

A SERVICE FOR THE TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE 20 NOVEMBER 2020

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

(all to mute all except Leader and the three readers)

CALLING

Leader

Come Lord Jesus Come
You who welcome all, from all the world
Come Lord Jesus Come
To greet us now
We come as we are from every race and love and gender
To build your house our home

COLLECT

Leader

God of All Mercy Compassion and Grace, we come today on this Transgender Day of Remembrance to remember all transgender 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 avoid unfeeling actions. Help us to bring love and not hate. Help us to rejoice in the diversity that humanity creates. Through our worship and our remembering of all transgender people who have died during this last year from the hands of others... and our appeals for those who face the distresses of exclusion and rejection which are enforced by others... help us to sustain the strength and the vision to break down these barriers of despising, rejecting, and misunderstanding and by your grace strengthen us to build a more tolerant and accepting world.

HYMN

[Music](#)

Leader Introduces

Let Us Build a House Where Love Can Dwell

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Let us build a house where love can dwell
and all can safely live,
a place where saints and children tell
how hearts learn to forgive.
Built of hopes and dreams and visions,
rock of faith and vault of grace;
here the love of Christ shall end divisions.
All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where prophets speak,
and words are strong and true,
where all God's children dare to seek
to dream God's reign anew.
Here the cross shall stand as witness
and as symbol of God's grace;
here as one we claim the faith of Jesus.
All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where hands will reach
beyond the wood and stone
to heal and strengthen, serve and teach,
and live the Word they've known.
Here the outcast and the stranger
bear the image of God's face;
let us bring an end to fear and danger.
All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

Let us build a house where all are named,
their songs and visions heard
and loved and treasured, taught and claimed
as words within the Word.
Built of tears and cries and laughter,
prayers of faith and songs of grace,
let this house proclaim from floor to rafter.
All are welcome, all are welcome,
all are welcome in this place.

READING FROM ISAIAH 53:1

Reader 2

He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely, he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

READING FROM JOHN 14: 2-14

Reader 3

"In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way to where I am going". Thomas, said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you had

known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him."

Philip said to him, *"Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us."* Jesus said to him, *"Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves."*

"Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it".

This is the Word of the Lord

REFLECTION

Leader/Preacher [Video](#) (go to speaker view)

On the 20th of November, each year during the Transgender Day of Remembrance we remember those transgender people who have died at the hands of others, or who have taken their own lives because of the discrimination they face



In John 14 verses 2-14, where Jesus says: *"In my Father's house are many rooms"*, Philip said to Jesus, *"Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us."* To be shown does not necessarily mean to see. Jesus tells us there are many rooms, but too often doors are shut to keep people out. To see, means to break through the barriers caused by ignorance, suspicion, rejection, and hate.

So, what have these barriers created? In the United Kingdom transphobic hate crime reports have quadrupled over the past five years. The number of transgender hate crimes recorded by police forces in England, Scotland and Wales rose by 81% between 2016 and 2019¹. The crime statistics show that there was an increase in criminal activity of 25% in 2019... and it continues.

In October 2020, an article in the Daily Telegraph reported that hate crimes topped more than 100,000 for the first time. It also noted that police now investigate seven transphobic crimes a day and that offences have hit a record high. Transgender people in the United Kingdom currently have it harder than most. And why?

¹ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-48756370>

Then how do we answer that question? A major reason for this is because there are disputes about the origins of these conditions. One group, mainly from the feminist movements argue that it is a paraphilia. This term and their arguments identify it as a disruption to the normal path of development which is driven by sublimated sexual motivations. The other group, which represents a consensus view of the professional medical institutions, argue that it is a personality variation, which is within the normal range of human development. Depending on which identification you choose, the methods of management are almost opposite to one another.

So, what are the consequences? One of these sides dismisses gender identity as a purely social construct, the other places it at the heart of the personality that is created. On one side the transgender person is presented as the perpetrator: on the other that person becomes the sufferer instead. What is seen as compassion by one side is automatically condemned as coercion by the other. It is these differences which provide the background for what has become a toxic dispute.

