

2025 PRIDE MONTH DAILY DEVOTIONAL



# Sacred, Seen, and Called: ✨

*Living Our Truth, Embracing Our Light*

*30 Daily Reflections for Sacred  
Resistance and Radiant Joy*



A DEVOTIONAL FOR THE OPEN AND AFFIRMING MOVEMENT



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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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# Sacred, Seen, and Called: Living Our Truth, Embracing Our Light

## Daily Reflections for Sacred Resistance and Radiant Joy

by The Open and Affirming Coalition of the United Church of Christ

Written under the leadership of  
**Rev. Derek Terry, Acting Executive Director**

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## Dedication

For all the crucified peoples of the world—  
the LGBTQ+ community, the unhoused, the undocumented,  
the Black, Brown, and Indigenous peoples,  
the disabled and differently abled,  
the poor and the working poor,  
the incarcerated and formerly incarcerated,  
the seekers, the dreamers, the survivors,  
the migrants and the displaced,  
the youth cast out from homes,  
the elders whose wisdom the world too often overlooks,  
and all who have been silenced, forgotten, or pushed aside.

You are sacred.  
You are seen.  
You are called.  
And you are not alone.

# Welcome from Rev. Derek Terry

**Acting Executive Director, Open and Affirming Coalition of the United Church of Christ**

Dear Beloved,

Welcome to **Sacred, Seen, and Called: Living Our Truth, Embracing Our Light** — a 30-day Pride devotional for all who dare to believe that their existence is holy.

We live in a time when LGBTQ+ people, Black and Brown communities, Indigenous relatives, immigrants, poor and disabled siblings, and so many others are being pushed to the margins once again. Laws, pulpits, and policies seek to erase our dignity. But the truth is deeper than their fear: **we are sacred. We are seen. We are called.**

This devotional is an invitation to remember that truth every single day. It is an offering of hope, healing, and fierce joy — a reminder that your light was never meant to be hidden, and your life was never a mistake.

May these reflections strengthen your spirit. May they call you deeper into courage and compassion. And may they remind you that you are part of a long, unstoppable story of liberation — shining now and beyond Pride Month, because you can't stop a rainbow.

Walk boldly. Love fiercely. Shine brightly.  
You are sacred. You are seen. You are called.

Blessings on the journey,

**Rev. Derek Terry**

Acting Executive Director

Open and Affirming Coalition of the United Church of Christ

**Introduction:**

In a world that often seeks to erase, diminish, or silence LGBTQ+ lives—especially those of us living at the intersections of race, poverty, immigration status, gender identity, and other margins—we affirm this sacred truth: we are seen, we are called, and we are shining. This 30-day devotional, *Sacred, Seen, and Called: Living Our Truth, Embracing Our Light*, draws inspiration from Philippians 2:15, which reminds us that we are meant to "shine among them like stars in the sky." Each reflection invites us to remember that our existence, our resilience, and our joy are divine. Whether facing rejection, injustice, or weariness, we turn again toward the God who calls us beloved. Together, we step into the fullness of our light—not alone, but arm in arm, as a sacred constellation proclaiming hope in every corner of the sky.

## 1. Called by Name

*But now thus says the Lord,  
he who created you, O Jacob,  
he who formed you, O Israel:  
Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;  
I have called you by name; you are mine. Isaiah 43:1*

Before any law was written, before any category was created, before any slur was spoken, God called us by name. Sacred. Beloved. Whole. Formed by divine hands and claimed by divine love, our worth was settled long before society ever tried to define or diminish us.

Consider those of us who have been misnamed by systems of power—those of us whose bodies, identities, and lives have been made the subject of debate or rejection. Even so, the Voice that matters most has already spoken: "You are mine."

We are not waiting for validation from governments, pulpits, or public opinion. Our belonging is not up for negotiation. The One who created the universe has already affirmed the sacredness of our existence, calling each of us—queer, trans, nonbinary, undocumented, Black, Indigenous, disabled, poor—into being with intention and joy.

"Do not fear," God says. Even in a world that refuses to recognize us, we can stand firmly in the truth that we are already seen, already named, already loved. Today, may we listen again for that first, eternal call—the one that spoke our names into the stars—and walk boldly in the sacred light we carry.

### **Prayer:**

God who knows us by name, help us to hear Your voice above all others and to walk in the truth of who You have created us to be. Amen.

## 2. Light in the Darkness

*The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it. John 1:5*

From the beginning, God's light has moved through the world—steady, persistent, unconquerable. No system, no violence, no injustice has ever succeeded in extinguishing it. The light of truth and justice continues to shine among us, even in a world intent on denying it.

Consider those of us whose lives bear the marks of systemic violence: those of us who are Black and queer, trans and undocumented, Indigenous and displaced. Our very existence testifies to a light that refuses to be overcome. We are not evidence of defeat—we are the living proof of survival, beauty, and sacred brilliance.

