



Pitt Street
Uniting Church

*Life in all
its fullness*



Liturgy and other worship resources for the
Transgender Day of Remembrance

Sunday 20 November 2022



Pitt Street Uniting Church is a progressive Christian community of justice-seeking friends in the heart of Sydney.

Our mission is to show God's compassion, enable God's justice, seek God's peace, and embody God's presence.

Wherever you are on your faith journey, wherever you have come from, wherever you are going to, whatever you believe, whatever you do not believe, you are welcome.

Pitt Street is a place of welcome for all people regardless of race, sex, creed, ability, age, cultural background, sexual orientation, gender identity or intersex status.

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Acknowledgements

Weblinks are included throughout this booklet.

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© Jo Inkin November 2021, with thanks to Susan Gilchrist for additional resources.

A wide range of resources and links can be found at "Trans Spirit Flourishing",
www.transspirit.org

Thanks to Vera Tibbertsma and Warren Talbot for assistance with this booklet.



Preface

The Christian Gospel offers “life in all its fullness” to all of God’s children (John 10:10). We see and hear this good news repeatedly in the life and teaching Jesus, as Jesus reaches out to include the “little ones” who have been marginalised and rejected by society.

As we look around the world we see many individuals and groups who do not know “life in all its fullness”. People facing war, hunger and disease have little chance of sharing in abundant life. Throughout the centuries Christian people have always made efforts to support individuals, families and communities, and overcome those things which harm, exclude, and take away God’s gift of life.

Commenced in 1999, the annual Transgender Day of Remembrance was set aside to recognize those who have been killed due to ignorance and hatred, targeted because they were trans or gender non-confirming.

At the Pitt Street Uniting Church it has been our privilege to journey with a number of transgender and other gender diverse people over the years. In doing that we have learnt about our own human journeys.

This booklet includes a liturgy developed in 2021 other worship resources, some of which have been used at Pitt Street.

It is offered to the wider Uniting Church as an invitation to think, pray, hope, and work for a world in which violence against transgender people is no more.

We are praying for a world, and a church, where all may know the fullness of life God offers.

Revd Dr Josephine Inkpin, Minister

Robyn Floyd, Chairperson

What is Transgender Day of Remembrance?

Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) was started in 1999 by transgender advocate Gwendolyn Ann Smith as a vigil to honour the memory of Rita Hester, a transgender woman who was killed in 1998.

The vigil commemorated all the transgender people lost to violence since Rita Hester's death, and began an important tradition that has become the annual Transgender Day of Remembrance.

"Transgender Day of Remembrance seeks to highlight the losses we face due to anti-transgender bigotry and violence. I am no stranger to the need to fight for our rights, and the right to simply exist is first and foremost. With so many seeking to erase transgender people -- sometimes in the most brutal ways possible -- it is vitally important that those we lose are remembered, and that we continue to fight for justice."

- Transgender Day of Remembrance founder Gwendolyn Ann Smith

You can participate in Transgender Day of Remembrance by attending and/or organizing a vigil on November 20 which are held in various cities to honour all those transgender people whose lives were lost to anti-transgender violence that year and learning about the violence affecting the transgender community.

Vigils are typically hosted by local transgender advocates or LGBTQ organizations, and held at community centers, parks, places of worship, and other venues. The vigil often involves reading a list of the names of those lost that year.

For Australian information go to <https://tdor.org.au/>



A liturgy for the Transgender Day of Remembrance

(20 November)

Acknowledgement of Country

CALLING

Come Christ Jesus
Come You who welcome all, from all the world
Come Christ Jesus
Come to greet us now

We come as we are from every race and
love and gender To build your house our
home

Keynote prayers/collects

God of All Compassion, we come today for
the/on this Transgender Day of Remembrance to
remember all gender diverse people who have
been persecuted, discriminated against, suffered
hate crime, have been murdered or have taken
their own lives because of the rejection they face.

Help us today to understand the things we may not understand.
Help us to bring love and not hate.
Help us to rejoice in the diversity that humanity creates.

God of all genders and none,
Source of our glorious difference and true harmony, Bearer of all pain and Spirit of
transformation,
we give you thanks that you have created us in your own image, in the many-
splendoured forms of our human diversity. Hear us as we remember and affirm
gender diverse people. Transform the violence, pain and struggles of the past and
present, bring new life out of death, hopelessness and despair, and empower us with
your grace, strength and joy.
May we be like kingfishers catching fire, dragonflies drawing flame, beautiful
butterflies shining with your love.

