



A Partnership of the Hudson River Presbytery  
[www.hudrivpres.org/hrp-queer](http://www.hudrivpres.org/hrp-queer)  
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### **“Seasons of Compassion” – PRIDE Worship Resources**

“In this extremely unsettled world, the science of compassion is crucial. Our inherent motivation of compassion pushes us to understand how we have structured the world, and to ask, how can we structure it better, not because we may suffer, but because others are suffering.”

Paul Gilbert, Director, Compassionate Mind Foundation, UK

As we approach PRIDE Month, many of us are considering ways in which we can recognize and welcome our LGTBQAI+ extended families, friends and allies. HRP Queer, a Partnership of the Hudson River Presbytery, is here to help you in any ways we might. Like you, we believe we are called to care for those who are marginalized, excluded, and suffering – especially our LGTBQAI+ kin. In our shared embrace of compassion and abundance, we know that together we have the heart and resources we need toward a full welcoming for the Queer community in our lives and worship.

Jesus: “My heart goes out to all the people, By now they have been with us three days and have had nothing to eat. I don’t want to send them away hungry—they might collapse on the way home.” The disciples said to Jesus, “Where could we get enough food in this deserted place to feed such a crowd?” Jesus asked, “How many loaves do you have...” (Matthew 15)

We have enough, as the disciples did then, so one day no one will collapse from hunger, loneliness, or the exclusionary practices of communities of faith.

So, as you consider how to bring a PRIDE-welcoming worship and educational message to members, family and friends -- we are here to help with a few ideas and resources. Feel free to reach out to us and we will be happy to see what we can do to help in this important mission today, tomorrow, for PRIDE, and for all the days to come.

Thank you for recognizing the “sacred” in your hearts and space as we open our doors.

*Seasons of Compassion: Ideas for PRIDE Month:*

1. Pre-Messaging: Share your plans early with the congregation. Use bulletin announcements, online media, presbytery websites, and local media if this is something you use to publicize worship or events to the community.
2. Share the pulpit: Invite open members, open clergy, open community leaders and others to talk about their faith journey as a person who identifies as Queer/LGBTQIA+.
3. Invite grandparents/guardians, parents/guardians, siblings to talk about their Queer family members and how they are loved. Small panels with time for Q&A can be very effective (moderator choice is important, as always).
4. Inclusive Worship: Include open members of the congregation who identify as LGBTQIA+/Queer to serve as liturgists, servers, leaders for talkbacks, minute-for-mission, greeters, soloists, and more.
5. Worship Language: Use inclusive language texts for readings. The Inclusive Bible is one such resource.
6. Call to Worship, Unison Prayers, Joys and Concerns, Others: Ideas for such prayers follow in this document. Such prayers can be very important in affirming a Queer member or visitor to worship, while reaffirming your inclusiveness to the entire congregation.
7. Hymns: Avoid hymns with themes or verses that refer to punishment, atonement, sin, royal language, and specific pronouns.

The LGBTQAI+ community knows church better than we might think, understanding the importance of sacrifice, faithfulness, service, and more. It is also true that no group has had these constructs or theological tenets used more effectively to twist, punish, shame or exclude them from the church, itself.

8. Suggested Hymns: In this document is a list of hymns from the Glory to God Hymnal that reflect comprehensive welcoming and a link to the HRP Inclusive Hymnal, a recent project of HRPQueer.
9. Preludes and Postludes: Consider anthems of the Queer Community loved by many, such as “Somewhere over the Rainbow” and “True Colors”.

10. Display the Flag: (It's more than a flag.) This is the most current flag - the *Progress Pride Queer Flag*. It is meant to include colors for all those who identify as part of the Queer/LGBTQIA+ community.

The flag makes an excellent educational activity, minute for mission topic, newsletter topic, forum, or woven into a sermon. And, when it is displayed outside is a powerful visual symbol of welcoming across lines that divide us.



11. PowerPoint Slides and Images: In this document is a link of PowerPoint Slides with related PRIDE images. There is also a link to an index of these slides for a quick look.

12. Hospitality: Invite youth, deacons, elders, choir, congregational life committee or others to organize themed hospitality for each week of PRIDE.