The darkness around us is real. It shows up in legislation, in discrimination, in daily moments of rejection and fear. Yet John's Gospel reminds us: the darkness did not, and will not, overcome the light. God's truth is not fragile. God's justice is not at the mercy of the powers of this world.

Today, may we remember that we are part of a light that stretches across generations—a light that calls us to resist, to hope, and to shine. And may we trust that even when the night feels heavy, we are not alone: the light shines still.

### **Prayer:**

Light of the World, strengthen our spirits when shadows fall and help us to shine with courage and love. Amen.

### 3. Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

*I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well. Psalm 139:14*

Each of us, in all our complexity, bears the imprint of divine wonder. Our bodies, our identities, our stories—all reflect the beauty and imagination of the Creator. Before a society divided us into "acceptable" and "unacceptable," before systems told us whose lives were worthy of dignity, God declared us wonderfully made.

Consider those of us living at the intersections of race, gender, sexuality, poverty, and migration. Every curve, every scar, every facet of our existence is woven with holy intention. Our worth does not hinge on passing laws, institutional acceptance, or societal approval. It is rooted in the One who crafted us with awe and delight.

To be fearfully and wonderfully made is to carry within us a sacred mystery that no hatred or injustice can erase. Our light, our love, our survival are part of the marvelous works the psalmist proclaims.

Today, may we resist every voice that tries to diminish or distort who we are. May we trust in the deeper truth that we are not broken, not mistaken, not unwanted. We are known. We are cherished. We are wonderfully made—and we have always been enough in the eyes of God.

**Prayer:**

Creator of Wonders, remind us daily that we are Your marvelous work, fearfully and wonderfully made for love and joy. Amen.

## 4. Bearing God's Image

*So God created humans in God's image, in the image of God, God created them. Genesis 1:27*

From the very beginning, the breath of the Holy has moved through every body, every story, every life. Created in the image of God, each of us reflects something sacred—something beautiful, complex, and infinitely worthy. No law, no prejudice, no system of exclusion can erase the imprint of divine love that shapes our existence.

Consider the ways the world has tried to divide, diminish, or deny that image. Across lines of race, gender, ability, class, nationality, and identity, human institutions have failed to honor the sacredness that God has already declared. And still, the truth remains: we are fearfully made, each bearing a reflection of the Divine.

To live authentically is to honor that image. To affirm the sacred worth of our own lives—and the lives of others—is to participate in the ongoing work of love and justice. We are not distorted reflections; we are radiant echoes of the Holy, woven into the great mosaic of creation.

Today, may we walk with dignity and boldness, knowing we embody God's image in all its diversity and brilliance. Let our living testify to the beauty that has been there from the very beginning.

### **Prayer:**

Holy Creator, help us to see Your reflection in ourselves and in one another, and to honor the sacred image we all carry. Amen.

## 5. Stars in a Violent Sky

*...you shine like stars in the world, Philippians 2:15b*

Every child carries a sacred light—a brilliance uniquely their own. In a world too often marked by violence, hatred, and exclusion, LGBTQ+ children—and especially those living at the intersections of multiple identities—shine with a beauty that must be nurtured, protected, and celebrated.

Consider the harm done when the light of young lives is dimmed by rejection, bullying, or institutional violence. Too often, society teaches children that their authenticity is dangerous, that their bodies and dreams must be hidden or denied. But the Holy One declares that every child—every human—shines like a star: precious, powerful, and woven into the fabric of creation.

Our call is clear: to build communities where every person is safe to be fully themselves, where their radiance is honored, not extinguished. We are called to defend one another's joy, to fight for each other's dignity, and to speak blessing over the lives of one another.

Today, may we remember that every LGBTQ+ child, every child living at the intersections of injustice, and every person—each a beloved child of God—deserves not only to survive, but to thrive. May we commit to building a world where each one's light is free to blaze across the sky.

### **Prayer:**

*Holy One, make us fierce protectors and tender encouragers of every child and every human whose light dares to shine. Amen.*

## 6. A New Creation

*So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! 2 Corinthians 5:17*

Transformation is at the heart of our faith—and our lives. In a world that tries to label us as broken, wrong, or unworthy, the Spirit of God declares something radically different: we are made new. Not in spite of who we are, but because of the holy truth of who we are.

Consider the lives that have been dismissed or condemned by churches, families, and institutions for being queer, trans, nonbinary, disabled, undocumented, or otherwise told they don't belong. God sees us differently. God sees *belovedness*. Possibility. Glory. The old stories of shame and exclusion do not define us. In Christ, those stories are shattered—and a new story begins.

