

Special **LGBTQI** Listening Committee  
Formed by The Presbyterian Church  
in Canada | General Assembly 2017

[presbyterian.ca/listening](http://presbyterian.ca/listening)

**SHARE YOUR STORIES.  
WE ARE LISTENING.**



## WELCOME TO

# Rainbow Communion

## *We are ...*

The Special LGBTQI Listening Committee known as **Rainbow Communion**.

Seven members drawn from across the church reflecting the diversity of the denomination and includes two members who identify as LGBTQI.

## OUR MANDATE

To offer a safe and respectful environment in which confidentiality is assured, in order to encourage people

- > to tell stories of harm done to them within and by the church because of homophobia, heterosexism and transphobia; and
- > to share stories of God's grace experienced by them and through them in Christian ministry, even in the midst of the challenges they have faced.

To invite people to submit their stories orally or in writing (face-to-face, video conference, phone call, email, traditional mail, or other means). Stories of those who have given permission to share them may be included in the committee's report to a future General Assembly.

To provide, after the listening process is completed, an appropriate response to the issue of homophobia within The Presbyterian Church in Canada with recommendations for concrete actions addressing homophobia to the General Assembly for implementation within the church.

## RAINBOW COMMUNION LISTENING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

**Co-Conveners:** The Rev. Dr. Bob Faris (Toronto, ON), Ms. Sue Senior (Waterloo, ON)

**Members:** The Rev. Dr. Tim Archibald (New Minas, NS), The Rev. Joseph Bae (Thornhill, ON), The Rev. Dr. Jean Morris (Calgary, AB), Ms. Sydney O'Brien (Waterloo, ON), Ms. Bassma Younan (Aurora, ON)

Trained Rainbow Communion listeners from across Canada (some fluent in additional languages) will be deputized and added to the roster of the listeners. These names will be made available on the website.

## *We are not ...*

- > a counselling team and the listening space is not a counselling session.
- > a committee that directly shapes doctrine, policy or programs of The Presbyterian Church in Canada nor is equipped to handle legal matters.

## THE LISTENING PROCESS

Two listeners will meet with the person who is interested in sharing their experiences. Listeners will include at least one person from the Rainbow Communion Listening Committee and the second listener may be one who has been trained and deputized by Rainbow Communion. In all cases the selection of the listeners is to be approved by you the storyteller.

This sharing will normally occur face to face and could happen by video conference, on the phone, in written form by letter or email, or by another method acceptable to all at a location approved by the storyteller.

We would encourage you to be prepared to share your story within 60 minutes. If you feel that more time is required, please let us know.

During the listening process, a notetaker will be present (if audio recording is declined) as the story is shared. For those individuals who do not desire that the experiences they disclose be shared, the taking of notes will still occur so that key themes can be identified for purposes of the overall report. In such instances, there will be an opportunity to verify and approve the content (themes discussed, without names or descriptions of events) that may be included for the purposes of the report.

After receiving the account of your experiences, a member of the committee will be in touch and follow up with you. Your story will be kept in the way you indicated on the initial contact information form unless Rainbow Communion is otherwise instructed by you.

With your permission, these accounts will be compiled and form the basis of a report to the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada on homophobia and experiences of God's grace in ministry.

Rainbow Communion will be collecting the stories and accounts of experiences from May 15, 2018 to June 15, 2019.

## YOUR RIGHTS AS THE STORYTELLER

**Confidentiality.** Under normal circumstances only you have the right to tell your own story and share your experiences. What you share is treated as confidential and will not be shared with any office or individual outside of our Rainbow Communion Listening Committee unless you have consented to share your story more broadly with, or without, your name attached.

Individuals in couple or family relationships are responsible for their own handling of confidences shared in their circles or groups.

If there is reason to believe that the person telling the story may do harm to themselves or another person or if there is reason to believe that a minor, is, or may be in danger of neglect or abuse, the team members may share specific and relevant information with appropriate organizations without your consent.

