

Detailed Call for Submissions

Deadline: August 15, 2026

Bio Instructions

- Please submit a 3-5-sentence bio (your name, your work, where you've published previously, from where you hail, etc.—whatever you want me to know!).
- Submit in a **separate Microsoft Word** document than your story.

Story Submission Instructions

- Stories should be ~2,000-3,000 words (sometimes less, rarely more).
- **Please read these instructions VERY carefully.**
- Stories should focus on **one or two** specific events. **Detailed, focused** stories are much more engaging to read than broad overviews of your life or your time in religious institutions. Stories should capture the one or two event(s) that best represent(s) what it was like to be queer in your religious community and how you were wounded in/by that community. I am looking for a **deep dive** into *one (maybe two) moment(s) in time that encapsulate(s) a traumatic moment in your religious past*. Some examples might include when your church forced you confess and ask forgiveness for your sexuality in front of the congregation; a queerphobic dorm experience at your Christian college that left you reeling; when you first met a lover (in church? on Grindr? in the library?) and how your religious community responded and in turn wounded you; when you were interrogated by a pastor about your sexuality; an exorcism; when you went through conversion therapy; or otherwise. You can reference moments that happened to you before or after, but these references should be in passing and woven into the main story without much interruption. A good short story offers detailed description and dialogue, so ensure yours does too!
- Stories should be **creative** nonfiction pieces, *NOT* academic discussions. I do *not* want your own commentary on your story (like one does when writing a personal or academic essay). For instance, I do not want phrases like “This represents _____,” “Looking back, I now realize _____,” etc.)—cut any and all of such reflections. Instead, **just tell the story as it happened**. This makes for a MUCH more engaging narrative. How you feel about religion and religious institutions today will come through how you tell the story, so no need to explicitly say how you feel today about your experience. Help the reader feel like they have landed in your story in a visceral way, as opposed to offering something that is retrospective or evaluative. Rather than you telling your readers what to think or what you now think about your own story, **let the story just speak for itself!** No need for hindsight reflections; just tell the story as it occurred, even if it leaves the reader sitting with the discomfort that comes with your story.
- **Show, don't tell.** Instead of *telling* your reader how you felt, *show* your reader how you felt with an impactful image. For example, rather than writing, “I felt ashamed when she looked at me,” provide an image that represents your shame like, perhaps, “I lowered my eyes from hers, my stomach kneading into a gnarled clench.”
- Submit your story in a **Microsoft Word** document, *separate from your bio*, with your name included.
- I need also to note that the publisher is *very* insistent on either anonymizing anyone in your story who had a part in your religious traumatization OR receiving written consent to include their names. I know this might pose some problems for writing our stories (mine included), but it is a necessary evil (so that we cannot be sued). However, I am approaching this as an opportunity to be creative and something we can all work around.

If I can explain anything better, please do reach out! Please e-mail your submission to Lucas Wilson (anthology.submission2026@gmail.com).