This promise isn't about erasing who we've been. It's about reclaiming our full selves. It's about becoming who we were always meant to be: free, whole, joyful, and fully alive. Our gender, our sexuality, our expression, our body—none of it is a mistake. All of it is part of the new creation that rises from courage, from truth, from love.

Today, may we trust that the Spirit is still creating. Still transforming. Still calling us into radiant becoming. We are not bound by the limits others try to place on us. In Christ, we are a new creation—and we are beautifully becoming.

### **Prayer:**

God of transformation, free us from the stories that confine us. Remind us that we are made new in Your love, and help us to step boldly into the truth of who we are. Amen.

## 7. When the World Rejected You

*Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you.*  
*Luke 6:22*

Rejection has always been part of the struggle for freedom. Today, LGBTQ+ people—and especially those of us living at the intersections of other identities on the margins—face renewed attacks. Around the world, hard-won rights are under siege. Laws are being passed to erase us from public life, to silence education about diversity, and to criminalize difference.

These are not new hatreds. They are reactions to our visibility, our truth, our refusal to disappear. They are the backlash of systems desperate to reassert control when liberation has already broken into the world. They are the violence of those who fear what love and justice make possible.

Some of us know these wounds intimately: being cast out by religious communities, betrayed by families, targeted by violence, struggling with shame or survival. And yet, Jesus' words remain: **Blessed are you.** Blessed when you are hated, excluded, reviled—because your light is too strong to be ignored.

Today, may we refuse to internalize the world's rejection. We are not the problem—we are the blessing. And we are never alone: new communities rise up around us, bearing witness that love always outlives hate.

### **Prayer:**

God who blesses those the world rejects, fortify us with courage, heal every wound, and strengthen the communities that choose love over fear. Amen.

## 8. Dancing in the Wilderness

*Then the prophet Miriam, Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with tambourines and with dancing. And Miriam sang to them: "Sing to the Lord, for the Lord has triumphed gloriously; horse and rider the Lord has thrown into the sea."  
Exodus 15:20–21*

Before the journey was complete, before the promised land was reached, Miriam led a dance of liberation. In the dust of survival, with the wilderness still ahead, the people chose to celebrate. They praised God not when everything was easy, but while they still carried the memory of captivity on their skin.

We, too, know what it means to dance before the work is finished. LGBTQ+ communities—especially those of us living at intersections of injustice—have carried tambourines into places of violence, rejection, and exclusion. We have dared to sing in a world that has tried to silence us. We have celebrated Pride, mourned at vigils, danced at weddings, welcomed babies into our communities, and blessed our chosen families—all while the wilderness still surrounded us.

Our joy is not denial; it is defiance. It is a living testimony that oppression does not get the final word. Like Miriam and her companions, we carry the sacred rhythm of survival in our bodies. We dance because we are still here. We dance because God has been faithful—and because hope moves us forward.

Today, may we lift up songs and dances of liberation, even when the way ahead is uncertain. Our joy is holy, and our survival is a triumph worth celebrating.

### **Prayer:**

God of Freedom, teach us to sing and dance even in the wilderness, trusting that Your liberating love is leading us onward. Amen.

## 9. Shelter for the Stranger

*for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink,  
I was a stranger and you welcomed me, Matthew 25:35*

The measure of a community's faithfulness is not found in its power or prestige, but in how it treats the stranger—the one who arrives hungry, thirsty, unknown. In a world obsessed with walls, borders, and exclusion, Jesus reminds us that true love is found in welcome.

Today, countless people on the margins face rejection not only from families and churches, but also from countries and institutions. Those seeking asylum because of their identities are turned away. Unhoused youth, disproportionately queer and trans, wander unfamiliar streets looking for safety. Displaced people, those surviving poverty, war, and violence, are often met with closed doors and hardened hearts.

Hospitality is more than kindness; it is resistance. It declares that no one is disposable. It builds homes where rejection once reigned. It creates spaces where sacred worth is recognized without question. Welcoming the stranger, especially those pushed furthest to the margins, draws us nearer to the heart of God.

Today, may we be the ones who open the door, who extend the table, who make space. And when we are the stranger in need, may we find that God has already prepared a place of shelter through the hands of those who choose love over fear.

### **Prayer:**

God of Welcome, make our hearts wide enough to shelter every stranger, and remind us that in offering refuge, we find You. Amen.

## 10. God's Justice Rolls On

*But let justice roll down like water and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. Amos 5:24*

The world remains a hard and violent place for many of God's beloved. It is still dangerous to be Black, Brown, or Indigenous. It is dangerous to be queer or trans, to be disabled or neurodivergent, to live without wealth or shelter.

It is dangerous to navigate life with a criminal record in a society that offers no real path to restoration. It is dangerous to need care and be met with punishment. Families are torn apart by incarceration, by borders, by systemic neglect. Indigenous communities are displaced and erased. People with disabilities are denied access and autonomy. Neurodivergent people are forced to mask or disappear. And those living at the intersections of these identities carry the heaviest burdens of all.

