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Shabbat Sh'lach L'cha 5779

Opening to Lecha Dodi

Shabbat Shalom.

500 years ago, in the hills of Tzfat, Shloma HaLevi Alkabetz wrote Lecha Dodi. Originally, this prayer was sung as people walked through the hills of Tzfat in Northern Israel.

Today, we rise when reach the 9th verse and open our doors to the world.

50 years ago, the GLBTQ community, led by trans women of color, took action and marched through the doors of the Stonewall Inn to demand equal rights for our community and to resist police brutality and violence. .

Seven years ago, we here at Shir Tikvah and the wise people of Minnesota, continued the struggle born at Stonewall, first as we defeated the grotesque marriage amendment and then, in 2013, achieved marriage equality.

Tonight, on this Pride Shabbat, we remember and we celebrate the victories we've won, the pain we've survived, those who have died, and we remember that our fight for human rights and dignity is not yet over. We have come so far--and as long as transwomen of color continue to be brutalized and murdered, as long as homophobia still exists, as long as we can still be fired in 21 states for being GLBTQ, our spiritual work is not over.

As we rise tonight at this final verse of Lecha Dodi, we keep those who worked so hard to get us here in our hearts, and we commit to working for the next generation, that they only know the sting of discrimination from reading it in their history books.