

OPEN TABLE MCC - MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS

Pride Cares PH

Pride Cares PH led by our Lay Pastor Sean Malang, is the disaster response, relief, and care program of the Open Table Metropolitan Community Church, acting as the church's social responsibility and outreach arm. Through this program, we aim to enjoin people to show support and solidarity with our siblings in Christ, especially LGBTQIA+ individuals and community members, who are stricken with natural and human-made disasters. We try as much as possible to provide our queer siblings with the support that they need, based on their unique situations.

Educational assistance



In June 2026, Pastor Sean Malang attended the high school graduation ceremony of Open Table MCC's second scholar, Kim. After being disowned by his family for being queer, he decided to work in fast food and reached out to one of the social media accounts of Open Table MCC. There, one of our members engaged with him and brought Kim home for a while. Later, Pride Cares PH stepped in to fund his education.

Open Table MCC's first college scholar graduated in 2023 and was accompanied by Rev. Joseph San Jose.

Mass Holy Union



Also in June 2026, Pride Cares held a mass holy union ceremony for same-sex couples who wished to formally celebrate their commitment for a fraction of the amount usually charged for this ceremony. While there is still no law allowing LGBTQIA+ marriages in the Philippines, Holy Unions officiated by our Church serve as a vital pastoral ministry to our queer siblings and a means for us in advancing queer rights in the country.

Support for an elderly homeless trans woman



On September 7, 2025, Pride Cares PH assisted an elderly trans woman, whom we fondly call as Nanay Ema. For years, Nanay Ema lived as a homeless person near the MRT Boni station, close to the De Oro Building where Open Table MCC once stayed.

Since our time at the De Oro Building, Open Table MCC had aimed to help her return home. Pride Cares then began planning her journey in June of the same year. We secured bus tickets for Nanay Ema and her

adoptive son so they could travel back together to her hometown Isabela. We also provided grocery items and financial assistance to help her open a small sari-sari store for her livelihood.

Support for Lupang Ramos Farmers in Cavite



On July 26, 2025, Open Table MCC, together with Pride Cares PH, visited the farming community of Lupang Ramos in Cavite to provide support following the devastation caused by successive typhoons and subsequent monsoon rains.

With the assistance of Kasimbayan – Union Theological Seminary, volunteers from Open Table MCC and Pride Cares PH brought food

and relief items to the farmers of Lupang Ramos in Dasmariñas, Cavite. The visit also served as a welfare check on the community after the heavy rains that battered Luzon in late July. Many of the farmers' crops were destroyed, and their community center, used for gatherings and mass, was damaged and is now in need of new roofing materials.

This outreach effort is in line with Pride Cares PH's commitment to standing in solidarity with vulnerable communities in times of crisis. It also highlighted the importance of inclusive disaster response, embodying Jesus' love and compassion through responsive care for queer and marginalized individuals affected by calamities.

Free 2 Be Me (F2BM)



In 2023, the Humanis Foundation invited Open Table MCC to submit a project proposal under the Free To Be Me Network. The project addressed the intersectionality of Christian theology, sexuality, and gender. To support this, the team developed and produced a comprehensive module exploring intersectionality and demonstrating how queer individuals and people of faith can engage in meaningful dialogue.

With funding and support from the Netherlands, coursed through the Humanis Foundation, Open Table rolled out the first

Free to Be Me (F2BM) workshop in 2024. This landmark event brought together LGBTQIA+ advocates alongside Christian leaders and clergy from various churches and denominations to foster dialogue and build potential partnerships for advancing equality within faith communities and institutions.

The workshop included SOGIESC education, Queer theology, and practical sessions guiding clergy on how to effectively minister to and provide safe spaces for their queer church members. Since its launch, the project has influenced the LGBTQIA+ initiatives of the Theology Department at Ateneo de Manila University. It has also shaped the work of a professor from St. Andrew's Theological Seminary of the Episcopal Church in the Philippines, as well as the efforts of two priests from the Diocese of Rizal and Pampanga of the Philippine Independent Church (Iglesia Filipina Independiente).

This historic project marked the first time Open Table MCC brought LGBTQIA+ and Christian leaders together not in opposition, but within a safe space of dialogue and mutual care. The Humanis Foundation (formerly Yayasan Hivos) highly commended Open Table and its project team — Rev. Joseph, Jack, Josh, Charles, and Ammiel — alongside theology consultants Prof. Kakay Pamaran and Rev. Carleen Nomorasa, for their exceptional professionalism, integrity, and efficiency in implementing the project.

