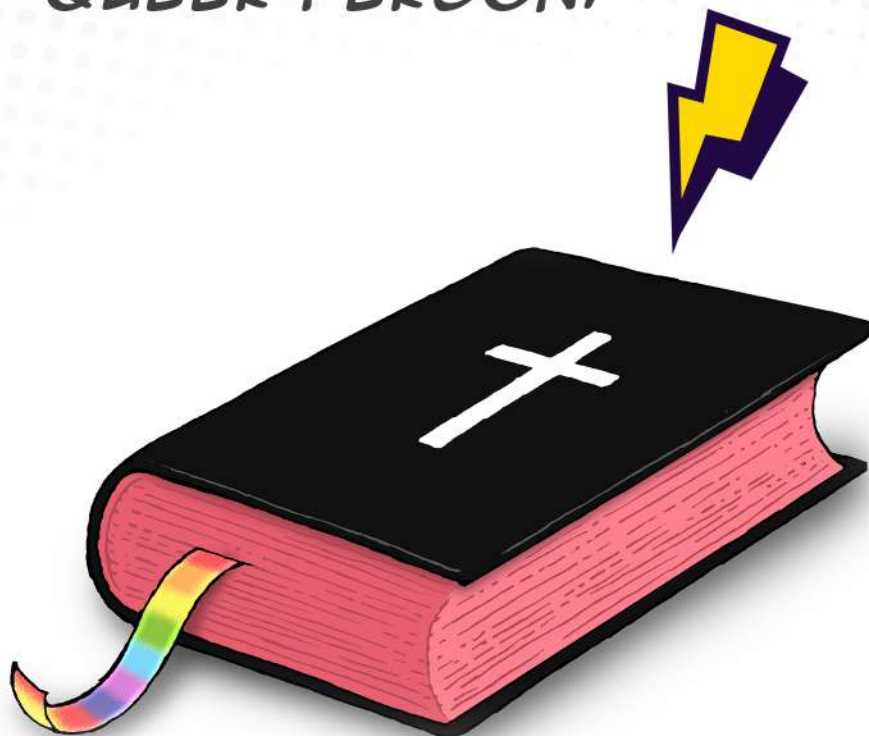




EAST AFRICA
VISUAL ARTISTS

A QUEER STORY OF BELONGING, DIGNITY, AND INCLUSION IN UGANDA

FAITH ROOTED IN DIGNITY,
COMPASSION, AND
ACCOUNTABILITY
CAN PROTECT *EVERY*
QUEER PERSON.



“FAITH SHOULD **NEVER HARM**.
FAITH SHOULD HELP US LIVE
WITH LOVE.

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🌐 www.eavisualarts.org

**I AM
FREE IN
FAITH**

I AM FREE IN FAITH

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BELONGING, DIGNITY,
AND INCLUSION IN
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This is a work of educational and advocacy illustration created for community use in restrictive environments.

Characters depicted are fictional. The views expressed promote the dignity, safety, and inclusion of LGBTIQ people within faith communities.


www.eavisualarts.org

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**FOR EVERY QUEER PERSON IN THE WORLD
WHO HAS BEEN PUSHED TO THE OUTSIDE OF A
DOOR THAT WAS ALWAYS MEANT TO OPEN FOR YOU.
YOU ARE THE ANSWER.**

TO THE READER

You are holding something that was not meant to be easy to make. This book was drawn and written in Uganda — where the questions it raises are not theoretical. They are daily realities.

The people behind these pages have sat in the same churches, crossed the same thresholds, and heard the same sermons that these panels describe. They made this anyway.

The text in this book does not whisper. It does not hide behind metaphor or careful qualification. It says what it means: queer people belong. Faith should never harm. Exclusion is a choice — and so is inclusion.

These are not radical positions. They are the oldest teachings of love, returned to their source.

IF YOU ARE LGBTIQ

This book was made with you at the centre. Not as a subject to be debated. As a person whose full humanity, faith, and dignity are already assumed here. If any page is difficult to read because it mirrors pain you have lived — take your time. You are not alone. You do not have to earn your place in this story. You are already in it.

IF YOU ARE A FAITH LEADER

These pages are a direct conversation with you. The pulpit. The half-open door. The sermon that shapes a community. This book does not ask you to abandon your theology. It asks you to take it more seriously. What does love actually require? A companion facilitation guide is available from Eava Artists for community dialogue.

TO THE READER

IF YOU PICKED THIS UP UNSURE WHY

Then you are exactly who this book was made for. Stay with it. Notice what moves you. Notice what makes you uncomfortable. Sit in that discomfort. It is not a signal to put the book down. It is the beginning of something

"FAITH SHOULD NEVER HARM. FAITH SHOULD HELP"

A safety note: This book was produced for environments where its content is legally and socially contested. If you are in a situation where reading or sharing it puts you at risk — please prioritize your safety first. Your life matters.

