

the back page - Sheth LaRue, Senior MDiv.

Over the past few weeks I've spent too many hours attempting to write something for this issue of Kairos. I've had a few ideas which have been drawn out to their fullest conclusions, ending with four or five incomplete, two hundred word essays. I've tried writing about my conservative upbringing, about my family's questions to their 'personal seminarian', about what I know - or don't know - about the Bible and homosexuality. Everything I've written has been garbage, really, and I haven't been able to string a coherent thought together.

It occurred to me that it's because I don't know where my voice belongs in this issue. What words would I have to contribute to a Queer Alliance issue of Kairos? I'm a straight cis male with no questions concerning my sexuality or gender - a luxury not easily claimed by other contributors in this month's issue. I have no perspective of the different sides of gender or sexual orientation, and I have no voice to speak on the matter.

While I grew up in a theologically-conservative home, I couldn't quite hold *that* way of thinking, and my beliefs have been conservative-lite. While believing and trusting in certain things, I suppose I have left some room for doubt and uncertainty because there were too many unanswered (and unanswerable) questions being hushed away by an adult replying: because the Bible says so!

In 2011, I joined the PCUSA, a denomination which had just allowed for the ordination of LGBTQIA+ persons, and in 2014 it allowed same-gender marriages. I recall discussing these actions with my pastor and I said that it all just sort of made sense to me. That was my strong, theological argument: it just made sense.

It made sense for the church to allow all people to live into their calling from God, no matter their orientation. It made sense for the church to allow all people equal access to the table, both as a partaker and as a presider. It made sense for the church to consecrate LGBTQIA+ weddings because a committed relationship is a blessing and should be blessed by the church. It made sense for the church to allow these ceremonies because of the access a married couple has in civil society, and LGBTQIA+ persons deserve this same access.

It makes sense for equality to be in all places and in all things because that is what I would want most for my LGBTQIA+ family and friends. I don't understand every argument made for or against ordination and marriage (I've tried, and will continue to try to comprehend), but what I do understand is that I'm called to love. I'm called to love and I will live out this calling in all the places I can. I may be too generous, but I'd rather be charged with being too welcoming than not welcoming enough.

May we all have the power to "grasp love's width and length, height and depth, together with all believers"¹ and may we exercise this love with exceeding generosity.

much love. sheth.

¹Ephesians 3:18, CEB