



Galaxies Evening Service 27 February 2016

Service by Pete Cowley



Welcome:

Tonight we celebrate what it is to be GLBT - we celebrate our spirit!



A traditional Gay pride event in front of the Brandenburg Gate, Germany

Galaxies candle Lighting

In honour of our community - those present and those not present

In recognition of the gifts each of us bring to the table

we light our candle, and give thanks

and we offer our love and support to each other.

Amen

We celebrate our Gay Spirit

Great Spirit we often call God, we celebrate your spirit within us. As Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and all the variations on the theme - we accept your gift of the sexuality and attraction that you have given us. We acknowledge that other people have not always made it easy for us to do so, but we celebrate who we are and continue the struggle to be included in the world of all your other children.

Affirmation of faith (said all together):

The bounty of the great Spirit surrounds us with grace,
spread in generous measures of loving creativity,
poured forth for generation after generation in hopeful abundance,
in an endless invitation to hospitality.

The feasting Christ walks in our scarce life
as though all of us might be part of the celebration,
as though each of us might be a guest at the banquet,
as though we might all be together at the table,
holding each other as precious,
dying before we will give up love, or life,
which is lived to the full.

The laughing Spirit moves in endless freedom
stirring, surprising, bestowing gifts as it moves
as though wisdom is foolishly faithful to hope,
eternal living for truth and will not settle for less,
as though we are worth the struggle
and we could really be the emerging children of God

This we believe. This is the wonder of our God.

Stonewall/Pride:

A Sacred Celebration
FROM RENEE HILL

"We may have lost the battle, sweets, but the war is far from over."
—Participant in the Stonewall uprising, 1969

"On the night of Friday, June 27, 1969, the New York City police conducted a raid on the Stonewall, a gay bar located in Greenwich Village. Raids on gay bars were not uncommon. What made this event different, what made this a night to remember, is that the people in the bar fought back in a sustained act of resistance. They fought back, and that act of resistance quickly became a focal point for organized protest and annual commemoration. The gay liberation movement had been born. Of course action for gay and lesbian liberation had taken place long before Stonewall. All of that groundwork was critical for what Stonewall was to become—a symbol of freedom, pride and self-determination. Each year at this time, communities around the world gather to celebrate Stonewall and to empower the work for the struggles at hand and those yet to come. And in those celebrations, we hear the language of God's freedom and blessing for all of creation.

The liberating Spirit that animated the Stonewall uprising has also impacted the church. We cannot underestimate or ignore the power of the legacies that we inherit as lesbians, gay men,



bisexual, transgendered (GLBT) people and straight allies in the church. We have received a sacred heritage. We have been passed a spirit not of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and a sound mind. It is a spirit of freedom that affirms our humanity and identity as children of God. What we have inherited is not a guarantee of success or safety. What we have inherited is much more unsettling. What we have inherited is a call to voice and visibility.

There are many organizing efforts in the church, including those led by Integrity and Beyond Inclusion, that are working hard with and in this spirit to challenge the church to move in ways that reflect God's transforming and inclusive love, through both equal rights and equal rites for all GLBT people. There are many individuals who speak up, stand firm and come out conscious of the risks that are still very much alive in the Churches and in society in general. We still risk losing our homes, jobs and children for who we love. We still risk losing our lives. And yet we are called again and again to our sacred task of witnessing to the spirit of life that God has given us. In this time of celebrating our GLBT legacies, may we see them as sacred. May we continue to move in the spirit of Stonewall, the spirit that calls us to be instruments of God's freedom and justice for all."

The Spirit is moving within us still, in 2013 the Marriage Equality Act was passed so Gay people can legally marry, and those saying the sky will fall, have yet again proven to be wrong. There is still much to do especially in our schools and those young and old people brought up to believe our love is somehow inferior. In many places in the world it is still illegal to be Gay and often it does not even have to be proven. May we remember and support those still struggling.



Great Spirit Prayer: (all together)

"Oh, Great Spirit, whose voice I hear in the wind,

Whose breath gives life to all the world.

Hear me; I need your strength and wisdom.

Let me walk in beauty, and make my eyes ever behold the red and purple sunset.

Make my hands respect the things you have made and my ears sharp to hear your voice

Make me wise so that I may understand the things you have taught my people.

Help me to remain calm and strong in the face of all that comes towards me.

Let me learn the lessons you have hidden in every leaf and rock.

Help me seek pure thoughts and act with the intention of helping others.

Help me find compassion without empathy overwhelming me.

I seek strength, not to be greater than my brother, but to fight my greatest enemy

Myself.

Make me always ready to come to you with clean hands and straight eyes.

So when life fades, as the fading sunset, my spirit may come to you without shame.

Departure:

Leader: As we depart from this place

of light,

love,

and warm hearts

may we be a light to others

may we treat all we meet with loving-kindness

may we warm others hearts with our care and commitment

to compassion, truth and justice

in all our dealings.