In the name of Christ incarnate in a thousand places, and more. Amen.

A suggested song:

Let Us Build a House Where Love Can Dwell

Marty Haugen: © GIA Publications Inc, Chicago USA: May be used with the appropriate licence

Psalm 139.7-18

Reading from Isaiah 53

They were despised and rejected by others, a person of sorrows, and familiar with suffering.

Like one from whom others hide their faces they were despised, and we esteemed them not. Surely, they took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered them stricken by God, smitten by them, and afflicted. But they were pierced for our transgressions, they were crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon them, and by their wounds we are healed.

Reading from 1 Corinthians 12.14-26

Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honourable we clothe with greater honour, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it.

Reading from John 10: 1-10

'Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.' Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

So again Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

Reflection - as appropriate

ACT OF REMEMBRANCE

We remember now by name some of the transgender people who have died by the hands of others or by suicide in the last twelve months

List of Names

<https://www.hrc.org/resources/fatal-violence-against-the-transgender-and-gender-non-conforming-community-in2021>

We also remember all others who have been hurt and persecuted, or who are not on this list (for more information see: <https://transrespect.org/en/>)

Suitable Reflective Music

Candles may be lit

Loving Creator,

Let the rain come and wash away the
ancient grudges, the bitter hatreds held
and nurtured over generations.

Let the rain wash away the memory of the heart, and neglect.
Then O God, let the sun come out and fill the sky with beautiful rainbows.

Let the warmth of the Sun heal us wherever we
are broken. Let it burn away the fog so that each
of us sees each other clearly: so that we can
move beyond labels, beyond accents, gender,
sexual orientation, or skin colour.

Let the warmth and brightness of the sun melt our
selfishness: so that we can share the joy and
sorrow of our neighbours. And let the light of the
sun be so strong that we will see all people as
our neighbours.

Let the Earth, nourished by rain, bring forth
flowers to surround us with your beauty, and let
the mountains teach our hearts to reach upward
to heaven. Then, dear God, grant us comfort,
give us peace, and allow us strength to enable
us to Stand up, Fight for, and be a Voice for
Equality.

In Jesus' name, Amen!

*(prayer by Rev. Debra J. Hopkins, Black trans woman, Minister at Sacred Souls
Community Church in Charlotte, NC, sourced from*
<http://religiousinstitute.org/resources/prayers-weekend-trans-justice/>*)*

Loving source and light of all creation, your life
and wisdom is gloriously revealed in gender
diversity and in the kaleidoscopic beauty of
human difference.

We give you thanks for gender diverse people.
Bless them with assurance of your love.
Grant them strength and joy in their lives, bodies and relationships.

And enable everyone to celebrate their gifts:
that all may flourish as full and equal expressions of embodied love. In the power
and mystery of your presence and peace.

Amen.

Intercessions

God of kaleidoscopic love, we pray today for healing and new strength.

God of love, in your mercy

hear our prayer

We pray for those in need, for a deeper understanding of your joy and purpose for us all, and for the fulfilment of your vision of dynamic unity: in which 'there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female' for we are all 'one in Christ Jesus' (Gal 3.28). As we celebrate the work of your grace in making us new creations, help us come home to your peace and enable others to be at home with you, with themselves, and with all that you have created.

God of love, in your mercy

hear our prayer

We pray for welcoming hearts and arms to embrace.

Like the parent in Jesus' story, who rushed out to meet their offspring with your profound mothering love, enable us to let go of our inherited prejudices and inhibitions. that we may joyfully receive one another's diverse gifts and thus be fully reconciled and renewed together in your love.

God of love, in your mercy

hear our prayer

We pray for the Church, that it may fully recognise, affirm and celebrate the lives, bodies and gifts of its gender diverse members. Enable the Body of Christ to support those who suffer, to enable those who seek to thrive, and to welcome all fresh insights into what it is to become a new creation in God's love.

God of love, in your mercy

hear our prayer

We pray for our wider communities and world, that they too may embrace the gifts of gender diversity. We ask for a true spirit of listening and commitment on the part of politicians, media and other opinion formers. Strengthen those who bring light rather than heat and lift the clouds of ignorance, fear and oppression.

God of love, in your mercy

hear our prayer

We pray for healing and renewal for all who struggle with gender dysphoria, particularly those rejected by family and other loved ones.