And what does the Gospel tell us about these disputes? In the Gospel of John, Thomas, said to Jesus: *"Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?"*. When Philip said to Jesus, *"Lord, show us the Father"*, he was asking for Jesus to prove his statement, but Jesus did not provide it, instead he described journeys people make. Thus when Jesus responded by saying: *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life"* he was telling them not to rely on the sort of evidence that Philip wanted, but follow the example of how he lived his life, and how other people live their lives. He backed this statement up by saying: *"Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves"*

Far too often we do not even try to see or listen to what people say and do, Instead we spend much of our time trying to manipulate science and theology and distort our reporting of how people behave to conform to the agendas and viewpoints that our particular approach or diagnosis dictates. Of course, all viewpoints must be objectively analysed and truthfully examined, most notably in every argument which claims to use science to justify its position.

But when one side attacks the other with accusations of malpractice, and dismisses it with the statement that: *"Their teaching is backed by no credible science but has been adopted by government, the NHS, schools, and therapists"*, and when the other side responds in equal measure, or when any group refuses to consider even the possibility of moving from its entrenched theological stance, then regardless of your viewpoint, or the justice of your position, the capacity for listening is destroyed².

This is not the only challenge to be met. All lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people disrupt the accepted order of any society where gender complementary is socially and legally enforced. This is regardless of the morality of their acts. Today and throughout history, sexual abuse is and has been horrendous. For historical reasons, a sexual motive has always been presumed, but listening to the experiences of gender and sexually variant people shows that the driving forces behind them are those of love and identity instead.

² For my own research in these areas see: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/bibliography.htm>

So, people do disrupt gender and sexuality for many reasons. Motives may be misjudged, and many describe the current plight of transgender people as being equivalent to that of the gay rights movement in the 1980s and 1990s. Today we know this to be about love or identity, not dissolution and sex. In the well-known passage in Galatians 3:28, Paul said *“There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus”*.

For everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. Thus without exception, all people, who seek live their lives in ways that fulfil the love of Christ... and that welcome includes, transgender, transsexual, lesbian, gay, heterosexual and bisexual people... who seek to express their identities within roles that are true to themselves, and seeks to fulfil the Gospel message must be fully accepted in their own right... If we are truly to build the house of many rooms that Jesus refers to, we must listen and hear from each other with love and respect.

Sadly, and too often, instead of seeking to listen, we use what we hear about each other to condemn them. Listening becomes more difficult if the condemnations become too great, and it may be made impossible if criminalisation occurs. And that is still the position in many countries. To listen and enter with an open mind is all that is asked.

Jesus was despised and rejected because he broke the mould. Today, we remember the many deaths that have been caused by our failures to listen. It is transgender people who suffer greatly in these gender wars. As we now encounter the list of names being screened/read out of those who have been murdered because they have sought to live in ways which are true to their own identities, let us resolve to go forward and make this house of Jesus a home where love can dwell, a house where all are welcomed, and a house which shines with the Love of Christ.

Susan Gilchrist

ACT OF REMEMBRANCE

Leader (go to service sheet view)

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 NAMES³

Download if required from

www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/TDOR2020-MurderList.pdf

Before the service, download the list of those who have been killed from this source. The list is divided the list into three sections. Each reader reads one of these sections while the appropriate flower pictures which follow are being shown.

The music and words in the three subsequent autumn scene slides use the hymn "God Weeps". Details of authors, permissions, and sources are given on the last page of this order of service, and the words of the hymn are shown on the last two of the subsequent pictures. Match these pictures to the words of the hymn, as they are shown

Reader 1

Reader 2

Reader 3



In music we remember these people and others, not on this list, who have died, been hurt and persecuted for trying to live in ways that are true to their identities [Music](#)

God weeps
at love withheld,
at strength misused,
at children's innocence abused,
and till we change the way we love,
God weeps.