And yet, God speaks: justice is not a dream deferred or a slogan for convenience. It is a river—alive, holy, and unstoppable. No prison wall, no policy of exclusion, no ableist system, no settler logic, no transphobic law can hold back the flood forever.

When we march, when we build accessible spaces, when we demand decarceration, when we honor neurodiversity, when we listen to Indigenous voices, when we make room for every kind of body and mind—we step into the current of God's justice, which has always been flowing.

Today, may we remember: justice is not ours to own. It is ours to join. The river still moves. And we are called to move with it—until every story is heard, every soul is free, and every life is treated as sacred.

### **Prayer:**

God of Righteous Waters, let justice surge through our hands and hearts until every life—no matter its body, history, identity, or need—is honored with dignity, care, and joy. Amen

## 11. Holding Both Grief and Glory

*Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning. Psalm 30:5b*

The grief of this world is real—but so is the joy we dare to claim. It is wrong that Black and Brown bodies are targeted. It is wrong that LGBTQ+ youth are bullied in schools, used as political weapons, and told to erase or conform to survive. It is wrong that unhoused neighbors are dehumanized, that disabled and neurodivergent people are excluded, and that those at the margins are punished instead of protected.

And still—joy rises.

Those of us living with layered struggles have learned to create life in the cracks. We dance in defiance. We build art out of anguish and community out of chaos. We laugh loudly, love boldly, and celebrate truthfully—not because oppression has broken us, but because it has *not*.

Joy is not a distraction from the work of justice—it is part of it. It reminds us who we are and what we deserve. It nourishes us when the fight is long. It disrupts despair and dares us to believe in something better. In our songs, our worship, our poetry, our gathering, our chosen families—we find a holiness that no system can erase.

We are not waiting for liberation to begin before we celebrate. We celebrate *because* we believe liberation is possible.

### **Prayer:**

God of Joy and Justice, thank you for the gift of laughter, love, and resistance. Let our joy be deep, defiant, and contagious—until every life can dance in freedom. Amen.

## 12. Beloved from the Beginning

*“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.” Jeremiah 1:5*

Long before the world tried to name us, confine us, or erase us, God knew us. Long before we were celebrated—or rejected—God called us beloved. Divine love was never conditional. It was not based on appearance, success, behavior, or conformity. It was spoken over our lives from the very beginning.

Yet for many of us, that *belovedness* has been hidden under layers of harm. Some of us were raised in families or faith communities that treated us as less than. Some of us learned to believe we were unworthy of love. Some of us struggled to recognize the image of God within our own reflection.

Today, let us remember: our worth was never up for debate. Our *belovedness* is older than any wound. And we are called not only to live into that truth ourselves, but to extend it to others—to the queer youth searching for a place to belong, to the elder who carries silent scars, to the trans migrant building a new life, to anyone who has been told they are anything less than holy.

Our lives, our love, and our communities can become bridges back to the God who has always been affirming, always been loving, always been calling each of us by name.

### **Prayer:**

God who knew and loved us before we even knew ourselves, help us to claim our *belovedness* and to embody that love for all who are still searching. Amen.

### 13. Speaking Sacred Truth

*but speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into God who is the head, into Christ, Ephesians 4:15*

Speaking sacred truth is not only about personal honesty; it is about public witness. It is about confronting the powers that silence, exclude, and destroy. It is about naming injustice even when it is costly, and refusing to be silent in the face of the hate and fear that define so much of this time.

Those of us who have been pushed to the fringes of society know the risk of speaking the truth. We know the danger of standing in streets, courtrooms, pulpits, legislatures, and public squares, demanding dignity and justice. We know what it costs to protest, to resist, to lift our voices in places designed to erase us.

Speaking truth in love does not mean speaking softly. It means speaking boldly, letting love fuel our courage to reject racism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, economic injustice, xenophobia, and every system that denies the sacred worth of God's people. Speaking sacred truth is how we embody the love of Christ in a world that would rather we stay silent.

Today, may we refuse complicity with injustice. We refuse to obey in advance. May we speak sacred truth in love and in power, until every wall of oppression crumbles before the relentless justice of God.

**Prayer:**

God of Liberation, give us voices strong enough to challenge hatred, hands brave enough to build justice, and hearts fierce enough to love without fear. Amen.

## 14. Healing the Brokenhearted

*God heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. Psalm 147:3*

The world wounds deeply. It wounds through exclusion, hatred, betrayal, violence, and silence. It wounds when families turn away, when churches shut folk out, when policies are written to erase lives rather than protect them. Some wounds are fresh; others are carried silently for years.