**Privacy.** You have a right to expect as much visual and auditory privacy as may be reasonably provided given the location and the facility where the meeting will take place. If you have concerns about privacy, please share this with the team members in advance, if possible.

**The Story-Teller Records.** All listening-related material is kept and held confidentially and securely by the Rainbow Communion Listening Committee. The record of the account of your experiences is a part of that material and will be held in the way you confirmed on your permission form. The records will be securely and confidentially maintained following the completion of the listening space. You will be given the opportunity to approve the content that may be used for the purposes of the Committee's report.

**Informed Consent.** You have a right to be meaningfully informed about the listening process. Together you and the listeners who will attend the Listening Space will discuss the details of the informed consent. You are encouraged to ask the listeners for clarification as needed. You also will be asked to give your permission for audio recording to occur in the Listening Space.

**The Listening Approach.** Listening to the story of your experiences is the main purpose of our time together. While listening to your story, the listeners might ask for some information for clarification. You are free to answer or not. You may end the Listening Space at any time if you do not feel comfortable for any reason. If possible, it would be best if you could discuss your decision to end the Listening Space in order for the listeners to understand your concerns.

**Risks of The Listening Approach.** The process of telling our stories and sharing experiences has an impact on us as well as those with whom we are in relationship. Sometimes if the harm done is deep, telling the story might trigger the emotional pain associated with the memories of the experience. The emotional pain may vary from feelings of discomfort to being re-traumatized. Please consider bringing someone with you to support you emotionally and/or spiritually and with whom you can debrief afterwards.

CONNECTING WITH

# Rainbow Communion

## Welcome ...

to the Rainbow Communion listening process. To assist in receiving your story, **please complete the contact information** located on the following pages. Sharing this information may help us understand who you are and what brings you to share your experiences. If you are unable to complete some parts, leave them blank and a committee member will be in touch to assist you in completing it (if you wish).

Your personal information will not be shared with anyone or any organization without your expressed consent. Thank you for taking the time to share this initial contact information with Rainbow Communion.

**The contact information form may be completed and sent to Rainbow Communion\* in one of several ways.**

1. Complete the form in this brochure and send it by mail to:  
**P.O. Box 40113, Waterloo Square, Waterloo, ON N2J 4V1**
2. Complete the form in this brochure, scan it and send it by email to:  
**rainbowcommunion@gmail.com**
3. Go online at: **presbyterian.ca/listening** to download the contact form, complete it electronically and email it to **rainbowcommunion@gmail.com**.

\*Communications are monitored solely by Rainbow Communion. The email and postal addresses are not associated in any way with The PCC's communication infrastructure.

## CONNECTING WITH

# Rainbow Communion

A member of the Rainbow Communion Listening Committee will be in touch to discuss the best way to set up the Listening Space (including method, date/time, duration, location, and/or listeners) all to be approved by you, the storyteller. If you prefer to only communicate with a specific member of the Listening Committee, please state here:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Listening Committee member requested or N/A

## CONTACT INFORMATION

\_\_\_\_\_  
**First Name** (required) Last Name (optional)  
The name by which we should address you.

**Age** (please check one) (required)  under 18  18 years of age and older

<b>Method of contact</b> Please provide <b>at least one</b> mode (required)	Voicemail?	Is it ok to leave a discrete message?
Mobile Phone ( )	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Home Phone ( )	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Work Phone ( )	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

\_\_\_\_\_  
City/Town (optional) Province (optional) Postal Code (optional)

## METHOD OF SHARING

I prefer to share my story via (please indicate **at least one** option). (required)

- Face-to-face    Video Teleconference (Skype, FaceTime etc.)    Phone call    Email    Traditional Mail  
 Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

## DOCUMENT SHARING AND RETENTION

All listening-related material is kept and held confidentially and securely by the Rainbow Communion Listening Committee. Your story is a part of that and will be held in the way you decide below.

You have options in how the record of the account of your experiences will be shared and stored.

