

# TRANS DAY OF REMEMBRANCE TOOLKIT

[www.transfiguredmission.uk](http://www.transfiguredmission.uk)

RESOURCES  
OUR  
PROJECT

# Introduction

Trans Day of Remembrance (TDOR) is an annual observance on 20th November in memory of the trans+ people who lost their lives through acts of anti-trans violence and bigotry in the past year. With so much anti trans rhetoric, and many actively seeking to erase transgender people. It is so important that those we lose are remembered, and that we continue to fight for justice.

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.

There is no one way to lead a vigil or service of remembrance, it is important to respond to the local context and audience. For example, some vigils will read every name of trans+ people who have died in the last year, while others choose to focus on local struggles.

If possible, it is important to be led by your local trans+ people and community. This should be their space, and they should take ownership of a vigil.

In this document we will share some of our resources, and the resources of others, compiling together a list to help you get started, or develop upon your existing practice.

## Information about Vigils

### Remembering the Dead

A fundamental part of TDOR is remembering those that have died over the past year. However you choose to share this information, it is recommended that you offer a clear trigger warning, with a safe space to find support.

It is important to note that countries where higher statistics are shown, are not necessarily more violent or hostile than others. Many of these countries are recording deaths more accurately, typically due to a queer and trans community reporting this.

Some ways you might choose to share this information includes:

- Reading the full list of names, found on the [Trans Lives Matter website](#). With 100s of names to read, it is good practice for multiple people share this responsibility.
- Printing photos and stories, with more detail of a limited number of people. This information is often released in November annually.
- Sharing the statistical information to offer an overview, and sense of global picture. Various sites collate this annually, including: [TGEU](#), and [Trans Remembrance Project](#).
- Others choose to present this information on slides, while music is played.

Following the reading of the names, it is sensible to honour and remember those not named, whose stories, lives, and deaths were made invisible by transphobia. And to note the local tensions and situations that cause pain.

## Space to Respond

With the weight of this information and reality, please consider carefully how to give space for people to respond. You may choose that this happens during the reading of names, or afterwards. This may include:

- Lighting candles.
- Minute/s of silence.
- Writing down prayers, reflections, struggles, hopes and dreams. Onto: butterflies (symbol of transformation), purple luggage tags, a trans flag.

You may wish to lead space for those present to name their feelings, to give them permission to feel it. To allow for a range of feelings, including: discomfort, hope, pain and solidarity.

## Art, Music & Poetry

Liberation and emotion has always been at the heart of art. A sharing of poetry, music and hymns can offer respite and soul to a vigil. If trans+ people are not already leading the vigil, these may be places where they can be involved.

Consider dispersing poetry and music throughout the time, making sure wherever possible to use work made by trans+ poets, artists and musicians. It is your responsibility to follow copyright law and ask for the rights to use material when needed.

## Faith & Prayer

The choice to use prayer, religious texts and sharing faith is primarily about your context. If a church is hosting a TDOR event for a local trans + group, prayer during the vigil should be done with consent.

While advertising an TDOR event from your church, it is helpful to be clear about the Christian content involved. The ongoing oppression of LGBTQ+ people from the Church creates a culture of suspicion. Transparency and collaboration would help create trust.

When using prayer at an vigil, some will use language that is inclusive of other faiths, and gender-expansive language about God.

## Leaving Well

To conclude a vigil or remembrance service, it can be helpful to finish with words of hope grounded in the reality of oppression. Some important areas to consider include:

- Safety from potential hostility, especially when leaving venue.
- Offer support: including chaplains, and details for helplines & local groups.
- Allyship: ways to support trans\* people everyday, and local groups to donate towards.
- Refreshment and hospitality, as well as opportunities to meet with others & finish any activities.
- Space to leave seats at own speed, to not be rushed into socialising.

# Materials

## From Churches & Faith Groups

[The Methodist Church, Transgender Remembrance](#)

[Student Christian Movement, Trans Day of Remembrance Liturgy](#)

[Metropolitan Community Church, Trans Day of Remembrance Toolkit](#)

[OneBodyOneFaith, Trans Day of Remembrance](#)

[Worship Words, Liturgy for Transgender Day of Remembrance, Corrymeela Community](#)

[Open and Affirming Coalition, Transgender Day of Remembrance](#)

[QSpirit, Transgender Day of Remembrance Spiritual resources](#)

## Poetry

Jay Hulme, Beatitudes for a Queerer Church

Aly Richardson, Velociraptors

Nico Wilkinson, A Transgender Guide to (Book) Binding

Joshua J Espinoza, The Moon is Trans

Taylor Berieter, Airplane Weather

Otter Jung-Allen, A Lesson in Trans Joy

Miles Walser, Hierarchy

Cecily Schuler, Use Your Words

Ethan Smith, A Letter to the Girl I Used to Be

Trans Teacher, Made of Clay

Kae Tempest, Love Song for Queens, Studs, Butches, Daddies, Fags and All the Other Angels

Sam Mackie, Rainbows are Circles

Audre Lorde, A Litany for Survival

[Caitlin, No Name Unknown](#)

## **Prayers**

[Methodist Church, A prayer for the Transgender Day of Remembrance](#)

[United Church of Christ, Prayer for Transgender Day of Remembrance by Rev. Malcolm Himschoot](#)

