October 15th, 2023

Reflections on Inclusivity

I always say that as a Christian I cannot find any passage in the Gospels in which Jesus condemned homosexuality. Troy Perry – founder of the Metropolitan Community Church

> Order of Worship (*Please rise in body and/or spirit)

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude Alle, Alleluia

Bruce Tippett

Candle Lighting

*Call to Worship

Leader: May the Rock of our lives be with you. **People: And also with you.** Leader: I appeal to you to offer your hearts to God. **People: We lift them to the One who heals their brokenness.** Leader: Sing your songs of praise to our God. **People: We join in choruses of joy and wonder.** Leader: Love all people as if they were our siblings, **People: for God seeks to weave us into one family.** Leader: Be patient, rejoice, and never stop praying. **People: Because we are God's people, called to lives which are different and which make a difference!**

***Hymn** We come to Celebrate

Call to Confession

Leader: God gifts us with God's open heart and listening ear. God invites us to confess our sin, and be vulnerable in truth-telling, trusting that God's purposes are to bless, not to harm. **Prayer of Confession (unison)**

It is never easy for us to confess but deep down inside, we know that graced, we have trouble being grace-full to others; forgiven, we are eager to judge and punish all who hurt us; freed, we find ways to put restrictions on people we fear. Forgive us, Servant God. You show mercy more often than we deserve; you pardon us more times than we can count. And why? Because we are the Lord's - siblings of Jesus Christ, who died and lived again, so we might abide also in new life. Amen.

Moment for Silent Reflection

Assurance of Pardon

Leader: Persistently, patiently, lovingly, God pours out grace and joy into our lives, healing our brokenness, forgiving our sin. Loved, we are sent to love; forgiven, we are freed to forgive; graced, we can offer our gifts to everyone we meet. Thanks be to God. Amen.

Prayer of Illumination

First Scripture Lesson:Psalm 147:1-5This is the Word of the Lord:Thanks be to God!

Special Music Walk Hand In Hand

Johnny Cowell

Children's Message Noisy Offering

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Prayers of the Church and The Lord's Prayer

Passing the Peace

***Hymn** God of Many Faces

Second Scripture Lesson Romans 8:38-39 This is the Word of the Lord. Thanks Be to God!

Sermon	The Rev. Dr. David Williams	
Offering Offertory *Doxology	Hold On to the Rock	arr Pepper Choplin
Prayer of Dedication		
*Hymn	All the Colors of the Rai	nbow
People: We wi Leader: We wi People: We wi world.	ill seek to invite others Il go now, as seeds of just ill seek to welcome all w	ele, so others might know God. into this community of grace. ice, so others might know Jesus. Tho have been rejected by the tope, so others might know the
People: We will seek to illuminate the shadows of brokenness with peace and life		

s with peace and life.

Postlude I Have Had Singing **Ron** Jeffers

We welcome The Rev. Dr. David Williams who will be preaching this morning. Dr. Williams is pastor of Christ the Liberator Church, Cranbury, NJ, and Executive Director of the NJ Gay Men's Chorus. A career physician, he has traveled the world doing medical mission work and advocacy for LGBTQ+ communities. Raised in the Christian faith, Dr. Williams pursued his faith into ministry as one of many life pursuits that keeps him very busy and on his toes!

We welcome



Worship Leaders

Pastor: Preaching: Director of Music Ministries: Music Ministry: Liturgist: Ushers:

Zoom Hosts:

Rev. Katja Gruening The Rev. Dr. David Williams Marcello Velame New Jersey Gay Men's Chorus Carol Streeper Sue Starke Cari Suarez John Palframan Jim Wright Rich Vodhanel

- We Come to Celebrate (See lyrics below - tune: St. Anne #687)

We come today to celebrate the life that Jesus gives, and welcome in God's loving grace that in the Spirit lives.

The Spirit sanctifies our lives and helps our darkest days; we hold each other close to You with voices joined in praise.

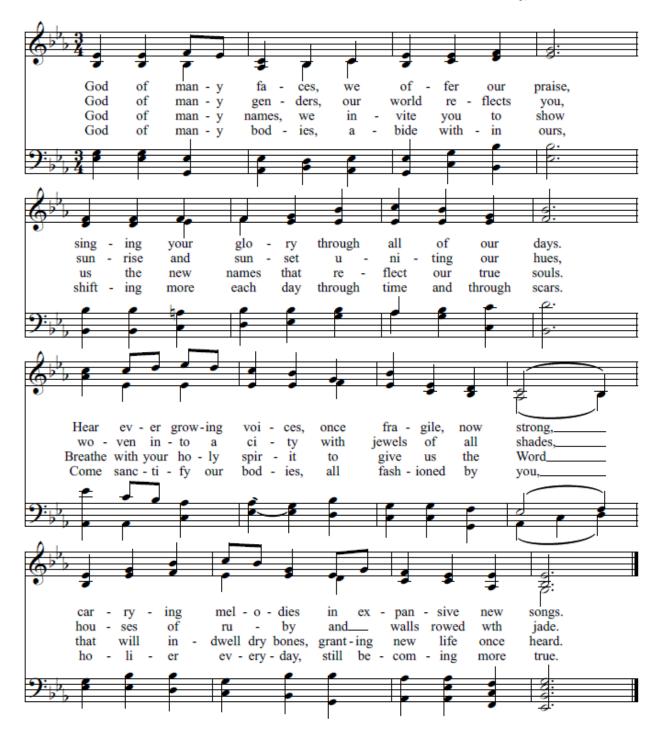
We celebrate diversity, as well as common ground, and will continue so to do while love and peace are found.

For Christ does not discriminate, but welcomes one and all; so we will seek to do the same, responding to God's call.

God of Many Faces

Amy Cerniglia

SLANE Irish Melody, harm. Jack Schrader



All the Colors of the Rainbow

Carl P. Daw

ABBOT'S LEIGH Cyril V. Taylor