1. I give permission to the Rainbow Communion Listening Committee to include the account of my experiences in their compiled report submitted to the General Assembly. (required)

- Yes    No

If **yes**, it may be shared on the following terms (select your preference)

- In any form faithful to the original  
 With names redacted  
 With portions redacted as identified by you following the listening process

2. I give permission for the record of my account to be held by the Rainbow Communion Listening Committee, and at the end of their mandate, in the archives\* of Presbyterian Church in Canada. You are able to access the record of your account in the future and also have the ability to change the restriction on them at any time. (required)

- Yes    No

If **no**, your record will be destroyed at the completion of Rainbow Communion's mandate

If **yes**, it will be held on the following terms (select your preference)

- Accessible to researchers  
 Accessible only to me and my family  
 Accessible to all with names redacted

\*The Archives of The Presbyterian Church in Canada is a professional standard archive with secure storage and policies that ensure restrictions are honoured in perpetuity.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Presbyterian Church in Canada affiliation, if any (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

If you want to tell your story in a language other than English, please let us know which language so that we can make arrangements accordingly (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate the pronoun that you prefer to be used with respect to your gender identity (optional)

(ie: he, she, they, ze, zir... etc...) \_\_\_\_\_

(continued over)



## LISTENING SPACE CONSENT AND PERMISSIONS

**This form will be completed in the Listening Space or prior to receiving your story by other means.** It is included here to reinforce the commitment by Rainbow Communion to prepare a safe and respectful space that is approved by you, the storyteller.

Rainbow Communion listeners will bring this form to the Listening Space for completion and all to sign. If you have questions about it before that time, feel free to contact Rainbow Communion for clarification.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Location Method of Sharing

1. I have read and understood the information found in: Information and Disclosure About the Listening Process
2. I agree to tell my story to the two listeners:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Listener name Listener name

3. I grant permission for the listening space to be audio recorded. I understand that I may withdraw my consent at any time for any reason. I am aware that the principle of confidentiality will be respected as described in the **THE LISTENING PROCESS** and **YOUR RIGHTS AS THE STORYTELLER**.
4. I grant permission to the listeners to take notes during the Listening Space.
5. I give permission to the Rainbow Communion Listening Committee to include my story in their compiled report submitted to the General Assembly.
6. I agree to have my name included with my story in the compiled report submitted to the General Assembly.
7. I understand that I can leave the Listening Space at any time. If possible, I will discuss this decision with the listening members.
8. I understand that the records of my account will be held in The Presbyterian Church in Canada's archives in accordance with my request on the initial contact form.
9. I understand that \_\_\_\_\_ minutes have been allocated for the Listening Space.
10. I agree to all the items listed above (1-9) except for the following (please explain):  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. Name of person (if any) who has accompanied me in the Listening Space: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Storyteller (Please Print) Signature\* Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Listener Name (Please Print) Listener Signature\* Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Listener Name (Please Print) Listener Signature\* Date

\*For electronic form completion, please enter name again as signature.

## *Rainbow*

as a symbol of God's promise, has its origin in the biblical covenant with Noah and his family. It is also a term or symbol often used to represent the inclusion of the full diversity of people and emphasizing the inclusion of persons who identify as sexual and/or gender minorities.

## *Communion*

is central to our life as Christians and in a broader sense reflects the sharing or exchanging of intimate thoughts and feelings, especially when the exchange is on a mental or spiritual level.

**LGBTQI is an acronym used to refer to people whose sexual orientation is not heterosexual and/or whose gender identity does not conform either to binary male/female categories or the "assigned" gender at birth. LGBTQI is an acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Intersex.**

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COMMUNICATIONS MONITORED SOLELY BY

*Rainbow Communion*

**1.800.619.7301 ext. 300**

Dedicated extension for confidential voicemail

**[rainbowcommunion@gmail.com](mailto:rainbowcommunion@gmail.com)**

The gmail address is not associated in any way with the PCC's communication infrastructure

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P.O. Box 40113, Waterloo Square  
Waterloo, ON N2J 4V1

[presbyterian.ca/listening](https://presbyterian.ca/listening)