Weekly Worship Service as an Advocacy

Given our church's limited resources — a reality clearly reflected in our financial statements — the programs pulled off by our Pride Cares PH ministry are a feat in themselves. Whenever our leadership team worries that we aren't doing enough justice work or community outreach, we remind ourselves that our weekly worship service is a form of advocacy and justice work in its own right.

This service holds immense significance in the Philippine context. Out of roughly five LGBT-affirming churches in the country, we are the only one that runs a weekly program actively ministering to the LGBTQIA+ community.

Through it all, we do our best to strike a balance, caring deeply for our own church members while remaining missional and socially aware, a commitment beautifully reflected in our liturgy.

2026 Pride Celebration

Our participation in the annual Pride parade celebrates the legacy of the first MCC church in the Philippines, MCC Manila, which helped organize the very first Pride march not just in the



Philippines, but in all of Asia. This year, our members set up a booth serving as a memorial to share the rich story of MCC's history in the country. We also used this opportunity to introduce passersby to our church and invite them to our weekly Sunday worship.

Most significantly, Open Table MCC marched alongside other faith-based groups, proclaiming the message of God's inclusive love to the queer community lining the streets. In doing so, we honor our roots as pioneers who first marched and protested for equal rights here in the Philippines.

Inviting Drag Queens to Officiate Communion



For this year's Pride Month, we made our altar table even more radically inclusive by inviting drag queens and trans individuals to officiate the sacrament. We remain deeply committed to diversity and inclusion in our liturgical and worship practices, intentionally ensuring that women, trans individuals, and non-binary people preach and officiate on a regular basis. Through these actions, we send a powerful message: the table of Jesus, traditionally weaponized to exclude, now stands as a symbol of radical inclusion and diversity. We commit to keeping this table open to all, inviting our queer siblings to officiate this sacrament and serve as a means of grace for others.

Although our church faced backlash on social media for this decision, we experienced God's profound protection and love through the comfort of our community. Leaders like Rev. Cecilia, Rev. Rich, Governing Board member Leo, and Rev. Miak anchored us, sending vital words of encouragement through video solidarity messages.

Sectoral exposure for University Students

Universities regularly partner with us as part of their student formation programs. Through these partnerships, we invite students to our church to immerse themselves in our community and hear the personal stories and struggles of our queer members. In turn,

schools frequently invite us to their campuses to speak about the intersection of faith and sexuality.



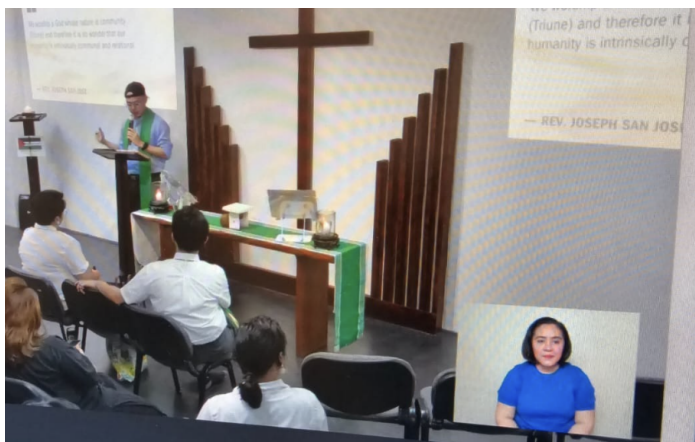
We use these interactions to introduce students to queer theology and examine the systemic roots of oppression confronting the LGBTQIA+ community. Together, we explore how these challenges intersect with other marginalized sectors, including the urban poor, people with

disabilities, and other vulnerable groups. Ultimately, this program serves as a pilot run for our future campus ministry, which aims to welcome and inspire more young people to join our church community.

Filipino Sign Language (FSL) Integration

As part of our efforts to practice intersectionality and deepen inclusion in our ministry, we

initially provided ASL interpreters for our Sunday livestream. However, we eventually paused the initiative upon realizing that our efforts would be far more impactful if we focused first on intentionally reaching out to and engaging with the queer deaf community directly.



Queer Affirming Worship Music - Open Table Originals



Finding music that aligns with our theological standards constantly challenges our church. To address this, our music ministry launched an initiative to write original, queer-affirming songs for our congregation.

In observance of this year's theme of queer-feminist theology, we released our first original track, "She Preached," honoring the often-untold stories of the first women evangelists.

We followed this up for Pride season with "Overflow," an anthem celebrating our identity as people wonderfully created in the image of God, inspired by Psalm 139:14.

As funding and volunteer support allow, we hope to release a full-length album by next year.