13. Participate in Local PRIDE Events: Chances are there are PRIDE events nearby your church and that members will be involved. Find out what's going on and then invite members and other to join church leaders in attending such events. The message of "church" is changed for some who have felt estranged when they see clergy standing among them in support.

14. It Doesn't Take Much: If you have done themed worship for PRIDE before, you know how wonderful it can be to bring folks together for the moment and long term. If you are just getting started, whatever you can do is a great beginning.

*Thanks for your support and your courage. We will help you in any way we can, just reach out to us at [info@hrpqueer.org](mailto:info@hrpqueer.org).*

*Please consider becoming a congregational member of HRPQueer. We'd love to have you join us.*

***Selected Hymns from Glory to God Hymnal:***

These can be thematically integrated with readings and prayers and sermons for PRIDE Month or any Inclusive Welcoming Service.

#22	God of the Sparrow
#23	God, You Spin the Whirling Planets
#37	Let All Things Now Living
#79	Light Dawn on a Weary World
#80	You Shall Go Out with Joy
#288	Spirit of the Living God
#291	Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness (v. 1, 2, 3)
#292	As the Wind Song
#310	Let Us Build a House
#372	O For a World
#379	We Shall Overcome
#388	Come All You People
#435	There's a Wideness in God's Mercy (Substitute "God" for "Lord")
#451	Open My Eyes, That I May See
#507	Come to the Table of Grace
#509	All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly
#539	We Will Go Out in Joy
#541	God Be With You Till We Meet Again
#623	I've Got Peace Like a River
#726	Will You Come and Follow Me (The Summons)
#769	For Everyone Born (v.1, 3, 4, 5)
#853	We Are Marching (Siyahamba)



HRP Queer

# Inclusive Hymnal

compiled by: Benjamin Low

[www.hrpqueer.org](http://www.hrpqueer.org)

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[Click Here to View / Download Inclusive Hymnal](#)

## **Prayer Selections**

Permission granted by author of non-attributed prayers. Prayers 3, 4, 6, and 11 may be used with indicated attributions.

### **1. Call to Worship**

We open our hearts and our minds,  
We set aside – for a moment –  
    The chaos...  
Not to forget  
    but to remember:  
    How good it is to be in worship together.

To remember the beauty of Gender (another word for God?)  
    in all its expressions and gifts;  
To embrace ways to end to Gun Violence;  
To stand firmly in the tenets of our faith, calling out:  
    “Black Lives Matter”.  
Calling out: “All are welcome here”.

Yes! We say Yes!  
We celebrate who it is God has created us to be –  
to be *out* in the world, free –  
With God’s love and beauty and healing power in each of us.

Welcome to this place and to our worship time together.  
Be assured of our commitment to “see” you, to “see” each other,  
To “listen and hear” – and to remember God in us,  
as you know God. YES, “Emmanuel”.

### **2. Unison Prayer**

We know this: God’s Love is for All.  
Acts of silence that limit God’s Love  
    cannot possibly be God’s way. We say.  
So, we live into radical hospitality – and by no means quietly!  
We gather and celebrate and break the “silence”.  
We make our “Holy-Spirit-Holy-Wind” so all can hear  
    how delighted in -- and loved -- are we by God.  
Imbued with all God’s magnificent and myriad colors;  
    All God’s astounding spectacular shadows and blends.  
*How beautiful are we? God-beautiful. That’s how!*

### 3. **Call to Worship**

“Flare #8.” From *Devotions* by Mary Oliver

The poem is not the world.  
It isn't even the first page of the world.  
But the poem wants to flower, like a flower.  
It knows that much.  
It wants to open itself,  
like the door of a little temple,  
So that you might step inside and be cooled and refreshed,  
and less yourself than part of everything.

*Friends, welcome to this place.  
Be cooled. Be refreshed. Be “you” and who you are.  
And, know how loved and welcome you are here.*

### 4. **Unison Prayer “Prayer” by Maya Angelou**

[Creator God], thank You for Your  
presence during the hard and mean days.  
For then we have you to lean upon.

Thank You for Your presence during the  
bright and sunny days, for then we can  
share that which we have with those who have less.

And thank You for Your presence during the  
Holy Days, for then we are able to  
celebrate You and our families and our friends.

For those who have no voice, we ask You to speak.