God bleeds
at anger's fist,
at trust betrayed,
at women battered and afraid,
and till we change the way we win,
God bleeds.

God cries
at hungry mouths,
at running sores,
at creatures dying without cause,
and till we change the way we care,
God cries.

³ An international TDOR List of names for 2020 is or will be also available at: : <https://transrespect.org/en/> and <https://www.glaad.org/tdor>

God waits
for stones to melt,
for peace to seed,
for hearts to hold each other's need,
and till we understand the Christ,
God waits.

INTERCESSIONS

"Let us Pray"

Leader Introduces

The response is ***"Help us God to do Your will"***

Reader 1

INCLUSION

Reader 2

Jesus said to his disciples: *"In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also": "Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son".*

As you called everyone on earth and in heaven, regardless of race, class, gender identity, and sexual orientation, help us to create for ourselves and others the ability to listen, so that we, and all people, find the same fulfilment, love, and inclusion on earth today, in all our diversities, without qualification or restriction, in Your Father's House, our home.

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

Reader 1

UNDERSTANDING

Reader 3

When Thomas, said to Jesus, *"Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?"* Jesus said to him, *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life".* Help us Lord to take away the Mist of Darkness so that we now know, even as you know us, how we fail to help others, how our lack of understanding creates prejudice fear and discrimination, and even death, to people whose identities are not the same as our own.

In your love and grace help us Lord help us to break down these walls of blindness in our own minds and in the minds of others, so that we may find understanding, compassion and acceptance of everyone who seeks to follow your will, so that from your home of diversity on earth and in heaven, we may all rejoice together in the Love of Christ.

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

Reader 1

CHURCH

Reader 2

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 fears and prejudices which we use to bar anyone from entry to the Institutions that we, for Your worship and service, provide.

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

Reader 1

WORLD (use Prayer A or B)

Reader 3

PRAYER A

In a world where social divisions by power and gender remain and fear and prejudice continue to exist, we pray that you will give peace love and understanding in place of the divisions that exist. We pray also that all governments, agencies and authorities will be inspired by your spirit to bring truth, justice, mercy and love to the world, and that all groups who are discriminated against, including transgender people, and all people who are in fear, hunger, danger and distress, may find a world transformed in your glory where such discrimination disappears, and all are welcome in the Love of Christ.

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

Reader 1

PRAYER B

As we bring into mind the one in eight transgender employees who have been physically attacked by a colleague or customer each year. The half of transgender people in the United Kingdom who have hidden their identity at work for fear of discrimination. The third of transgender people who have been discriminated against because of gender identity issues when visiting a café, restaurant, bar, or nightclub. The half of transgender people who do not feel comfortable using public toilets because of fear of discrimination or harassment. The quarter of transgender people who have been homeless. In a world divided by discrimination, inequalities, and strife, where social divisions by power and gender exist, we pray for the creation of a new world of world of freedom from fear, in the Love of Christ.

As we bring into mind the one in four transgender people who are discriminated against when looking for a house or flat to rent or buy. The more than a quarter of transgender people who are in a relationship and have faced domestic abuse from a partner. The rejection by friends, religious groups, and families. The two in five transgender people who would like to undergo medical intervention as part of their transition, but who have not done so yet, because they fear the consequences it might have on their loved ones and families. In a world divided by discrimination,

inequalities, and strife, where social divisions by power and gender exist, we pray for the creation of a new world of acceptance and understanding, in the Love of Christ.

As we bring into mind the two in five transgender people who report that healthcare staff lack understanding of transgender health needs. The more than a third of transgender students in higher education who have experienced negative comments or behaviour from staff. The many transgender people whose sense of identity has been directly attacked through deliberate misgendering by others. The forty percent of transgender people who have attempted suicide at some time in their lives⁴. In a world divided by discrimination, inequalities, and strife, where social divisions by power and gender exist, we pray for the creation of a new world of inclusion and welcome, in the Love of Christ.