I AM FREE IN FAITH

East Africa Visual Artists | Eava Artists Limited
www.eavisualarts.org

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WHY FAITH MATTERS

LASTING CHANGE MUST INCLUDE FAITH.....

FAITH IS NOT SOMETHING WE SIMPLY CHOOSE. IT IS PART OF OUR IDENTITY

WHEN WE ARE PUSHED OUT OF FAITH SPACES,

WE DO NOT LOSE OUR BELIEF. WE LOSE A PLACE TO BELONG.

FOR MANY QUEER PEOPLE, FAITH IS VERY IMPORTANT. IT SHAPES WHO WE ARE. IT SHAPES OUR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES.

AT THIS RATE, WE NEED OUR OWN CHURCH.

IN WHICH COUNTRY?

RELIGION TOUCHES EVERY PART OF LIFE OUR CULTURE, POLITICS, AND DAILY LIVING



EXCLUSION OFTEN STARTS QUIETLY.

JESUS TAUGHT LOVE. THAT LOVE INCLUDES QUEER PEOPLE.

Eava Artists Limited

ADMISSION FORM	
NAME	
AGE	
SEX	a) M
	b) F
	c)

IN FORMS.....
IN RULES.....
IN SYSTEMS THAT ASSUME ONLY ONE WAY TO EXIST.....
THESE SYSTEMS ERASE QUEER LIVES BEFORE CONVERSATIONS EVEN BEGIN. THIS IS WHERE DIGNITY IS LOST.....

BUT DOORS CAN BE OPENED AGAIN. HEALING BEGINS WITH TRUTH AND COMMUNITY.....

WHEN RELIGIOUS GROUPS REJECT LGBTIQ PEOPLE, THEY DENY US THE RIGHT TO WORSHIP



FAITH AND THE SEARCH FOR BELONGING

WE ARE ALL CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE



QUEER PEOPLE PRAY. WE CONFESS. WE SEEK SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE. JUST LIKE EVERYONE ELSE.

FAITH TEACHES US THAT "ALL PEOPLE ARE CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE."

IF WE TRULY LIVED THIS TRUTH, THERE WOULD BE NO EXCLUSION.

INCLUSION IS OFTEN PREACHED, BUT NOT ALWAYS PRACTICED.

|| LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF

|| LOVE IS NOT JUST WORDS—IT IS HOW WE TREAT PEOPLE

|| RELIGION SHOULD BE USED TO SPREAD LOVE TOWARD LGBTIQ PEOPLE.

WHEN WE HONOR DIVERSITY,
WE HONOR THE CREATOR.....

THE CLOSED DOOR



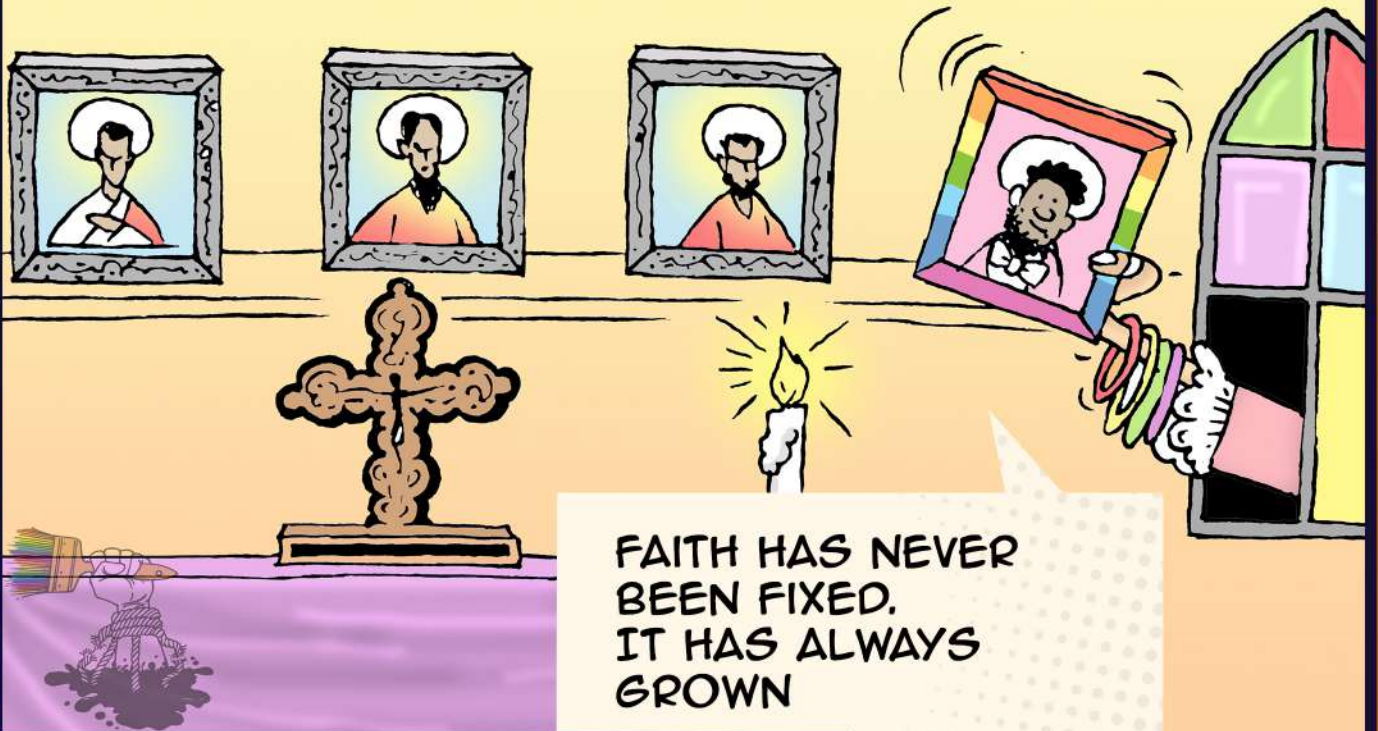
MANY OF US HAVE
FELT REJECTED.
IN CHURCH.
IN OUR FAMILIES.

