

## LEARN FOR LIFE BLOG

# REFLECTIONS FROM OUR ANNUAL COMING OUT DAY SERVICE

*APTS Queer Alliance*

This year, the APTS Queer Alliance welcomed the community to our annual Coming Out Day service. Founded in 2011, the Queer Alliance celebrates the image of God in all of God's children, recognizing the divine creativity in every gender and sexual identity. Its mission is to create a welcoming and supportive space for LGBTQIA+ individuals and allies through fellowship, education, worship, advocacy, and activism.

Though our service is tied to National Coming Out Day, October 11, the day is less about "coming out" and more about celebrating spaces where it is safe to do so and committing ourselves to create more of them. Coming out is not accessible to all, nor is it required to claim a queer identity. Instead, it is about accepting and celebrating oneself within a beloved community.

The service opened with the hymn For Everyone Born, a reminder that all people are welcome at God's table, deserving of care, safety, and opportunity. The words call us to embrace diversity, live with fairness, and honor the worth of every person.



The service included the Passing of the Peace, a reading from Psalm 139 celebrating God's intimate knowledge and love of each person, and musical offerings including Good Day by Flamy Grant and I Shall Not Leave from By Your Side. These moments highlighted the joy and affirmation found in living authentically.

During the Prayers of Intercession, we lifted up the broader queer community, those still unsafe to come out, seminary students learning and unlearning, and anyone discerning their identity. We prayed for safety, love, and affirmation, and committed ourselves to creating spaces that celebrate and protect queer lives.

During the Confession and Pardon, we acknowledged the ways the church has historically failed queer people. We confessed the role of the church in perpetuating homophobia, transphobia, and bigotry, through exclusion, misrepresentation of Scripture, and the reinforcement of heteronormativity. We sought forgiveness and the courage to unlearn harmful patterns, affirming that through Jesus Christ, we are empowered to repair, rebuild, and create a church that honors queer life, fosters queer joy, and facilitates liberation.



The benediction reminded us that God is both genderless and genderful, reflected in all children, including transgender, non-binary, gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, polyamorous, and other queer identities. We prayed for a world in which everyone is safe and celebrated, and in which God's justice, peace, and liberation are fully realized.