

## Woodland Celebrates Coming Out



October 11 is [National Coming Out Day](#). As with every year, Woodland will have a special Coming Out Worship service. That may seem like an odd event to commemorate for a church. But, then again, those who know Woodland, know we are given to doing things other churches may not. As an open and affirming community, we know the courage and bravery it takes to come out of the darkness to live as our authentic selves. Many of us personally know the pain and struggles associated with coming out.

We celebrate coming out because we believe that every person, regardless of race, sexual orientation, gender identity or ability is "fearfully and wonderfully made" in the image of God. No child of God should ever have to live in the darkness of pretending to be someone they aren't. God calls us all to live in the light of His love as He has made us to be in authenticity and truth. That includes our allies who should never have to fear showing their support for their GLBTQ family and friends.

We celebrate coming out because we want to honor those who have had the courage before us to come out at great personal risk and loss. We want to remember that many have come before us to shape a better world. Together, with allies, many have fought and lost much so that others could live a better life.

We celebrate coming out because we know many are watching. We are surrounded by witnesses. As a church, we will not be silent about our support or welcome for everyone, including our GLBTQ brothers and sisters. For those who are still living in the darkness, we want you to know that you are not alone. Others have been where you are. We will stand with you. We will walk with you.

We celebrate coming out because we look forward to the day when coming out is no longer a part of life; when people are empowered to live as their true selves from the moment they enter the world; when no one has to fear rejection, loss or shame inflicted on them by other people.

We hope you will come join us this Sunday, October 8 as we celebrate the present, remember the past and in our hope in Christ, look forward to a better future for all!