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

Reader 1

PERSONAL PRAYERS

Now, silently, or aloud we each pray for matters that concern us, people we know, and issues that we set before you in love and faith

End each prayer with: **Lord in Your Mercy**

Response: ***“Hear our Prayer”***

Reader 2

Reader 2 concludes this by introducing the following prayer

DEATH

Reader 2

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. We pray for the perpetrators. Give them the peace of knowing that we all are loved in equal measure. Help us to find that in life, as in death, we all are alive in Your Kingdom of Love.

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

Reader 1

OURSELVES

Reader 3

Often, we are uncertain, like Thomas, who did not know the way to follow. Or Philip who asked to see the evidence before being convinced. And when we see how Jesus responded to their uncertainties, when he said: *“I am the way, and the truth, and the life”*. Help us to recognise the harm we may have done to others through

⁴Abridge this section if necessary. This information is from Stonewall reports and other sources

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. In place of our own fears, our doubts and uncertainties, grant us your peace, give us the joy, hope and courage to bring that good news, with your message of mercy, justice, love, and freedom to the world.

Lord in Your Mercy:
Response: ***"Hear our Prayers"***

Reader 1

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Leader Introduces

In your own language and preferred version, as our Father has taught us... let us pray

COMMISSIONING

Leader

Today, we have remembered those transgender people who have died by the hands of others, for daring to be who they are. You have called us to your service, to teach and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. That their deaths may not be in vain, in your grace and your forgiveness, we ask for the courage to bring your love and acceptance to the world

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

Reader 1

THE PEACE

(gallery view)

The Peace of the Lord be Always with You

Response: ***"And also with you"***

Reader 1

Let us offer each other a (Socially distanced) Sign of Peace

HYMN

Leader Introduces
Organ Music, follow or sing to
the words

(order of service view)

LORD, WE HEAR THIS CALL TO SERVICE

[Music](#)

Lord, we hear Your call to service
Love and trust for all to see
Let us bring Your wish for welcome
To a world that You make free

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

Give us strength to face our weakness
Give us power to do your will
Conquer fear and conquer danger
Brought by love we would fulfil

Give to us the power and wisdom
To pursue this glorious task
In your strength and power and glory
Through your love we dare to ask.

Tune: Sussex: "Father, hear the prayer we offer"

Hymn © Susan Gilchrist

November 2018

Adapted and abbreviated. For the complete hymn go to:

<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/liturgies/hymns.htm>

BENEDICTION

Leader

As we go out into the world, from depression bring resolution, from hurt bring forgiveness, from despair bring hope, from fear bring courage, from self-interest bring compassion, from sadness bring joy, from darkness bring light, from commitment bring the peace which comes of knowing that we do God's will. And the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all now and for evermore.

Go in Peace to serve the World

Response: **Amen**

CLOSING MUSIC

Peace of the Earth

[Music](#)

Service: © Susan Gilchrist: November 2020

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Let Us Build a House Where Love Can Dwell

Performers: Iain McLarty and Phill Mellstrom

Marty Haugen: © GIA Publications Inc, Chicago USA: Tune: Two Oaks

<https://music.churchofscotland.org.uk/>

God Weeps

Scottish Festival Singers, Ian McCrorie (Conductor), Howard Duthie (Piano)

Tune: 'God weeps at love withheld' Shirley Erena Murray

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Lord, we hear this call for service

Hymn © Susan Gilchrist November 2018

Adapted and abbreviated. For the complete hymn go to:

<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/liturgies/hymns.htm>

Tune: Sussex: "Father, hear the prayer we offer"

<https://play.hymnswithoutwords.com/father-hear-the-prayer-we-offer/>

The Peace of the Earth be With You

Scottish Festival Singers, Ian McCrorie (Conductor)

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<https://music.churchofscotland.org.uk/>

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