Those of us who live at the margins—those who have been pushed aside, overlooked, or attacked—know what it is to carry heartbreak. It is not weakness to be wounded; it is the cost of living authentically in a world still steeped in fear.

Yet the Holy does not abandon the brokenhearted. God does not ask us to pretend our wounds are not real. God meets us exactly where the pain lives and begins the slow, holy work of binding, tending, and healing. Healing does not erase what was done—but it stitches hope into the places ripped open by harm. It reminds us that wholeness is still possible, even after betrayal, even after loss.

Today, may we honor our wounds without shame. May we reach out to one another with gentleness. And may we trust that the God who binds up the brokenhearted is still at work, still holding us, still bringing us back to life.

### **Prayer:**

Tender Healer, bind our wounds with Your mercy, and help us trust in the slow, sacred work of healing. Amen.

## 15. Choosing Life

*I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life so that you and your descendants may live, Deuteronomy 30:19*

For many of us, choosing life is not abstract—it is urgent. It is not theoretical—it is terrifying. Some of us have stared down the fear of death, not as an idea, but as a presence: in the threats we've received, the silence we've endured, the risks we carry just by living honestly. The fear is real. And yet, again and again, we choose life.

Choosing life does not mean denying grief or pretending all is well. It means holding our fear in one hand and still reaching forward with the other. It means saying: *I will not disappear. I will not fold in on myself. I will live, and I will live as me.*

To choose life is to believe, fiercely, that joy is possible. That love is worth it. That truth is holy. That presence—our real, whole, unapologetic presence—is an offering the world cannot take away.

Some of us were taught that survival was defiance, that hope was naive. But today we remember: life is sacred. Our lives are sacred. And we are invited not just to endure, but to live fully, freely, and abundantly. Not someday—*now*.

Today, may we choose life with trembling hands and open hearts, knowing that our living is already a blessing for those who will follow.

### **Prayer:**

Holy One, when fear grips us, help us choose life anyway. Breathe courage into our lungs and remind us that our living is sacred. Amen.

## 16. Hidden No More

*“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. People do not light a lamp and put it under the bushel basket; rather, they put it on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” Matthew 5:14–16*

There is nothing shameful about our light. There is nothing broken about our sacred brilliance. We were never meant to hide. God crafted each life to shine—not in arrogance, but in truth; not in dominance, but in love. Our light is a testimony to the goodness of creation itself.

And yet the world tries to cover our light. Anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric insists that Pride is shameful, that queer and trans lives should be hidden, silenced, erased. We reject that lie. We refuse the bushel basket of fear, shame, and invisibility. Pride is not arrogance—it is testimony. It is a celebration of survival, of sacred worth, of love that refuses to be extinguished.

When we shine—when we live openly, love boldly, create freely, organize fiercely—we glorify the Holy One who set light within us from the beginning. Our existence is a good work. Our joy is a good work. Our refusal to disappear is a good work. We are called not only to bear the light but to lift it high for all to see.

Today, may we remember: we are sacred. We are seen. We are called to shine without apology, lighting the way for a world still in desperate need of hope.

### **Prayer:**

God of Light, free us from every bushel basket of shame, and let our lives shine boldly with Your sacred love. Amen.

## 17. Bound Together in Love

*Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.  
Colossians 3:14*

We already have the love we need. It was never withheld by God. It was never dependent on human approval. Love has been stitched into our bones from the beginning—a sacred inheritance no hatred can undo.

In a world determined to divide, exclude, and isolate, we are called to live a different story. Love binds us together. Not sameness. Not erasure of difference. Love. A love that sees every body, every story, every intersection of identity as holy ground. A love that knows no borders, no conditions, no hierarchies.

Finding and building community is sacred work. It is not simply about finding comfort; it is about creating spaces where real love—bold, tender, healing, fierce—can take root and flourish. It is about choosing to honor one another across differences of race, gender identity, ability, class, language, and experience. It is about binding ourselves together in the love that refuses to let anyone be discarded.

Today, may we clothe ourselves with this sacred love. May we build communities wide enough for every soul. And may we remember that in a fragmented world, love is still the strongest force pulling us toward one another—and toward God's own heart.

### **Prayer:**

God of Love, clothe us with Your tenderness and courage, and teach us to build communities where every life is honored and every heart can find belonging. Amen.

## 18. No Longer Strangers

*So then, you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God. Ephesians 2:19*

There are places that treated us like strangers. Communities that locked their doors. Systems that told us we did not belong. Churches that whispered “love” but practiced exclusion. Families that broke apart when we spoke the truth of who we are.

But those voices do not have the final say. We were never strangers in the eyes of God. We were never aliens to sacred love. From the beginning, we have been full citizens, full members of the household of God. Our belonging is not conditional. It is not fragile. It does not disappear when the world turns cold.

