

From Dillon's Desk

Dear friends,

For the past few years, I've had several people come up to me, from the many number of communities I am or have been part of, and ask why we need to make such a big deal about Pride. "We've come such a long way... I just don't know that we need to hear about justice and equality for LGBTQ+ people all the time." The truth is, in many of the communities and bubbles we find ourselves in, that may be true. It seems as if we've made incredible progress and perhaps we should focus more of our attention elsewhere.

Unfortunately, while we have come a long way, we still have very far to go on the journey. In the past five years, LGBTQ+ persons have been facing heightened violence and harm; teens coming out are still being kicked out of their homes and families for trying to be their authentic selves; legislation being proposed against LGBTQ+ persons is at an all-time high this year; the suicide attempt rate among LGBTQ+ youth is nearly four times the rate of straight, cisgender youth.

It's not easy being part of the LGBTQ+ community. As much as we shine our lights, there are many people in our world who want to silence us and make us invisible. That's why Pride is so important, because we have to stand up and stand out for each other. The power of community is profoundly important, and that's why we focus so much on LGBTQ+ inclusion here at Plymouth. We are striving to do our part to change the world for someone who may feel like their life is not worth living because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

So, whether you identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community, or are an ally, June is a month set aside to celebrate the uniqueness that is you. There is no one way to exist as a person in this world, even as a queer person, and I hope that you take a moment and recognize what is so special and unique about yourself. Know that you are perfect as you are, exactly as you were created to be by God.

I'll leave you with one of my favorite poems that I'll be meditating daily on this month.

Amen. Happy Pride, Plymouth. Let's celebrate together this month!

In Christ's Love,
Pastor Dillon Shipman

From Dillon's Desk, cont.

Jesus at the Gay Bar

by Jay Holme

He's here in the midst of it -
right here at the center of the dance floor,
robes hitched up to His knees
to make it easy to spin.

At some point in the evening
a boy will touch the hem of His robe
and beg to be healed, beg to be
anything other than this;

and He will reach His arms out,
sweat-damp, and weary from dance.
He'll cup this boy's face in His hand
and say,

"My beautiful child,
there is nothing in this heart of yours
that ever needs to be healed."



Pride Parade

Plymouth Church will once again join the Cleveland Pride March on Saturday, June 1st. The parade staging will begin at 10 AM with the march starting at 11 AM from Memorial Plaza (Mall A) Rockwell Ave. Plymouth Church and Pilgrim Church UCC will also have a booth at the Pride festival throughout the afternoon. We invite all to join us at the parade and festival.

**Come and support the LGBTQ
community!**