BUT GOD CREATED US ALL DIFFER-
ENTLY. AND BEAUTIFULLY.....

DIVERSITY IS NOT A MISTAKE.
IT IS PART OF GOD'S DESIGN.....

|| LET US PREACH LOVE AND REJECT EXCLUSION

RECLAIMING FAITH



OVER TIME, FAITH HAS EXPANDED TO INCLUDE THOSE ONCE EXCLUDED.....

INCLUSION DOES NOT DESTROY TRADITION. IT STRENGTHENS IT.

JUSTICE AND FAITH BELONG TOGETHER.

PLACES OF WORSHIP SHOULD WELCOME EVERYONE, JUST AS JESUS DID.

SCRIPTURE AND LOVE



SACRED TEXTS ARE POWERFUL. BUT HOW WE INTERPRET THEM MATTERS

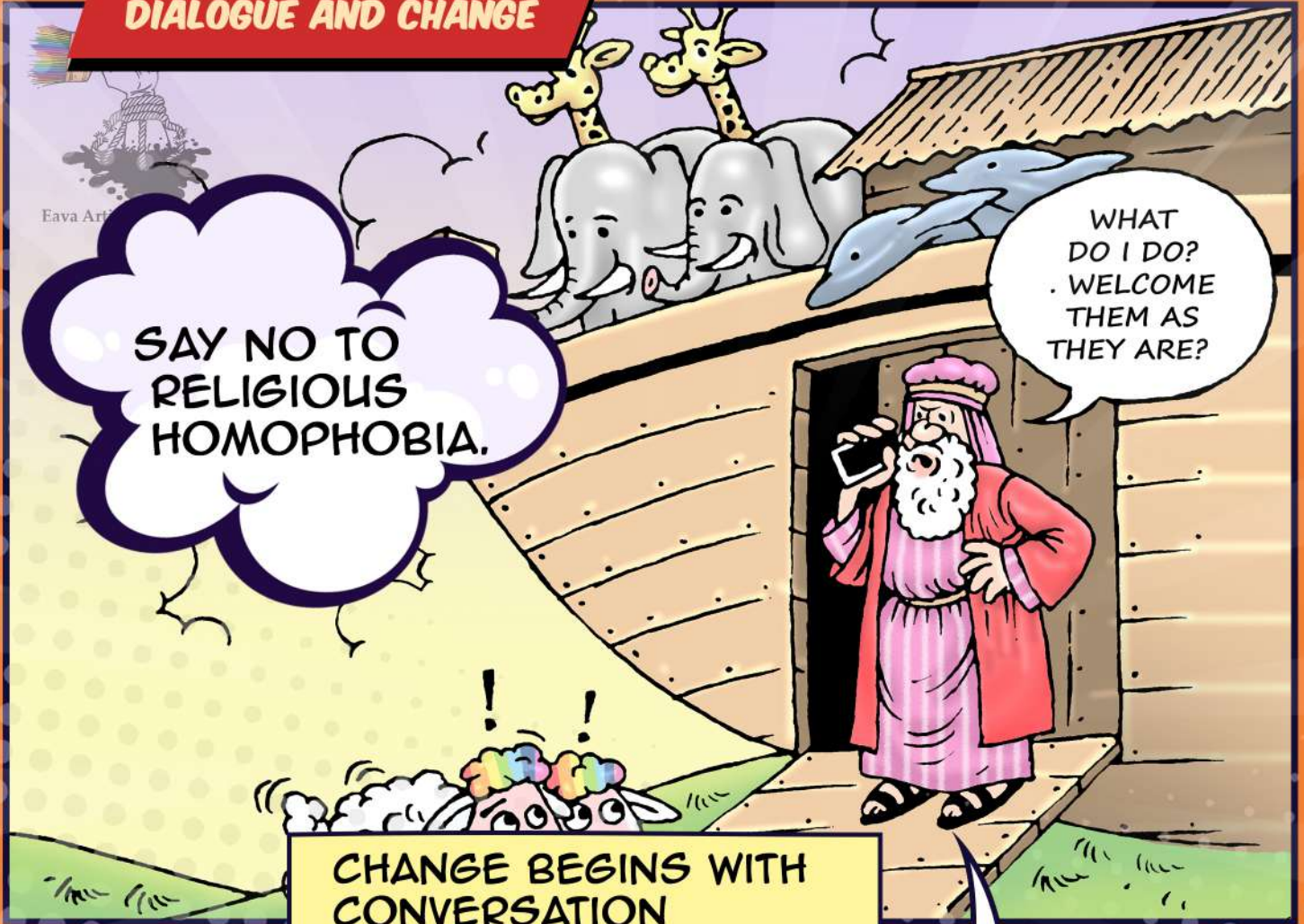
FAITH CALLS US TO LOVE, TO PROTECT, AND TO UPLIFT ONE ANOTHER...

