of death, you have guided us. You draw us into the heart of Wisdom, Saving us from the lies of destruction. Turning us towards hope that liberates. But still, O God, we struggle to trust in you. And so, when we are afraid. Or hurt. Or weary. We betray the very One who brought us thus far.

Search our hearts, O God, and see if there is any fear within us. Meet us there with your good news that sets the captives free. Forgive us from the harm we have done as we seek to harm no more.

Let us bring before God the prayers of our own hearts in a moment of silence.

Beloveds, God does not abandon us to the systems that destroy. God does not bind us to our regrets. Or forever hold us to what we once believed. Wherever new life is desired, may the peace of Christ be welcomed among us. Thanks be to God who leads us on paths of resurrection.

***SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

Service of the Word

POEM

“JESUS AT THE GAY BAR”

JAY HULME

Lamentations says: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases. The poet agrees, and paints a stunning picture of what steadfast love looks like.

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING

LAMENTATIONS 3:19-26

NRSV

SERMON

STEPHANIE OELRICH

PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY

Let us pray.

We pray for those who have stepped out of the closet into the light.

We pray for those who feel trapped and afraid to come out.

We pray for those who have lost the support of family and friends because of their sexuality or gender.

We pray for those who have experienced abuse, harassment, and negativity due to their sexuality or gender.

We pray for those who have felt pushed to end their own life due to the cruelty of prejudiced individuals and institutions.

We pray for those who have had their lives taken from them.

We pray for the allies who boldly stand alongside the LGBTQ+ community with support and love.

We pray for the global leaders who are striving to create a safer and more inclusive world.

We pray for this beautiful rainbow community and celebrate this day of coming out into the light. Amen.

Service of the Table

OFFERTORY SONG

“TRUE COLORS” (INSTRUMENTAL)

STEINBERG/KELLY

***THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

Presider: The Holy One be with you

All: And also with you

Presider: Open your hearts to the One who is Love

All: We open our hearts to you, O God

Presider: Let us give thanks to God, our life-breath

All: To the One who sustains us, we rejoice in your presence!

With gratitude, O God, we remember that it is through you we are made truly alive. Every creature and creation – the tiny ones, the scaly ones, the human ones, the leafy ones – all that is has been shaped by you. There is nothing on this earth that has not been touched by your Sacred hand. In your love for us, you claim us – individually and as a whole – as your beloveds.

And yet, daily, we turn away from you and one another. Destructive and divisive powers lure us away from connection and relationship. We forget that we need each other. We pretend that our lives are not deeply entangled.

But you do not abandon us to our fear or sin. In the life of Jesus, Love enfleshed, we are shown that the invitation to join in your work of transforming and healing and restoring is always open.

This relentless invitation of yours that entices with freedom and joy and forgiveness is such a threat to empire that it still attempts to crucify every incarnation of your love today. And so, we are reminded of the example given to us in the person of Jesus.

On the night of his arrest, he gathered around table with his companions. He took bread, blessed it, broke it, gave it to his disciples and said, “This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” He did the same with the cup after the supper, saying, “This cup that is poured out is the new covenant.”

And so in remembrance of the One who never gave up on love, we pray that the Spirit would make us one in our commitment to the liberation of all your creatures and creations. Pour out your Spirit on this bread and this cup, that through these ordinary gifts, we might taste a glimpse of your Kingdom. May they be for us a reminder of what we are capable of becoming and what we are capable of accomplishing together. Amen.

INVITATION TO THE TABLE

PRESIDER

We have a few COVID related options for those who wish to partake. If you wish to receive from the ministers, take an empty eco-friendly cup from the stack on the aisle table and approach the minister, who will place a piece of bread in your open hand. All bread is gluten free.

Or you may take one of the sealed celebration cups with the wafer on top and juice beneath; hold them out to the minister for a blessing. A minister will pour grape juice into your cup. Eat, drink, and dispose of the cup in the waste baskets at the side aisles as you return to your seat.