Today, when borders are built against bodies, when pulpits preach against love, when laws are crafted to erase identities, we remember: no human system can undo what God has already declared. We are not outsiders to grace. We are not visitors to hope. We are home.

May we find strength in that truth. And may we be builders of communities where no one is treated like a stranger—where every life is embraced as kin, every heart welcomed as sacred.

### **Prayer:**

God of Belonging, remind us that we are already at home in Your love, and help us to welcome others with the same fierce grace You offer us. Amen.

## 19. Anointed for Such a Time

*For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. Who knows? Perhaps you have come to royal dignity for just such a time as this. Esther 4:14*

The world is working overtime to silence us. Laws crafted to erase our identities. Pulpits filled with fear. Policies built to push us back into shadows. Some people work so hard to diminish LGBTQ+ people, Black and Brown communities, immigrants, and all those at the margins—because deep down, they recognize the brilliance they cannot control. They see the anointing they cannot replicate. They fear the power of lives fully and unapologetically lived.

But God's calling cannot be legislated away. God's anointing cannot be erased. We are not accidents or afterthoughts. We were made for this season. We were called for this time—not because the world made it easy, but because God knew our courage, our brilliance, our tenderness would be needed.

The old systems—of racism, colonialism, homophobia, transphobia, greed, and fear—will die because they must. Something sacred is rising. And we are part of it. We are not here by mistake. We are here by divine design.

Today, may we walk boldly in our anointing. May we refuse silence and fear. And may we trust that we have been placed here—at this moment, with these voices, with these dreams—for just such a time as this.

### **Prayer:**

God of Courage and Calling, strengthen us to live into the anointing You have placed upon us, and to rise with love and power for such a time as this. Amen.

## 20. Rivers in the Desert

*I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth; do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. Isaiah 43:19*

Hope does not wait for permission. Hope rises even in the places meant to bury it. Hope breaks open the hard ground and refuses to be stopped.

In a world that has tried to erase Black, Brown, Indigenous, LGBTQ+, and other diverse and ostracized communities, something sacred is springing forth. It cannot be legislated away. It cannot be buried under fear. It cannot be silenced by hate. Like rivers carving through the desert, like rainbows slicing through heavy clouds, new life is breaking open where the world only expected dryness and death.

We are the proof. Our survival, our joy, our creativity, our resilience are rivers running through deserts of injustice. Our movements, our art, our voices, our love are rainbows breaking into the dull and the gray, refusing to be ignored.

The new thing God is doing is not hidden. It is here—in us, around us, among us. It is messy and beautiful, tender and fierce. It is unstoppable.

Today, may we open our eyes to the rivers already running beneath our feet, the rainbows already forming in our skies. The wilderness will not have the final word. Life and hope will.

### **Prayer:**

God of New Beginnings, open our hearts to perceive the new thing You are doing, and help us to trust in the rivers of hope that flow even through deserts. Amen.

## 21. God's Workmanship

*For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we may walk in them. Ephesians 2:10*

We are not accidents. We are not mistakes. Every life, every body, every story has been crafted with sacred intention. Long before the world tried to measure worth through power, wealth, or conformity, God shaped us for good works—for beauty, for justice, for love.

We were created not for shame, but for liberation. Not for erasure, but for flourishing. God's artistry is wide enough to hold every shade of humanity, every song of survival, every act of resistance born out of hope. We are not here by coincidence; we are here because Love called us into being and prepared a way for us to walk in freedom.

Even when the world tries to diminish our light or deny our sacred worth, the truth remains: we are handcrafted by the Divine for this moment. Our creativity, our resilience, our dreams are not distractions—they are the work God planted within us from the very beginning.

Today, may we walk boldly in the truth that we are fearfully and wonderfully made, and that the good work we are called to do is already rising within us.

### **Prayer:**

Holy Creator, remind us daily that we are Your beautiful workmanship, called into being for good works of love and liberation. Amen.

## 22. Liberation is Holy

*“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because God has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. God has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed.” Luke 4:18*

Liberation is not an afterthought in the heart of God. It is not a side project. It is the very center of the Gospel. When Jesus stood in the synagogue and declared these words, he made clear that the work of love is the work of liberation: setting free those bound by systems of injustice, oppression, and despair.

This good news is for the poor. For the captives. For those whose sight has been stripped away by lies and violence. For the oppressed in every generation. It is for Black and Brown communities who continue to bear the scars of systemic racism. It is for LGBTQ+ people pushed to the margins of faith and society. It is for Indigenous communities defending their land and dignity. It is for immigrants and refugees seeking shelter. It is for disabled bodies still fighting for full inclusion. It is for all those crushed beneath systems that deny their sacred worth.

We are not called to be passive observers. *We are anointed*, just as Christ was anointed, to carry good news in our hands and feet, in our voices and in our votes, in our organizing and in our prayers.

