



**A RECONCILING IN CHRIST SERVICE:  
REMEMBER, HONORING, AND AFFIRMING  
OUR TRANSGENDER SIBLINGS**

November 18, 2020 - 7:00 PM



Welcome to Trinity Lutheran Church

As disciples of Christ seeking peace and justice in the world, we welcome, affirm, and include all people into the fullness of God's love. We celebrate people of all races, cultures, ages, sexual orientations, gender identities, physical or mental abilities, socioeconomic statuses, appearances, family status and citizenship as equally loved and valued in the eyes of God and in this place. All are invited to join this community as we worship God, grow in faith, and strive to love and serve one another. All, without exception, are welcome in this place.

## INTRODUCTION

We gather on this evening to lift up this congregation's desire to be a place of love, affirmation, welcome, and celebration for our gay, lesbian, transgender, bisexual, intersex, asexual, and queer siblings. We gather in solidarity to honor the inherent value and worth of every single human being, especially the transgender community. In honor of Transgender Awareness Week, we gather as a community to stand against the hatred and violence that is often directed toward our trans siblings.

In May of 2018, just one year after affirming the celebration of same-sex weddings in the life of this congregation, Trinity made the decision to become a Reconciling in Christ congregation, a designation that focuses on the welcome and inclusion of all people, specifically the LGBTQIA+ community which includes the full spectrum of sexuality.

Since these decisions two and three years ago, this congregation has become a kinder, gentler, more loving, more inclusive community of faith. Our life together has been strengthened and blessed by diversity. Our hearts have been opened to the plight of many who are marginalized by the powers of the world and the institution of the church. We gather in solidarity with our queer siblings with the desire to overcome prejudice and hatred, to help all human beings live fully and completely into their identity as God's beloved, precious children.

Trinity Lutheran Church, Greenville, SC stands against the hate, bigotry, homophobia, and judgment proclaimed in other Greenville pulpits as well as conservative, fundamentalist pulpits across the nation.

We stand against the brand of Christianity that judges, condemns, and wounds.

Called by God, this congregation stands as a beacon of love, light, hope, and healing to our LGBTQIA+ siblings who have been wounded by the church's judgment and condemnation.

We stand with our transgender siblings who have endured almost unbearable amounts of pain, judgement, and hatred from both the church and the world.

We strive daily to be a place of love, a place where love knows no boundaries, where all know that they are cherished and treasured.

We gather this evening to confess all the ways and times that we have not fully supported our queer and trans siblings.

We confess the jokes, the stereotypes, our fears, our misunderstandings, our lack of knowledge, our small-mindedness, our inability to love, embrace, and celebrate as God loves, embraces, and celebrates.

We gather this evening to stand in solidarity with our LGBTQIA+ siblings, to remember the beautiful and precious lives of our transgender siblings who lost their lives in acts of violence and hate.

We gather to pray for justice and righteousness for all people, for a world and a church that acknowledges the fact that every single person is created in the image of God and therefore worthy of love, honor, respect, and affirmation.

In this place, in our life together at Trinity, all, without exception, are loved, honored, affirmed, valued, welcomed, and celebrated.

HYMN

*All are Welcome*

#641

**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 speak to dream God's reign a new. Here the cross shall stand as witness and as symbol of God's grace; here as the 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 love is found in water, wine, and wheat: a banquet hall on holy ground where peace and justice meet. Here the love of God, through Jesus is revealed in time and space; as we share in Christ the feast that frees us: 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.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Let us pray.

God of love beyond measure who created the heavens and the earth and the many and diverse peoples around the globe, you sent your beloved child to dissolve the binaries between clean and unclean, holy and unholy, human and divine, saved and unsaved, and even death and life. Grant that we, following in your Child's footsteps, may see our whole lives as Scripture, so the coming Kin-dom may be witnessed in the way we love one another beyond binaries. Open our hearts and minds and hands to the beauty and value and inherent worth of all people. In the name of Jesus, our Companion and Protector, we pray.

**AMEN.**

MEDITATION (to include a reading from Acts)

Patrick Preacher

HYMN

*You are Mine*

#581

**I will come to you in the silence, I will lift you from all your fear you will hear my voice, I claim you as my choice. Be still and know I am here.**

**I am hope for all who are hopeless, I am eyes for all you long to see. In the shadows of the night, I will be your light. Come and rest in me. Do not be afraid I am with you. I have called you each by name. Come and follow me, I will bring you home; I love you and you are mine.**

**I am strength for all the despairing, healing for the ones who dwell in shame. All the blind will see, the lame will all run free, and all will know my name. Do not be afraid I am with you. I have called you each by name. Come and follow me, I will bring you home; I love you and you are mine.**

**I am the word that leads all to freedom, I am the peace the world cannot give. I will call your name, embracing all your pain. Stand up, now walk, and live! Do not be afraid I am with you. I have called you each by name. Come and follow me, I will bring you home; I love you and you are mine.**

THE LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE

We gather in this holy, sacred place embraced by God's love, filled with the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, blessed by Christ's presence, and surrounded by the soothing, comforting glow of candlelight to remember, honor, and hallow the lives of 34 of our transgender siblings who have died during 2020 as a result of hatred and acts of violence. May their families find comfort, peace, and hope in this time of remembering. May these precious lives be remembered for their beauty, courage, passion, conviction, and resolve. May their witness inspire us to continue to work for peace and justice in the world.