We give thanks for those who minister with them: for families and loved ones who are supportive; for informed and caring health professionals; for life-giving support networks, agencies and individuals; and, above all, for fellow gender diverse people who walk in solidarity.

God of love, in your
mercy
hear our prayer

God of kaleidoscopic love, we give thanks for all those who have gone before us, especially our gender diverse forbears who are numbered among the saints. Inspired by their love, faith and courage,

grant that we, and all your people, may come home to your abiding love, know your peace, strength and joy, and flourish more fully in your eternal presence,

God of love, in your
mercy
hear our prayer

The Prayer of Jesus

- in our own language and preferred version...

Litany/chorus of Thanksgiving

For the image of God in every person

Thanks be to God

For transgender and cisgender women in their diversity

For transgender and cisgender men in their diversity

Thanks be to God

For agender, non-binary, and other
gendered people in their diversity

Thanks be to God

For loved ones who share the lives of gender diverse people

For professionals who help bring support and strength

Thanks be to God

For those who give voice and expression to gender diversity
For those who work for justice and empowerment

Thanks be to God

For religious leaders and congregations who are fully affirming
For politicians, media and educators who bring understanding

Thanks be to God

For all human diversity and its joys and life-giving challenges
For continuing revelation and life-giving grace

Thanks be to God

Commissioning

Today, loving God,

we have remembered those gender diverse people who have died by
the hands of others, for daring to be who they are.

That their deaths may not
be in vain, in your grace
and your forgiveness,
we ask for the courage to
bring your love and
affirmation to the world

Help us to do Your will

Sending out prayer

Kaleidoscopic God,
beyond gender and embodied in all, thank
you for your love and your assurance that
we have been fearfully and wonderfully
made. Grant us strength and joy in being
the people whom you have created and
called us to be. Give us patience and
loving persistence in the face of struggle
and adversity, and help us always to live
fully as blessed images of you.

Blessing

May the delight of God fill your souls with joy and give you strength to celebrate and embody Christ's love in the world:

and the blessing of God – creating, transforming, and making new - bring you to your true and loving home, now and always.

Amen.

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Liturgy from the United Church of Canada

A liturgy for the Transgender Day of Remembrance, and other resources are available from the United Church of Canada.

<https://united-church.ca/sites/default/files/gender-trans-resources.pdf>

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A prayer of lament and proclamation for Transgender Day of Remembrance

United Church of Christ USA

Reader 1:

How long, O God?

How long will transgender people suffer shame and loss because of who we are?
How long must we bear pain in our souls, and have sorrow in our hearts all day
long?

How long shall we have enemies who persecute us, ridicule us, and gloat over us?
(adapted from Psalm 10)

Reader 2:

Consider and answer me, O Lord my God!
Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death,
And my enemy will say, "I have prevailed."
(from Ps 13)

Reader 3:

Why do you stand far off, hiding yourself in times of trouble?
In fear the violent attack the vulnerable –
Let them be caught in the schemes their hearts have devised.
In confusion and disturbance the oppressors say,
"There is no God who cares for the meek –
No God will find me out."
Their mouths are filled with cursing and deceit and oppression
They sit in ambush
In stealth they murder the innocent.
The helpless fall by their might.
They think:

"God has forgotten [the drag queens and cross-dressers, transgender men,
transgender women, transgender children and youth, gender-queer people and
intersex individuals]* – God has hidden God's face."

Rise up, O Lord; O God, lift up your hand
Do not forget the oppressed.
(from Ps 10)

Silence

Reader 4: Matthew 5:1-9

Silence

All Gathered:
Why do murderers rage, and fearful people plot in vain?
Those in power, and those who long for power, conspire
Against the precious anointed of the Lord.
In heaven God laughs at their presumption.
I will tell of the decree of the Living, Mighty God
Who said to me, "You are my child. Today I have begotten you.
Ask of me, and I will make the earth itself your inheritance."
(from Ps 2)

*In this line place whatever names and identities best affirm the community.

Revd Malcolm Himschoot

https://www.ucc.org/what-we-do/justice-local-church-ministries/justice/health-and-wholeness-advocacy-ministries/lgbtq-ministries/lgbt_prayer-for-transgender-day-of/

For other resources from the United Church of Christ USA go to
<https://openandaffirming.org/resources/transgender/>

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A world that operates from love

On this Transgender Day of Remembrance
we remember those who have been murdered for being who they are,
those who face violence on a daily basis,
those who have lost loved ones,
and those who worry for loved ones.