Today, may we refuse to separate the love of God from the liberation of God's people. Love demands action. Justice is love lived out loud.

### **Prayer:**

God of the Oppressed, anoint us with Your Spirit of justice and set us boldly to the work of liberation for all Your beloved people. Amen.

## 23. Rest for the Weary

*“Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” Matthew 11:28–30*

Too often, those who carry the heaviest burdens are accused of doing the least. Marginalized people—those surviving racism, poverty, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, displacement—are blamed for their own suffering. Yet behind every survival story is endless labor: invisible, uncelebrated, relentless work just to live, to protect family, to organize for justice, to breathe freely.

The world demands more and more from those it gives the least. But God’s voice breaks through the noise: Come to me, you who are weary. I will give you rest. Rest is not a luxury. Self-care is not selfish. They are sacred necessities, especially for those who have been expected to pour out everything without replenishment.

Taking on the yoke of Christ is not about picking up more burdens—it is about exchanging the crushing demands of the world for the gentleness of grace. It is about remembering that our worth is not tied to how hard we work or how much we suffer. It is about reclaiming space for joy, for healing, for peace.

Today, may we honor rest as a holy practice. May we embrace self-care not with guilt, but with gratitude. May we remember that tending to our bodies, minds, and spirits is a radical act of love—and that rest is part of how we shine.

### **Prayer:**

Tender Christ, teach us to rest without shame, to care for ourselves with holy love, and to find peace in the gentleness of Your heart. Amen.

## 24. Made Strong in Weakness

*but God said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." So I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. 2 Corinthians 12:9*

The world misunderstands weakness. It calls vulnerability a flaw. It calls tenderness a failure. It calls survival without domination a defeat. But the Gospel tells another story: God's power shows up precisely where the world sees only fragility. Grace is not poured out on those who pretend invincibility—it is poured out on those who have endured, who have loved, who have remained human even under inhuman systems.

The "weakness" the world despises is the sacred strength of those who have refused to bow to violence, to greed, to hatred. It is the stubborn courage of those who have survived racism, homophobia, poverty, ableism, displacement, erasure. It is not weakness in the way the world uses the word. It is the strength of standing up after being knocked down. It is the power of refusing to lose our tenderness even when systems of privilege and power have tried to crush it out of us.

God's power does not show up through dominance. It shows up through survival, through compassion, through authenticity. It lives in those who continue to choose love in a world that rewards cruelty.

Today, may we boast gladly of the strength it takes to stay tender, to stay true, to stay human. God's power is dwelling in us still.

### **Prayer:**

God of Grace, teach us to honor the strength found in vulnerability, and help us to trust that Your power shines brightest through our survival and truth. Amen.

## 25. Rooted and Grounded in Love

*and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. Ephesians 3:17*

Fear cannot be the soil where we grow. Shame cannot be the foundation that holds us steady. We were never meant to be rooted in rejection, in judgment, in hatred disguised as holiness. From the beginning, our roots were planted in love—the deep, enduring love of God that calls us sacred, sees us fully, and sends us forth with purpose.

The world tries to convince us that worth must be earned, that belonging must be negotiated, that dignity is conditional. But God's love dismantles all of that. Love—not fear—is the ground beneath our feet. Love—not shame—is what nourishes our souls. We are not rooted in human approval; we are rooted in the divine.

Being sacred means we carry the imprint of love at our very core. Being seen means we are fully known and fully embraced. Being called means our lives have holy purpose—woven into God's dreams for justice, liberation, and flourishing.

Today, may we sink deeper into the soil of love. May we let go of the lies that tried to choke our growth. May we rise rooted, steady, and unshakable, grounded in the love that has held us all along.

### **Prayer:**

God of Deep Roots, plant us firmly in Your love, and let that love be the foundation that steadies and strengthens us for the work ahead. Amen.

## 26. Holy Joy Breaks Forth

*For you shall go out in joy and be led back in peace; the mountains and the hills before you shall burst into song, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Isaiah 55:12*

Joy is not a denial of grief. It is not forgetting the struggle or pretending the pain never existed. Joy is what rises after the weeping. Joy is what bursts forth when survival turns into flourishing. Joy is what the world cannot steal, no matter how deep the wounds or how long the nights.

Those who have lived at the margins—those who have survived rejection, injustice, erasure—know that real joy is a sacred force. It is a rebellion against despair. It is a testimony that love and life still grow where the world expected only barrenness.

When we dance, when we laugh, when we celebrate who we are without apology, we are joining the mountains and the trees in their holy song. We are echoing the rhythm of God's liberation moving through the earth. We are declaring that we are sacred, we are seen, we are called—and we are still here.

Today, may we claim joy as a holy birthright. May we trust that even after deep struggle, joy will break forth like rivers through the desert, and all creation will clap along with us.