*Jesus, Remember Me is sung one time and then the music continues as the names and petitions are offered.*

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'Jesus, Remember Me'. It consists of two systems of music. Each system has a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The lyrics are: 'Je-sus, re - mem-ber me when you come in - to your King - dom.' The first system ends with a double bar line and repeat dots. The second system is identical to the first.

Text: Luke 23:42; Taizé Community, 1981  
Tune: Jacques Berthier, 1923-1994  
© 1981, Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, Inc., agent

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Dustin Parker.  
May he rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Neulisa Luciano Ruiz.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Yampi Méndez Arocho.  
May he rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Monika Diamond.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Lexi.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Johanna Metzger.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Serena Angelique Velázquez Ramos.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Layla Pelaez Sánchez.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Penélope Díaz Ramirez.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Nina Pop.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Helle Jae O'Regan.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Tony McDade.  
May he rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Dominique Fells.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Riah Milton.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Jayne Thompson.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Selena Rayes-Hernandez.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Brian "Egypt" Powers.  
May they rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Brayla Stone.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Merci Mack.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Shaki Peters.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Bree Black.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Summer Taylor.  
May they rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Marilyn Cazares.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Dior H. Ova.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Queasha D. Hardy.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child,  
Aja Raquell Rhone-Spears.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Kee Sam.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Aerrion Burnett.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Mia Green.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Michelle Michellyn  
Ramos Vargas.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Felycya Harris.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Brooklyn Deshuna.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Sara Blackwood.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Angel Unique.  
May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

*Jesus, Remember Me is sung a final time.*

## THE PRAYERS

Trusting in the one who names us, claims us, and calls us beloved, we pray for the world, the church, and all in need...

Holy God, You made us in your image, and you call us good. Silence the voices of shame and hatred – including the ones in our own heads – and inspire us to love ourselves and one another the way you so desperately, passionately, and deeply love us. God of grace,

**Hear our prayer.**

Holy God, Teach us a fondness and delight for our bodies as we are called to live in them, in all of their holy, messy, fabulous glory.

God of grace,

**Hear our prayer.**

Holy God, Teach us to love our neighbors who live in different skin and to love intelligences and abilities of all kinds, and to practice loving-kindness toward all.

God of grace,

**Hear our prayer.**

Holy God, Make us bold in our proclamation that the lives, loves, and gifts of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Ace, Queer, Intersex, Native, Black, Brown, Incarcerated, Disabled, and Migrant people matter to you, and so therefore matter to us. God of grace,

**Hear our Prayer.**

Holy God, we pray for those who need hope. For those who feel excluded. For all to know that they have value and are worthy of love, acceptance, and celebration. We pray for all those we name on our lips or silently in our hearts.... God of grace,

**Hear our Prayer.**

**Amen.**



Holy God,

We pray for our LGBTQIA+ siblings who have lost their lives to hateful and fearful acts. We pray for those who work to make our neighborhoods safer and more peaceful places. End violence. Restore communities. We pray for peace and comfort for the families and friends of queer siblings who have lost their lives. Strengthen us and keep us until that day when we meet you face to face. God of grace,

**Hear our Prayer.**

Receive these prayers, O God, and those desires too deep for words, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

HYMN

*We are Called*

#720

**Come! Live in the light! Shine with the joy and the love of the Lord! We are called to be light for the kingdom, to live in the freedom of the city of God. We are called to act with justice, we are called to love tenderly; we are called to serve one another, to walk humbly with God.**

**Come! Open your heart! Show your mercy to all those in fear! We are called to be hope for the hopeless so hatred and blindness will be no more. We are called to act with justice, we are called to love tenderly; we are called to serve one another, to walk humbly with God.**

**Sing! Sing a new song! Sing of that great day when all will be one! God will reign, and we'll walk with each other as children of Jesus united in love. We are called to act with justice, we are called to love tenderly; we are called to serve one another, to walk humbly with God.**

BLESSING

May the Holy Parent surround and fill you with the knowledge that you are loved, affirmed, cherished, and celebrated.

May the Son walk with you as you march with your queer and trans siblings.

May the Spirit ignite the fires of justice in your heart.  
The blessing of God, Sovereign, Savior, and Spirit,  
bless, strengthen, and comfort you this day and always.

**Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Go out into the world and shout from the rooftops that God's love is for ALL  
– No Exceptions!

**Thanks be to God.**



## CHURCH STAFF

Susan J. Crowell  
Senior Pastor

James C. Parham, III  
Associate Pastor for Worship and Music

Amy R. Brown, Deacon  
Director of  
Educational Ministries

Mandi T. Whitley, Deacon  
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and Children's Ministries

Kay M. Cook  
Office Manager

Henry W. Wilcox  
Accountant and Social Media Manager

Karen M. Craig  
Administrative Assistant

Roy L. Cook  
Facilities Manager

Beth C. Oswald  
Nursery Attendant

## CONGREGATION COUNCIL

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