

Sermon Outline - Sunday, June 12, 2022
Pose- At the Intersection of Pentecost & Pride
A Holy Spirit Posture
Acts 2: 1-24

Keyword Summary- Pride; Pentecost; Holy Spirit; Queer Liberation; Radical Family

Review- Today we find ourselves in the midst of Pride month and in the midst of the Pentecost season. A beautiful intersection of queer joy and Holy Spirit disruption. Last week Rev. Mariama launched the sermon series titled POSE at the intersection of of Pride and Pentecost. POSE is a fictional show based on the drag and ballroom scene in New York City during the height of the AIDS crisis. This show follows characters - representative of so many real life humans, who navigated life together, built family together, danced together, sang together, cried together. In many ways, modeled what radical family can look like, when we take responsibility for one another. Rev. Mariama reminded us that holy Spirit goes big. Holy Spirit has always been strange. And the spirit of Pentecost calls us into radical ways of being in relationship with God and with one another.

Overview:

Ironically, so many sermons in “progressive” churches during Pride month speak about queer people as if we are not in the room. Many sermons are addressed at an assumed straight audience - saying “Love is love and God calls us to welcome, embrace, celebrate others. So we need to make sure we are doing that and doing that well.” And we will put up a rainbow flag while we are at it. I agree, and I am grateful those sermons exist in their time and place, but today’s sermon is an offering to my fellow queer and questioning friends. A love letter from the heart of my wonderings and reflections to yours.

Pose, the title of this particular show, is also a verb in the English language meaning “a sustained posture.” Our posture communicates - and can dictate - how we move in the world and how we are perceived.

As we sit at the intersection of Pride and Pentecost, it is important to inquire about posture in relation to our faith and spiritual practice. What is God’s posture towards creation? In turn, what is our posture toward ourselves and one another?

Key Points:

- **How we perceive Gods posture towards creation matters.** In this community, we come from a variety of traditions and theologies. The overarching societal narrative of who God is within Christianity is so strong. A white male, Father figure, with a long white beard, up in the sky, judging humanity’s every move to determine who goes to heaven or hell.
- **The God of Pentecost.** God sends the Holy Spirit in the form of fire and tongues giving to those gathered in the house the ability to communicate. Not to hit people over the heads with a particular theology or to shame them or reprimand them - but to communicate. In their particular native languages - languages that carry culture and meaning. A tender God, a thoughtful God.
- **The Holy Spirit is the gift.** The gift of accompaniment, discernment. The gift of being in active relationship with God and figuring out life together.
- **Holy Spirit moves outside of every expectation.** We don’t have a visual image for Holy Spirit because she is a rushing wind, a mighty water, a gentle dove - we cannot dictate how she moves, how she speaks, or how she is received.

- **A Holy Spirit posture means stagnancy is not an option.** We are in motion, like the ocean. We are churning. We sustain life, life that lives so deep down in the earth that manmade tools cannot reach the furthest depths.
- **A Holy Spirit perception of God means actually trusting God to be God.** And embracing the beauty of unknowing. I say unknowing instead of the unknown because it really is a practice and a process of unlearning and actively choosing to find peace in the not knowing.

And this sounds a lot like a queer journey if you ask me...Queerness is not all rainbows and glitter and impeccable music. Queerness can feel like a rushing violent wind, a shaking of your shelter. Queerness is not coming out once and your done. Queerness is a lifetime commitment to discovering out who you are - in a world that questions your worth at every corner.

Queerness is a break from the mold. Queerness is stepping into systems of liberation and collective care before there are stable structures to hold you. Queerness is finding ways to breathe easier together. No queer journey is the same, could be expected, or predicted. Queerness is not just something to be tolerated, but is a treasure, a portal into jubilee.

In my humble opinion, queerness is a Holy Spirit gift to this earth. A reminder that God has something better in store for us than what this death dealing world continues to offer. The same God who calls for the birds to sing, the tomatoes to grow, the tides to pull and release - is the same God who wants each one of us to be well, to be free.

To my queer siblings - Your name is a prayer of gratitude to the ancestors who have come before and a pathway for future generations to come. Your breath is proof that liberation is possible. Your creativity is a mirror of God's whimsy and wonder. Your dancing is a deep connection to the waves, to the branches in the wind, to the flutter of wings. Your sorrow and grief is a steady reminder that we have not yet reached Jubilee.

As we move through this season of Pride and Pentecost, may we commit to a Holy Spirit posture - ready for disruption and making an intentional commitment to unknowing - to discerning step by step our journey to Jubilee. Embracing God as tender and creative. This, is how we might heal our way towards being radical family. Honoring one another rather than trying to change one another. Trusting that Spirit moves in ways far beyond our own comprehension.

ACTIVITY: Create a movement together that demonstrates a release of Golden Standard God [strict, narrow, judge] and an embrace of a Holy Spirit posture [creative, unexpected, full of wonder].

Reflection Questions:

- 1) What images and postures of God were given to you? In your relationship with God, what are you in the process of unknowing?
- 2) When have you noticed Spirit moving/speaking in your own life? What did that feel like? What did that sound like? What did that look like?
- 3) What people and practices can you call on to live into a Holy Spirit posture? Get practical and tangible with your responses.