May we come to a time when we cease to shame children around gender roles and expression,

where we allow for freedom and exploration of identity and expression, and to a world that operates from love especially when things are difficult and confusing.

May all of us who live with the threat of violence find support, strength, community, hope, and safety from violence.

Revd Sunshine Jeremiah Wolfe

<https://www.uua.org/worship/holidays/transgender-remembrance>

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A prayer for forgiveness

Loving God, Creator of the Universe,
you know our inner hearts.

Too often we have failed to follow your ways,
to love our neighbour and to truly love you.

We also recognise the ways in which transgender people have been sidelined,
feared or abused by the Church.

Forgive us for our past failures.

Grant all people fresh hearts and new minds so that we can celebrate the full
richness and diversity of human experience in the Love of Christ.

Amen.

Girton College, Cambridge

<https://www.girton.cam.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2020-11/TransgenderRemembrance-Friday20November2020.pdf>

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A prayer to honour identities

God of all creation,
whose wisdom and love is boundless,
you have many names and you are beyond all divisions of gender.

As we come together
to remember those transgender people who have been killed,
taken their own lives or been injured,

help us to honour their identities,
and the identities of all people.

Help us to create a world
where everyone can live with authenticity and dignity.
Help us all:
who belong to every sexuality and gender,
to live our own lives in true fulfilment of our different identities,
in fellowship with each other
and in the Love of Christ.

Amen.

Girton College, Cambridge

<https://www.girton.cam.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2020-11/TransgenderRemembrance-Friday20November2020.pdf>

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God full of mercy

God full of mercy,
bless the souls of all who are in our hearts on this
Transgender Day of Remembrance.

We call to mind today young and old, of every race, faith, and gender experience,
who have died by violence.

We remember those who have died because they would not hide, or did not pass, or
did pass, or stood too proud.

Today we name them: the reluctant activist; the fiery hurler of heels;
the warrior for quiet truth; the one whom no one really knew.

As many as we can name, there are thousands more whom we cannot,
and for whom no Kaddish may have been said.

We mourn their senseless deaths, and give thanks for their lives, for their teaching,
and for the brief glow of each holy flame.

We pray for the strength to carry on their legacy of vision, bravery, and love.

And as we remember them, we remember with them
the thousands more who have taken their own lives.

We pray for resolve to root out the injustice, ignorance,
and cruelty that grow despair.

And we pray, God, that all those who perpetrate hate and violence will speedily come to understand that Your creation has many faces, many genders, many holy expressions.

Blessed are they, who have allowed their divine image to shine in the world. Blessed is God, in Whom no light is extinguished.

Rabbi Reuben Zellman

(The Kaddish is a prayer that is commonly referred to as the Mourners Prayer because it is said in honour of people who have died.)

www.keshetonline.org/resource/prayer-for-transgender-day-of-remembrance

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Sending forth

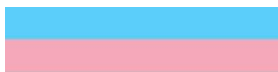
It is sacred work to make sure that in this world,
all are treated equally,
all have the right to live a safe life,
and every person is counted as a whole
and complete person created in the image of God.

Let us do this work with our whole selves.

Let us stand together and act together so that no one may remain broken.

https://united-church.ca/sites/default/files/in-the-image-of-god_transgender-day-remembrance.pdf

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If you need immediate support

Lifeline 13 11 14

If you face a personal crisis, including thoughts of self harm, volunteer crisis support workers are available 24/7.

QLife 1800 184 527

Specialist support, via phone or chat, for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer plus people (LGBTIQ+). 3.00 pm to midnight every day.

Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800

Telephone support for anyone under 25.

Suicide Callback Service 1300 659 467

If you are experiencing thoughts of self-harm or suicide.

Services and information for trans and other gender diverse people

There are services in each State/Territory. Two leading organisations are:

Gender Centre

<https://gendercentre.org.au/>

Support for trans and gender expressive people at every stage of their journey and live and explore their authentic sense of self.

ACON

<https://www.acon.org.au/who-we-are-here-for/tgd-people/>

AO offers and refers to a range of trans-affirming resources, programs and services delivered by caring people who genuinely understand the health issues affecting trans people.

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Contact Pitt Street Uniting Church

<https://pittstreetuniting.org.au>

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