

## A RESPONSIVE READING FOR LGBT PRIDE MONTH

We are grateful for the gift of our lives and the gift of others in our lives.

**Each of us is created with dignity and worth.**

We are called to love each other and to do nothing to others that we would find hateful to ourselves.

**We honor the many ways that people live and love.**

We repent for the times when our faith traditions have named lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people unworthy.

**Love does not exclude. We are all worthy.**

We suffer when LGBT persons are oppressed, excluded and shamed by religious people who overlook the fundamental call to justice in our scriptures.

**True justice flourishes when we can live with authenticity and integrity.**

May we work to build a community where LGBT people are celebrated as full and equal members, recognizing their many gifts.

**We celebrate sexual and gender diversity as a blessing that enriches us all.**

## SEXUAL & GENDER DIVERSITY IN THE UNITED STATES

- The U.S. Department of Human Services has estimated the national gay, lesbian and bisexual population to be 8.8 million, or 2.5-3% of the population. There are no national data on how many people identify as transgender.
- Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people live in 99.3% of U.S. counties. Same-sex couples with children reside in 96% of U.S. counties. About one-quarter of same-sex couples are raising children, compared with one-third of heterosexual couples. (*U.S. Census, 2000, and Gay and Lesbian Atlas, 2004*)
- LGBT youth represent 20–40% of all homeless youth. Many had to leave their homes because of conflict over their families' religious beliefs. (*National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and National Coalition for the Homeless, 2007*)
- Three-quarters of LGBT people report experiencing prejudice, discrimination and verbal abuse. One-third report that at least one family member has refused to accept them because of their sexual orientation. (*Kaiser Foundation, 2001*)
- In a proclamation issued on May 28, 2010, President Barack Obama designated June as LGBT Pride Month in the U.S. The last Sunday in June is traditionally celebrated as LGBT Pride Day.

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*“This month, as we recognize the immeasurable contributions of LGBT Americans, we renew our commitment to the struggle for equal rights for LGBT Americans and to ending prejudice and injustice wherever it exists.” – President Barack Obama*