

Lighting the Candles

In Jewish and Christian tradition, when Noah's family was brought out from the ark after the flood, God promised to never again destroy all people. The symbol of this promise was a rainbow in the sky. For the Same Gender Loving and LGBT communities, the rainbow means many things. But it also points to our share of God's promise: that we cannot be destroyed by hate, ignorance, or even our own shame.

As we light the candles of the rainbow, think about your journey. Draw strength, hope, and healing from the knowledge that God did not create you to be destroyed.

Lighting the Red Candle

This is the candle of sacrifice. Our movements did not spring into this moment in history fully formed. We benefit from the courage and wisdom of many who challenged both the dominant culture and oppressions within our own spaces. With humility and deepest respect, let us take a moment of silence for those who laid a foundation of honor and openness.

Lighting the Yellow Candle

This is the candle of healing. Every day, some of us are murdered because we love openly and live our genders fully. There are illnesses that affect our communities at higher rates than the dominant culture. And still we thrive. We create memorials, and care for each other when no one else will. As we light the yellow candle, feel the warming touch of our Creator.

Lighting the Green Candle

This is the candle of motion. Being part of God's community is not a spectator sport. We are called to go and do. The Scriptures tell us that doing for others in God's name can be as simple as giving a thirsty person water,

but it still must be done. Now is the time to be open to those around you, trusting that God will guide your path.

Lighting the Blue Candle

This is the Candle of Calm. U.S. culture makes an idol of individuality and “being productive”. And if you are from a marginalized community, you often work twice as hard as those around you just to be seen as half as good. God’s system is radically different. The Scriptures of our faith communities show us God’s priorities. Relationship with Creation and rest are central. Remember, right after humans were created, God set aside the Sabbath as a day of rest! From here on out, let the color blue be your reminder to take a moment to center yourself.

Lighting the Purple Candle

This is the Candle of Opportunity. Red and blue are the colors that come together to make purple. That combination of sacrifice and calm is one way of revealing how we have made the gains we celebrate today. Some among us have risked deportation, disgrace, and being disowned to live in the full truth of their lives. Together, we have pushed forward and thought deeply before deciding. Opportunities of all kinds swirl around us. Many are worth reaching for. Today, decide to see and claim one new opportunity as yours. Then follow where it leads.

All the Candles Are Lit

Now that the candles are lit, look around you. Each person here today has played a heroic role in the struggle to claim our full human dignities. And there is more to come. Know, now and forever, that you were created to help others do great things also. Leave no one behind.