For those who feel unworthy, we ask You  
to pour Your love out in waterfalls of tenderness.

For those who live in pain, we ask You  
To bathe them in the river of Your healing.

For those who are lonely, we ask You to keep them company.

For those who are depressed, we ask You  
to shower upon them the light of hope.

Dear Creator, You, the borderless sea of Substance,  
we ask You to give all the world  
that which we need most—Peace.                      Amen.

## 5. *Call to Worship*

If we could see the light  
beyond the limits of our vision  
what might be revealed?

Perhaps we would find a new prism, the next *color*  
beyond all rainbows that have arched the sky;  
a color beyond marginalization that flows wide.

Imagine such things – here in this place.  
Imagine in your mind's eye  
what is - just waiting to be seen.

For such imagination comes from the margin's edges;  
It moves toward one uncompromising vision...  
That embraces us all, so we can embrace one another.

Come. Dream. Envision. Embrace Love. Here. Now.

## 6. *Unison Prayer*

(by Rev. Bob Howard, Community Christian Church, Tempe, AZ - Modified)

O Infinite Love, bathe us with beams of compassion, revealing reflections of your  
love in each one we see. Help us to see you in all people: Transgender, Queer – all.

*Turn our marginalization and fragmentation  
into a new prism of light, that radiates life and love!*

Give us hearts to nourish courage into a wild daring of acceptance for all to  
celebrate.

Show us how to find each other in you,

As we know you and come to know you more.



## **7. Call to Worship**

We open our hearts and our minds,  
We set aside – for a moment –  
The chaos...  
Not to forget  
    but to remember:  
    How good it is to be in worship  
    Together.

To remember during this Pride Month and all days  
    Our commitment to the covenant of Love:  
    Our commitment to “see” each other  
    “listen” to one another  
    And remember how easily we can lose each other  
    When we forget to be vigilant  
    In our “withness” and worship.

“Love is here”, which is another way of saying  
God is here. Welcome, where you are loved.

## **8. Unison Prayer**

We know this: God’s Love is for All.  
Acts of silence that limit God’s Love in any way, indeed,  
    equals a death: figuratively and literally.  
So we are loud and we live loudly!  
We celebrate Pride to break the “silence”.

Hear us:

“You are loved; you are welcome here;

*Because*

“we are loved, we welcome you!  
    And because we really like you, too!

*Because,*

God’s welcome is to be shared unconditionally.

And, because we need your help to do better...  
as we Love - in all the many ways of all Gods’ magnificent colors.



## **9. Call to Worship**

You are invited, welcomed and wanted here.

No kidding! ☺

Welcome to this “house” where we do justice,  
love mercy and kindness and share affection.

A place where God’s love cascades like raindrops,  
wonderfully revealing pallets of  
magnificent colors!

Welcome, again...and know  
that all the ways you find God,  
wherever you are on your spiritual journey -  
God is delighted in you, in us!

Yes, it is good to be together!

## 10. Unison Prayer

*This unison prayer is based upon on comments by South Africa's Nobel peace laureate, the late Archbishop Desmond Tutu.*

*I would refuse to go to a homophobic  
[transphobic, queerphobic] heaven.*

*I would say, No, sorry, I would much rather  
go to the other place.*

*I would not worship such a narrow God  
and that is how deeply feel about this.*

*I am as passionate about these rights for our Queer family,  
as I ever was about apartheid. For me: it is at the same level.  
People are literally paying for their love with their lives.*

This is ours. This passion. Is ours.

This steadfast love for all that joins us – joins us forever.

It is what strengthens us in sorrow and encourages us in joy.

It is what we are called to in serving one another, to...

:

Do justice.

Love mercy.

Walk humbly with our God." (Micah 6:8)

The question is, "Will we?"

The answer must be, "Yes."

However we may,

"Yes."

## **PowerPoint Slide Resources:**

These PowerPoint Slides share graphics with permission for use or are in the public domain. Incorporate them in presentations, as a springboard for what you are creating, or as you wish.

We hope these are helpful.

[Here is a link to the Slide Index](#)

[Link to PowerPoint Slides \(125.2MB\)](#)

Need help? Want to share resources?

[info@hrpqueer.org](mailto:info@hrpqueer.org)