SCRIPTURE CAN BE USED TO HARM. OR IT CAN BE USED TO HEAL.



RELIGIOUS LEADERS HAVE GREAT INFLUENCE. THEY MUST USE IT TO SPREAD LOVE.

DIALOGUE AND CHANGE



TALKING OPENLY
HELPS REMOVE
FEAR AND
STIGMA.

HUMAN DIGNITY IS
NOT ABOUT
CONFORMITY.
IT IS ABOUT HOW
WE TREAT THE MOST
EXCLUDED.

WE MUST ASK HARD
QUESTIONS.
WHY DO WE FOCUS
ON IDENTITY
INSTEAD OF JUSTICE,
MERCY, AND LOVE?

**TALKING HELPS US UNPACK LIES AND
HARMFUL BELIEFS.**

CALL TO ACTION



AT THIS RATE, WE NEED OUR OWN CHURCH.

CHOOSE ACCOUNTABILITY.

IN WHICH COUNTRY?

IN DIFFICULT TIMES, RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES MUST CHOOSE: LOVE, RESPECT AND DIGNITY.

CHOOSE LOVE.

CHOOSE INCLUSION.



FROM UGANDA TO THE WORLD

FAITH, RISK, AND RESILIENCE.....

MUJUZI

WE ARE YOUR CHILDREN, YOUR DOCTORS, YOUR TEACHERS, AND YOUR FAMILY. MEET MUJUZI. MUJUZI LOVES HIS FAITH. HE LOVES HIS COMMUNITY. BUT LIKE MANY QUEER PEOPLE IN UGANDA, HE OFTEN FINDS HIMSELF

STANDING ON THE OUTSIDE LOOKING IN. HIS ONLY CRIME IS LOVE AND FAITH

THE COST OF COURAGE

IN UGANDA AND EAST AFRICA, PREACHING INCLUSION IS RISKY.

CHOOSING LOVE CAN COST EVERYTHING. MANY RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS SURVIVE BY EXCLUDING LGBTIQ PEOPLE. THIS EXCLUSION BECOMES NORMAL.

WHEN A FAITH LEADER WELCOMES LGBTIQ PEOPLE, THERE IS A PRICE TO PAY

- SOME LEADERS ARE REMOVED FROM CHURCH
- SOME LOSE THEIR INCOME
- SOME ARE THREATENED OR ATTACKED
- SOME ARE SILENCED ONLINE

SPEAKING FOR INCLUSION CAN COST YOU YOUR LIFE AND WORK, BUT WE DON'T GIVE UP.

WE STILL SPEAK OUT. BECAUSE FAITH LEADERS ARE TRUSTED VOICES. WHEN THEY CHOOSE LOVE, COMMUNITIES LISTEN AND LOVE BACK

HOW WE SURVIVE: WE HAVE LEARNED TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY. RELIGION MAY CLOSE ITS DOORS. BUT OUR SPIRITUALITY STAYS OPEN.

FROM UGANDA TO THE WORLD, THIS IS OUR MESSAGE:

CHOOSE LOVE.



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