

Applewood United Church
An Affirming Community
Sunday, June 22, 2025
Celebrating Pride
(please stand in body or in spirit)*
Bold words are for all to share

Gathering Music: "Praise My Soul the King of Heaven"

Territorial Acknowledgment and Announcements

We understand that the land on which we live, work and worship is situated upon traditional territories of the Erie, Neutral, Huron - Wyandot, the Haudenosaunee and later the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. The territory is mutually covered by the "Dish with One Spoon" Wampum Belt agreement. In the spirit of reconciliation, we commit to building relationships with all created beings, those who were here before, those who have settled, and those who continue to settle on this land. We commit to partnering with our Indigenous neighbours in being stewards and caretakers of God's Creation. Today, this remains the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we seek to live as reconciled people through our respect for, and our learning and understanding of, our Indigenous siblings.

Centering Music: "Lord Prepare Me" MV 18

Call to Worship and Opening Prayer:

One: We gather in the presence of God,

All: broken and whole, seeking and finding.

One: We gather in the warmth of God's love,

All: all accepted, all celebrated, all known.

One: Together, we work to follow Jesus,

All: together, we share the journey of faith.

One: Together, we share breath in prayer and praise,

All: together, we worship our God of Love.

One: Let's pray together:

**All: Holy One, you are the Shaper of the Universe,
you are the Knowing One, the Source.**

**We bring our humble thanks that you continue
to love us, lead us, and know us.**

Remind us that you set no limits to that love,

no boundaries to belovedness.
Help us to recognize your diverse creativity
in the faces of everyone we meet,
everyone we might judge,
everyone that others might reject.
Teach us your inclusive love, God,
embed it in our hearts and minds.
We pray in the name of your loving,
knowing, accepting one – J1984esus Christ.
Amen

Opening Hymn: “Come In, Come In and Sit Down” VU 395 verses 1, 2, 4

Prayer for Reflection and Revelation: ‘A Prayer for Pride Month’
by *Jordan Sullivan*

One: Oh, Love that will not let us go...
Our hearts are filled and overflowing with joy, deep love, and gratitude.

Two: We are thankful, for the gifts of all Affirming Ministries and communities of faith who
open their churches, their homes and their hearts to Two-Spirit and LGBTQ+ people and
all their intersecting identities. for music, friendship, and for family.
We are thankful for the Love that will not let us go.

One: We are thankful, for Pride Marches and Pride Month, for all those who publicly,
intentionally, and explicitly affirm that 2S-LGBTQ+ people are children of God.

We are thankful most of all, for the blessing of a Love that is and always has been there
for us.

Two: The truth at the heart of our faith – that you are Love - echoes today in words and in
music, in friendships and family, in our hearts and minds, and continues to challenge us
to Love.

One: We pray for our hearts and minds to be open to our own homophobia, transphobia, and
biphobia, to be open to our own racism, sexism, ableism, sizeism, and all the ways we
fear those who are different from us.

Two: We pray to learn how to recognize the kinship between our souls and the souls of those who, to us, are strangers.
We pray that we will never cease in our journey to learn how to Love more radically.

One: We pray in the name of the Love that flips tables and cracks whips, the Love that heals those judged by religious leaders and powers, the Love who lives and loves among the marginalized and outcast.

Two: We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Musical reflection: "There is Room for All"

Scripture Readings:

Galatians 3:26-29 *The Inclusive Bible*

Luke 8:26-39 *The Inclusive Bible*

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

All: Thanks be to God.

Choir: "Love"

Reflection: Demons

Hymn: "The Dove Will Fly on Mended Wing"

Invitation to the Offering

Offering of Music: "Tender Shepherd, El Shaddai"

Hymn of Dedication: "What Can I Do?"

Offering Prayer (*together*)

All: God of persistent love, of healing and wholeness,
may what we share bring life to your church.
May what we bring reflect our gratitude,
may what we offer be blessed and blessing.
Amen

Prayers of the People *adapted from a prayer by M Jade Kaiser, enfleshed.com*

One: In the midst of all that keeps our spirits frantic, overwhelmed, or troubled, we pause, we breathe, we lift our hearts to you, God.

We pause and remember and give thanks for one another, celebrating that our lives are inherently bound together. We pause and give thanks for the unique gifts that our 2S LGBTQIA+ siblings bring to our lives.

We pause also to remember and give thanks for the basic gifts of water, of trees, of beauty, of the land we gather upon.

We pause to remember and give thanks for our neighbors – distant and near.

Two: And to the One who is Love, we bring the prayers of our community.

We pray...

for all the queer, trans, and intersex children and youth across the globe. For the ones who are struggling with feelings of isolation and shame. For those who have no safe place or people to retreat to. For those who must be teachers to the adults in their lives. For those who are unsafe in their communities.

We pray ...

for our elders whose labors have brought your love and justice into the world. We pray for the ones in marginalized communities who never tasted the freedom they fought for. We pray for those who teach and lead us, while still being open to learning themselves.

We pray ...

for allies and advocates who step up and step out, casting their lot with others in true solidarity. We pray for the ones forgotten and betrayed.

One: We pray for all those who hunger for justice and liberation today. For the ones who lay down their lives for their friends, for the ones whose lives have been lost. We pray for the ones who tell the truth, stand up for the truth, and lift up the truth, whatever the cost. For the ones who take risks, who dream, who feed and pray, who walk with others in respect and solidarity.

We pray for all who are suffering in the church and the world at the hands of white privilege and colonialism, homophobia, transphobia and racism. We pray for those imprisoned unfairly and unjustly. For those whose land has been taken. For the earth that groans beneath us. For those without food or housing. For those who have yet to repent.

Two: We pray in gratitude for all that nourishes and sustains us. For the gifts of beauty and friendship, shared meals, and art, and love. For laughter. For pleasure. For the friends, lovers, and comrades who lift our spirits, always by our side when the days are heavy. For the freedom we have in Christ. For the freedom we have to gather and to worship and to share our truths.

One: For your presence within and around us, in our highs and lows, our hope and our despair, God, we give you thanks. Hear our prayers and deepen our willingness to show up with and for one another, sharing in each other's burdens and working for one another's protection and care. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer (*a translation*) VU 916

Eternal Spirit, Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God, in whom is heaven:
The hallowing of your name echo through the universe!
The way of your justice be followed by the peoples of the world!
Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!
Your commonwealth of peace and freedom sustain our hope and come on earth.
With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love, now and for ever.
Amen

Closing Hymn: "Draw the Circle Wide" MV 145

Commissioning/Benediction

Sung Amen VU 974

Music for Scattering: "How Majestic is Your Name"