



A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church In America

TRANSGENDER MEMORIAL SERVICE REMEMBERING, HONORING, AND AFFIRMING OUR TRANSGENDER SIBLINGS

November 17, 2021 - 6:30 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.

WELCOME

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.

There is still much work to be done. Most recently we began a series of completely Queer-led worship services in an effort to create a loving space of healing for those who have been wounded by the church. Partnerships with community LGBTQIA+ organizations such as 864Pride and PrideLink continue to evolve and strengthen. These groups educate us on all the many ways we can work together towards justice, equality, and love right here in the upstate.

Our congregation has become a kinder, gentler, more loving, and more inclusive community of faith.

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.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Please stand as able.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✝ one God whose boundless love encompasses all people, our unending and most glorious hope.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God of love,

We are guilty of having listened to hateful voices who claim to speak in your holy name. At times, we have believed harmful words proclaimed about our transgender siblings. Have mercy upon us O God, for not always seeing ourselves and others as perfectly and wonderfully made in your most Holy image. Forgive us for the hurts we have caused each other as well as ourselves. Renew us and strengthen us in the love of our Savior Jesus Christ, for now and for all time to come.

Beloved people of God:

In Christ you are filled through and through with the love and grace of God our creator. You are worthy of God's love just as God created you to be. Open your hearts to see yourself as God sees you: gay, beautiful, lesbian, holy, bisexual, cherished, transgender, beloved, queer, marvelous, intersex, wonderful, asexual, adored, allies, righteous. Your sins are forgiven ✝ in the name of Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of a God filled with compassion for you.

Amen.

**Let us build a house where love can swell 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:**

Refrain

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: *Refrain***

**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: *Refrain***

**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: *Refrain***

**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: *Refrain***

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**

A READING FROM PSALM 139

¹ My God, you've searched me, and you know me. ² You know if I am standing or sitting, you read my thoughts from far away. ³ whether I walk or lie down, you are watching; you are intimate with all of my ways. ⁴ A word is not even on my tongue, God, before you know what it is: ⁵ you hem me in, before and behind, shielding me with your hand. ⁶ such knowledge is too wonderful for me, a height my mind cannot reach! ⁷ Where could I run from your spirit? Where could I flee from your presence? ⁸ If I go up to the heavens, you're there; if I make my bed in Death, you're already there. ⁹ I could fly away with wings made of dawn, or make my home on the far side of the sea, ¹⁰ but even there your hand will guide me, your mighty hand holding me fast. ¹¹ If I say, "The darkness will hide me, and night will be my only light," ¹² even darkness won't be dark to you; the night will shine like the day—darkness and light are the same to you. ¹³ You created my inmost being and stitched me together in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ For all these mysteries I thank you—for the wonder of myself, for the wonder of your works—my soul knows it well. ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you while I was being made in that secret place, knitted together in the depths of the earth; ¹⁶ your eyes saw my body even there. All of my days were written in your book, all of them planned before even the first of them came to be. ¹⁷ How precious your thoughts are to me, O God! How impossible to number them! ¹⁸ I could no more count them than I could count the sand. But suppose I could? You would still be with me! ¹⁹ O God, if only you would destroy those degenerates! If only these reprobates would leave me alone! ²⁰ They talk blasphemously about you; your enemies treat you as if you were nothing. ²¹ Don't I hate those who hate you, God? Don't I loathe those who defy you? ²² I hate them with a total hatred, and regard them as my own enemies! ²³ Examine me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts— ²⁴ see if there is misdeed within me, and guide me in the way that is eternal.

The word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

The Rev. Noah Herren
Pastor at Saint Luke's Lutheran Church,
Atlanta, GA

**Longing for light, we wait in shadows. Longing for
truth, we turn to you. Make us your own,
your holy people, light for the world to see.**

Refrain

***Christ be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the shadows.
Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gathered today.***

**Longing for peace, our world is troubled. Longing for
hope, many despair. Your word alone
has power to save us. Make us your living voice. *Refrain***

**Longing for food, many are hungry. Longing for
water, many still thirst. Make us your bread,
broken for others, shared until all are fed. *Refrain***

**Longing for shelter, many are homeless. Longing for
warmth, many are cold. Make us your building,
sheltering others, walls made of living stone. *Refrain***

**Many the gifts, many the people, many the
hearts that yearn to belong. Let us be servants
to one another, making your kingdom come. *Refrain***

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 45 of our transgender siblings who have died during 2021 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 continues the melody and accompaniment, also ending with a double bar line and repeat dots.

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, Tyianna Alexander. May she rest in the eternal love of Christ.

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Samuel Edmund Damián Valentín. May he rest in the eternal love of Christ.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We bless and honor the life of God's beloved child, Whispering Wind Bear Spirit. May they rest in the eternal love of Christ.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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 changing 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, Migrant, and all 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.

**My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the
God of my heart is great, and my spirit sings of the
wondrous things that you bring to the ones who wait.
You fixed your sight on your servant's plight, and my
weakness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my
name be blest could the world be about to turn?**

Refrain

***My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn!***

**Though I am small, my God, my all, you
work great things in me, and your mercy will last from the
depths of the past to the end of the age to be.
Your very name puts the proud to shame, and to
those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the
strong to flight, for the world is about to turn. *Refrain***

**From the hall of pow'r to the fortress tow'r not a
stone will be left on stone. Let the king beware, for your
justice tears every tyrant from his throne.**

**The hungry poor shall weep no more, for the
food they can never earn; there are tables spread, ev'ry
mouth be fed, for the world is about to turn. *Refrain***

**Though the nations rage from age to age, we remember
who holds us fast: God's mercy must deliver
us from conqueror's crushing grasp.**

**This saving word that our forebears heard is the
promise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be
crushed by God who is turning the world around. *Refrain***

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.

SERVING TONIGHT

Preacher

Noah Herren

Leaders

Ian Boden
Susan Crowell
Patrick Preacher

Pianist

Jim Parham

Cantor

Richard Moose

Video Production

Henry Wilcox

CHURCH STAFF

Susan J. Crowell
Senior Pastor

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

Ian E. Boden
Vicar/Pastoral Intern

Amy R. Brown, Deacon
Director of
Educational Ministries

Mandi T. Whitley, Deacon
Director of Youth
and Children's Ministries

Kay M. Cook
Office Manager

Henry W. Wilcox
Accountant and
Digital Media Manager

Karen M. Craig
Administrative Assistant

Roy L. Cook
Facilities Manager

Beth C. Oswald
Nursery Attendant

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