

PRIDE

Shabbat Planning Guide

Introduction

Pride is a time to celebrate our resistance and resilience. We stand on the shoulders of our queer and trans Jewish ancestors who survived so that we could thrive. We push back against the harmful rhetoric and policy to show those who don't believe we should exist that we are here, we aren't going anywhere, **and that our communities are beautiful, joyous, generative spaces of love and belonging.**

Join us this Pride month by hosting a Pride Shabbat in your community and embracing these multiple layers. This guide can help you and your community do just that.

Planning Pride Shabbat

It is crucial to ensure that LGBTQ+ community members are involved in the visioning and planning of Pride Shabbat. Consider inviting a community member who is already active in planning events or has specifically shared interest in being involved in LGBTQ+ programming. Be careful not to invite someone just because you think they are LGBTQ+! Not all LGBTQ+ people want to take on this labor.

Get clear on goals. Given the multiple emotional layers of Pride, it is important to define the goals of your community's Pride Shabbat. This may include fostering belonging, celebrating queer ancestors and queer community members, taking action together in your community or in your state etc.

Make Pride Shabbat accessible to all members of the congregation, including those with disabilities. Choose an accessible area, provide American Sign Language interpretation if needed, and offer alternative formats for printed materials. You can learn more about how to ensure accessibility [here](#).

Putting Together the Service

Prayers

Add prayers and relevant readings to your service that span a variety of experiences and tones. Here are some options:

- [Birkat Chodesh Ga'avah](#) by Rabbi Lily Solochek
- [Prayer for Coming Out](#) by Rabbi Rebecca Alpert
- [Twilight People's Prayer](#) by Rabbi Rueben Zellman
- [Love Wins](#) by Alden Solovy
- [Where There Is Pride, There Is Hope](#) by Brasha Smith
- [For LGBTQIQ People](#) by Andrew Ramer

Prayer and liturgy are expansive categories. If you know of a piece of text that is meaningful to you or others planning the service, add those as well!

Torah Service

The Torah service can often be a part of the synagogue experience when queer people feel unseen. Many congregations have adopted gender-inclusive language for those called up to the Torah that can offer everyone a chance to use their preferred gender terminology. Here is one example of [gender-inclusive aliyah cards](#) to use during Pride Shabbat, and perhaps beyond.

Sermons

Use this [sermon guide](#) to help develop divrei torah that correlate with likely June Torah portions.

If you would like to bring a speaker from Keshet to your community for a Pride Shabbat service or celebration, [you can submit a request here](#).

Programming Beyond the Service

Plan additional programming and activities to complement the Pride Shabbat service. This may include workshops, panel discussions or additional ritual services focused on LGBTQ+ art, ritual, text study or activism.

Some additional ideas:

- **Havdalah** - Using some of the aforementioned prayers, you can create a meaningful transitional ritual between the holiness of Pride Shabbat and the rest of the week
- **Tot Shabbat** - Sing songs and [share books](#) that promote expansive ways of thinking about identity and family. Here is a list of wonderful books you can use:
 - *Joyous Song or Heather Has Two Mommies* by Lesléa Newman
 - *The Purim Superhero* by Elisabeth Kushner
 - *The Flower Girl Wore Celery* by Meryl G. Gordon
 - *Harvey Milk and the Rainbow Flag* by Rob Sanders
 - *Jacob's New Dress* by Sarah Hoffman and Ian Hoffman
- **Bring Pride Shabbat to your camp!**

Signage and Decoration

Visibility matters! Consider adding decorations that celebrate the rainbow of LGBTQ+ identities. Something as simple as adding a rainbow flag outside can be very meaningful to LGBTQ+ community members and beyond.

Keshet has a variety of signage that can help make your Pride clear and designate your space, during Pride month and beyond, as safe and welcoming to LGBTQ+ people. Check out our [Printable Signs and Stickers](#).

Continuing the Conversation

After Pride Shabbat, reflect on what worked well and areas for improvement. Celebrating LGBTQ+ life within your congregation doesn't need to stop with Pride Shabbat. Keep the energy going by continuing to host LGBTQ+ inclusive programming, engaging with LGBTQ+ advocacy within your local context, and incorporating LGBTQ+ themes into regular synagogue activities and services. If your congregation would like support in doing so, [bring Keshet in for training!](#)