If you are unable to come forward, please signal the ministers and we will come to you at your seat. Those who prefer not to partake in Communion are invited to a different kind of divine encounter through an interfaith prayer of blessing. If this is your preference, we invite you to meet the minister at the baptismal font.

COMMUNION SONG

“BRAVE”

SARA BAREILLES

Going Forth as the Body of Christ

*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

God, we give you thanks for this meal that nourishes us, body and soul. May it sustain us as we confront evil that keeps us from living the lives you intended for us and for all your creatures and creations. Until every life can be lived abundantly, be our guide, be our hope, be our comforter.

For the sake of our shared lives, the life of this land on which we live, and the lives of those yet to come, nourish us and renew our hope that soon Christ may rise again among us. Amen.

*CLOSING SONG

“QUEERLY BELOVED” VS. 1 & 3

AMANDA UDIS-KESSLER

*BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Queerly Beloved

Amanda Udis-Kessler

♩ = 174

The musical score is written in 3/4 time with a key signature of two sharps (D major). It consists of three systems of piano accompaniment and vocal melody. The piano part uses chords and a simple bass line, while the vocal part includes lyrics.

System 1 (Measures 1-8):

- Chords: D, A/D, G/D, A/D, D, A/D, G/D, A/D
- Lyrics: Queer-ly be - lov - ed, we have as - sem - bled, join - ing in won - der, sing - ing in

System 2 (Measures 9-15):

- Chords: D, A/D, G/D, A/D, Gmaj7, D/F#, Em7 D/F# G
- Lyrics: Queer-ly be - lov - ed, we have been hat - ed, treat - ed as out - casts, rag - ged and
Queer-ly be - lov - ed, we have dis - cov - ered love that is per - fect, end - ing our

System 3 (Measures 16-22):

- Chords: A, A/G, D/F#, F#m, G, Em7, F#m7
- Lyrics: praise. rough. Lift - ing our eyes, rais - ing our voi - ces, trust - ing in hope, in
fear. There is a truth wait - ing to claim us. There is a call so

Biblical references: 1 John 4:18

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Queerly Beloved

23 G A D D/F# G Bm Em7

love, and in faith, Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -
 ev - er e - nough. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -
 strong and so clear. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le -

30 D/F# A sus A D D A/D G/D A/D D 1, 2.

lu - ia, God is great!
 lu - ia, God is love!
 lu - ia, God is here!

39 G/D A/D 3. A/D G/D A/D D rit.

Cover Art: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel_Quasar#/media/File:LGBTQ+ rainbow flag Quasar %22Progress%22 variant.svg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daniel_Quasar#/media/File:LGBTQ+_rainbow_flag_Quasar_%22Progress%22_variant.svg)

Centering Song: "Queerly Beloved," © Amanda Udis-Kessler, <https://queersacredmusic.com/lgbtq-music-2>

Call to Worship: "Lifting our Voices," by Bambi Galore and Beth Taylor.

Opening Hymn: "Guide Us To Openness," © W. Robert Martin, III, <http://www.welcomingresources.org/music.htm>

Prayer of Confession: Adapted from "Prayer of Confession," <https://enfleshed.com/liturgy/prayer-of-confession/>.

Communion Liturgy: Adapted from "God Calls Us," <https://enfleshed.com/liturgy/communion-liturgies/>.

Communion Song: "Brave" by Jack Antonoff and Sara Bareilles. <https://www.songfacts.com/lyrics/sara-bareilles/brave>

Poem: Jesus at the Gay Bar by Jay Hulme - <https://jayhulme.com/blog/jesus-at-the-gay-bar>

**This service was curated from a service designed by Bambi Galore, Alex Rachel Compton-Monell, Stephanie Oelrich, and Beth Taylor in the Spring of 2021 for a Worship class project.*

**The worship planning team creates all other parts of the liturgy except where noted.*

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THE WORSHIP TEAM SEEKS:

To serve the universal church of our Creator.

To minister to the unique and diverse needs of the seminary community.

To foster an expansive culture of worship that values difference and challenges the normative.