

SUGGESTED LITURGY FOR THE TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE: 20 NOVEMBER 2018

This liturgy and other information is available online at
<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/liturgies/tdor/tdor2018.htm>

REFLECTION

“For now we see through a glass darkly”

“For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known”. (Corinthians 13:12)

Paul’s Great Paeon of Love in 1 Corinthians describes a journey of discovery, a journey in love as we each individually and together discover each other and, in God our true selves. A journey where love finds no difference between all people, but instead rejoices in it, between people whose gender identity coincides with that expected by biological sex, and for those it does not. In that glass we see the light of the hope of that love, and also the fear of the darkness that surrounds it. On this Transgender Day of Remembrance we encounter that darkness expressed in transgender lives attacked through persecution, rejection and death by the hands of others, or by suicide. Destroying lives of people and of families who try to live in ways that are true to their own identities, true to themselves and true to God’s love. Yet instead of working towards greater understanding and acceptance of each other the recent proposals by the United Kingdom government to allow people to self-define the gender identity they belong to, for legal purposes only, a toxic argument has been created between those for whom social identification must be determined by gender identity and those for whom social identification must be fixed by biological sex. An outcome of the latter attitude is found in the present suggestions by the executive administration in the United States to legislate transgender people legally out of existence. This is by decreeing that social identification must be determined by biological sex identified by the genitalia at birth, regardless of any changes through surgery or otherwise that are made. Yet in the Bible we are all called to be as one: we are all called to be truly ourselves in the Love of Christ. Today we remember the hurt and distress that this discrimination and hate has caused to transgender people. In the face of this darkness when: “Now we know in part, but then we shall know just as we are also are known”. So, today we must commit ourselves, all of us, to disperse that darkness and build the true welcome for everyone, transgender people included, which finds its complete inclusion and fulfilment in the Love of Christ.

REMEMBRANCE

We remember now by name some/all of the 368 transgender people who have died by the hands of others or by suicide in the last twelve months

LIST OF NAMES

(An international TDOR¹ List of names for 2018 is available at;
<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/TDOR2018-InternationalTMMList2018.pdf>

<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/TDOR2018-TransgenderDeathsInTheUKandUS.pdf>
<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/TDOR2018-InternationalList-2017-8.pdf>)

We also remember all others who have been hurt and persecuted, or who are not on this list

¹ For more information see: <https://transrespect.org/en/> <https://www.glaad.org/tdor>

INTERCESSIONS

The response is ***“Help us God to do Your will”***

INCLUSION

In the Synagogue at Capernaum Jesus said: *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed”*: As we seek to do your will help all of us to create that same inclusion so that everyone regardless of race, class, gender identity, sexual orientation finds the same fulfilment and inclusion, along with all others in the Love of Christ.

Response: ***“Help us God to do Your will”***

UNDERSTANDING

“For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known”. Help me Lord to take away the Glass of Darkness so that I shall know even as also I am known to know how I fail to help others, how my lack of understanding creates prejudice fear and discrimination, and even death, to people whose identities are not the same as our own.

Response: ***“Help us God to do Your will”***

CHURCH

As we pray for ourselves so let us pray for the Churches. Grant us Lord that we may create true, caring and compassionate Churches which welcome all equally who seek to fulfil Your love in the world, irrespective of race, class, tribe, gender and sexual identities, and all other differences that identity provides. Help us to dispel the fear and lack of understanding which bars anyone from entry to the Institutions that we for Your worship and service create.

Response: ***“Help us God to do Your will”***

WORLD

In a world where social divisions by power and gender remain and fear and prejudice continues to exist, one in eight transgender employees have been physically attacked by a colleague or customer in the last year. In the United Kingdom half of transgender people have hidden their identity at work for fear of discrimination. A quarter of transgender people have experienced homelessness two in five trans people who would like to undergo medical intervention as part of their transition, haven't done so yet, because they fear the consequences it might have on their family life. Almost half of transgender people don't feel comfortable using public toilets through fear of discrimination or harassment. A third of transgender people have been discriminated against because of their gender identity when visiting a café, restaurant, bar or nightclub in 2017. More than a quarter of transgender people who were in a relationship in 2017 have faced domestic abuse from a partner. More than two in five transgender people avoid certain streets because they don't feel safe there. One in four transgender people were discriminated against when looking for a house or flat to rent or buy in the last year. One in five non-binary transgender people have experienced discrimination while looking for a new home. When accessing general healthcare services in 2017, two in five transgender people said healthcare staff lacked understanding of transgender health needs. More than a third of transgender students in higher education have experienced negative comments or behaviour from staff in 2017². Help us to build a world where such discrimination disappears and all are welcome in the Love of Christ

² <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/news/new-research-exposes-profound-discrimination-trans-people-face> Abridge this if necessary

Response: ***"Help us God to do Your will"***

DEATH

Lord God, we remember before you all those who have died recently, especially those known to us. On this day we also remember all those transgender people who have been murdered or committed suicide, because they have been trying to be true to their own identities. We also remember those who grieve for them. Give them the peace of knowing that we all are loved in equal measure. Help us to help them find as we will all find in death, as in life, we all are alive in Your Kingdom of Love.

Response: ***"Help us God to do Your will"***

OURSELVES

Help us to recognise the harm we may have done to others through ignorance or lack of understanding even when our best intentions are in place. As we mourn for those who have died let us remember that the true fruits of that mourning must be found in a better and more understanding world. Today remember the deaths of transgender people but Jesus also said: *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed"*: Help us Lord to bring that freedom to the world.

Lord in Your Mercy

Response: ***"Hear our Prayers"***

HYMN

LORD, WE HEAR THIS CRY FOR FREEDOM

Lord, we hear this cry for freedom
Love and trust for one and all
Lord we hear this shout for justice
As we answer to your call
Bring us strength and bring us courage
Bring us love and help us care
So our lives can truly witness
Love of Jesus which we share

Lord you felt the bonds of prison
Put to death through human sin
Cursed and stripped and then derided
So God's love may truly win
Give us strength to face our weakness
Give us power to do your will
Conquer fear and conquer danger
Risking all we would fulfil

In these battles fighters fear us
Threatening their hold on power
Seeing all of us as traitors
Not supporting who they are
In these groups and gangs and cultures
Help us to provide escape
For all victims trapped by violence
To the love which you instate

Truth and mercy kiss each other
In the justice you endorse
Let us face the power of nations
When they use abusive force
Harming those by state run violence
Or discrimination's hate
Let your love become our witness
Of the freedom you create

Lord your will is seen in flowering
Never bounded by a creed
Tribes and people's own exclusions
Bringing guilt to each true need
With the outcasts, scorned and sinners
You yourself were called unclean
Help us Lord to share that presence
Finding out what this will mean

In this world no male and female
Jew or Greek or slave or free
Is excluded from your friendship
Of true selves that you can see
Neither race nor sex nor gender
Shall debar us from your call
When our acts are based on loving
You do welcome one and all

Bring us Lord the Church you founded
Not a Church of strength and power
But a Church which in the weakest
Builds God's kingdom where we are
Help us Lord to share your vision
Of a world that's just and good
In a Church of love and welcome
Sharing all that life's imbued

Lord we seek not little triumphs
In the lives we see and own
But the worldwide call of mission
Which the Gospel's power has shown
Give to us the power and wisdom
To pursue this glorious task
In your strength and power and glory
This from you we dare to ask.

Tune: Beethoven "Ode to Joy", last movement of 9th Symphony.
Or Sussex: "Father, hear the prayer we offer"

©Susan Gilchrist

November 2018