

Pastoral Prayer July 28, 2026

The Rev. Dr. Gary Comstock

The First Congregational Church of Old Lyme

Hello, God. Thank you for coming by this morning.

It's good to have you with us as we celebrate Pride Sunday.

We've been on this journey for quite a while now — a blink in time for you, but we've been on this path long enough to have ancestors.

People who were at Stonewall in 1969 and before that in demonstrations in D.C. and San Francisco have died and moved into the role of memories that support and encourage us — reminders that the journey is both arduous and liberating.

You know them well, and we thank you for caring for them and preserving the gifts they continue to share with us.

We remember also the transgender people who died this past year — some by transphobic violence, others by society's neglect of their needs, and still others defeated by the power of policies hardened to deny them care and affirmation.

We confess that we haven't done enough to oppose those new orders from the national leadership, and we could probably benefit from a good scolding along the lines of your prophet Isaiah's style, but hopefully we can say today, "We've got this, and we'll attend to what we haven't yet done."

We also need to increase our efforts to help those neighbors in the wider community who are newly threatened with deportation, and we thank you for Steve's leadership and direction in organizing us and our response.

As our sister Maya Angelou said, and we say today, "Still we rise," in spite of and against the negativity and harm waged by the current regime.

We are blessed each time someone or some people somewhere raise their voice, act alone or with others, to stand by and for what is good as you have taught us.

And each of these blessings nurtures and sustains us — and without your inspiring presence within each of us and among all of us we would not survive.

You comfort and support us when we are most afraid of speaking out and acting for what we know is right — and you are the source of confidence we rely on.

We do indeed lift up our eyes to the heights of your expectations, encouragement, and comfort.

Stay with us if you have time to hear Reilly's sermon. You know them and know they'll do a good job.

But your attention — and our prayers, as well — may be needed more urgently by the people in Venezuela.

If so, we'll carry on here as you so often carry us.

Take care. Be well. Safe trip. We love you.

Amen