### **Prayer:**

God of Joy, teach us to trust the holy power of joy rising within us, and let it lead us forward with hope and fierce celebration. Amen.

## 27. Speaking the Language of Hope

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13*

Hope is not wishful thinking. It is not a fragile dream that shatters at the first sign of struggle. Hope is a language—a way of speaking, of living, of building—that refuses to be silenced even when the world tries to drown it out.

Hope is spoken every time we show up for one another. Every time we create art that tells a truer story. Every time we refuse to accept injustice as inevitable. Hope is spoken when we dare to envision a world where every person—every LGBTQ+ body, every Black and Brown child, every refugee, every survivor—thrives in freedom and joy.

The God of hope fills us not so we can sit quietly in our comfort, but so that we may abound—overflowing, pouring out a new vision, sowing seeds of love where the ground has been hard and barren. Speaking hope is an act of sacred resistance. It is how we name the future God is already shaping among us.

Today, may we speak hope fluently, boldly, tenderly—believing that what we speak and what we build will echo far beyond what we can see.

### **Prayer:**

God of Hope, fill our hearts until they overflow with the language of joy, justice, and new beginnings. Amen.

## 28. Set Free to Love Boldly

*“Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaining. Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.” 1 Peter 4:8–10*

Freedom is not about escape or isolation. It is not the absence of obligation—it is the presence of purpose. The kind of freedom God calls us into is a freedom shaped by love: the freedom to show up, to care deeply, to build together, to serve boldly.

We are not set free just to survive on our own. We are set free to co-create spaces where others can thrive. We are free to dismantle what harms, to nurture what heals, to use our gifts in service of something greater than ourselves.

Beloved community is not accidental. It is born from daily choices: to open our doors, to share what we have, to stay tender, to speak up, to sacrifice comfort for connection. This is the kind of love that covers wounds, builds bridges, and points us toward justice.

Today, may we remember that freedom is most sacred when it leads us to deeper love, wider welcome, and collective joy.

### **Prayer:**

God of Love and Liberation, help us use our freedom not for isolation or safety alone, but for building a world where all can live, give, and belong. Amen.

## 29. Courage to Keep Going

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God. Hebrews 12:1–2*

We are not running this race alone. We are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses—those who have gone before us, who refused to give up even when the world tried to break them. Their courage echoes in our bones. Their prayers carry us forward. Their dreams still call us onward.

The race is not easy. Systems of oppression throw up barriers. Shame tries to weigh us down. Fear whispers at every turn. But we are called to lay aside every weight that keeps us small, every lie that tells us we are anything less than sacred. We are called to run—not perfectly, but faithfully—with our eyes fixed on the One who showed us that joy and liberation are worth every struggle.

The courage to keep going is not about running alone. It is about running together, lifting one another up, leaning on the saints and ancestors who cheer us on, trusting that our perseverance is holy work.

Today, may we find courage in the cloud of witnesses. May we run with love burning in our hearts. And may we trust that the race we run is sacred, and the journey itself is a testament to hope.

### **Prayer:**

God of Endurance, strengthen our spirits to run with courage, surrounded by the love of all who have gone before and all who walk with us now. Amen.

### 30. Shine Like Stars

*...you shine like stars in the world. Philippians 2:15b*

After all the grief, after all the struggle, after all the healing and the building and the daring to hope again—we shine. Not because the world made it easy. Not because everything is perfect. But because the light planted in us by the Holy refuses to be extinguished.

We shine because we are sacred. We shine because we are seen. We shine because we are called. Every act of love, every moment of truth-telling, every step of resilience sends light rippling into a world desperate for hope.

Like stars scattered across the night sky, we are reminders that even when the world feels heavy and the night feels endless, there is beauty, there is direction, there is light. We are not accidents. We are part of a constellation woven by grace—radiant, enduring, alive.

Shine now and beyond Pride Month. You can't stop a rainbow. The brilliance God planted within us is not seasonal, and it will not be silenced.

Today, may we claim our place in the sky. May we shine with boldness, tenderness, and fierce joy. And may we remember always: the world cannot silence what God has called to shine.

**Prayer:**

God of Light, help us to shine with courage and love, bearing witness to the sacred beauty You have planted within us. Amen.

# Closing Blessing

May you walk forward rooted in the truth  
that you are sacred, seen, and called.

May the love that shaped you  
be the ground beneath your feet  
and the light ahead of you.

When the world tries to silence your song,  
may you sing louder.  
When fear tries to dim your flame,  
may you burn brighter.

You were not made to hide.  
You were not made to shrink.  
You were made to shine—  
now and beyond Pride Month,  
in every season,  
for every generation yet to come.

Go in hope.  
Go in fierce, tender love.  
Go knowing you are never alone.

Amen.



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