[Fran Pratt, An Interfaith Litany for Trans Day of Remembrance](#)

[Jenn Luong, A Prayer for the Trans Day of Remembrance](#)

[George White: Prayer for Trans Day of Remembrance \(Video\)](#)

[Bishop Susan Johnson, Transgender Day of Remembrance: Honouring the gospel call to love](#)

[Reuben Zellman, God Full of Mercy](#)

## **Liturgy**

[Student Christian Movement, Trans Day of Remembrance Liturgy](#)

[Metropolitan Community Church, Trans Day of Remembrance Toolkit](#)

[Worship Words, Liturgy for Transgender Day of Remembrance, Corrymeela Community](#)

[TransSpirit, A Liturgy for Transgender Day of Remembrance](#)

[Girton College, Midday Liturgy for Transgender Day of Remembrance](#)

[Student Christian Movement Trans Day of Remembrance Service 2024](#)

[St Mark's Episcopal Cathedral, TDOR Holy Eucharist & Vigil of Remembrance](#)

[Jenny Alexander-Allen, A Liturgy for Transgender Day of Remembrance](#)

[Jay Wilson, Worship Resources for the Transgender Day of Remembrance](#)

[United Church of Canada, In the image of God: A Transgender Day of Remembrance Service](#)

[TGDR, Take Away This Hate: A Liturgy for the Transgender Day of Remembrance](#)

[Holy Spit, A Prayerful Lament & Vigil for Trans Day of Remembrance](#)

## **Reflections**

[Open & Affirming, We Know the Love of God](#)

[Student Christian Movement, Remember the Dead, Fight Like Hell for the Living](#)

[Shannon Kearns , Grief & Resurrection: A Sermon](#)

[ALOK, Re-membering Trans Day of Remembrance \(Video\)](#)

[Jay Hulme, Trans Day of Remembrance Sermon](#)

[Shannon Kearns, Transgender Day of Remembrance](#)

[David Weekley, A Christian Calling For Transgender Day Of Remembrance](#)

[Esther, Transgender Day of Remembrance 2022, My Transition is Holy](#)

[MW Bychowski, The Grief of Thomas: A Sermon for Trans Day of Remembrance](#)

[Simon de Voil, Sermon for Transgender Day of Remembrance](#)

## **Secular Songs**

Izzy Heltai, Happy

Sasha Allen, Bones

Jerrica Escoto, The Problem with Being a Tree

Skylar Kergil, Tell Me A Story

The Trials of Cato, Gloria

Nancy Kerr, Fragile Water

Jules Paymer, The Daughter That my Mother Wanted

Wrabel, The Village

Kae Tempest, Love Harder

Claye Bowler, You Wish You Wish

## **Faith Songs & Hymns**

Ash Brockwell, In Memoriam

Open Table, Speaking & Singing to God

Taize, Stay With Me

Taize, Wait for the Lord

Daniel Charles Damon, Colors in the Sky

Miriam Winter, O for a World

Ally Barrett, Hymns

Let My People Sing!, We Defend Our Trans Family (Album)

Semler, Raise Up

The Porter's Gate, Justice Songs / Lament Songs (Albums)

The Porter's Gate, Christ Has No Body Now but Yours

Biforst Arts, How Long?

Singing from the Lectionary, Songs & Music to Welcome LGBTQIA+ People

Amanda Udis-Kessler, God the Soaring Eagle

John Miller Campbell, In the Struggle

Raven Kaldera, Between

## Additional Hymns

Ash Brockwell writes some of trans-inclusive hymns to old well-known tunes. These have been reworded for this context, they are not intended to replace the traditional versions.

### The Ways We Live Our Love

Tune: 'Simple Gifts' by Joseph Brackett, 1848 (used in 'Lord of the Dance')

It's not about the labels that we give ourselves,  
It's not the names that we give our love,  
It's not about the stories that we tell ourselves;  
It's about the ways that we live our love.

Time now to break, and time to heal,  
It's time now to fall and it's time to rise,  
For whenever we feel that we have lost it all,  
We find You in the kindness in someone's eyes.

It's not about the judgements that we had to bear,  
It's not the love mistranslated as a sin,  
It's not about communion that we could not share,  
It's about the times when You entered in.

Time now to break, and time to heal...

It's not about the hatred or the words they used,  
It's not the feelings of guilt or shame,  
It's not about the scriptures or the prayers abused,  
It's the day we knew we were called by name.

Time now to break, and time to heal...

It's time for us to breathe and open up our hearts,  
Forgetting things we were certain that we knew,  
From the ashes of illusion, revolution starts;  
For You're in us, and we're one in You.

Time now to break, and time to heal...

We feel the earth below us, and the sky above,  
Transcending the fear, and the drama, and the pain;  
Together we affirm the way of hope and love,  
The Nameless Love is alive again!

Time now to break, and time to heal...



## **The Path You Came To Show Us**

Tune: 'What A Friend We Have In Jesus' (Joseph M. Scriven and Charles Converse, 1868)

You can see beneath the surface,  
See the heart beneath the skin;  
Let us see the way that you see,  
let the time of change begin.  
Let us love with no more judgement,  
no more fear or prejudice,  
That's the path You came to show us;  
let the world be changed by this!

Stand with us against oppression:  
No-one will be pushed aside,  
No-one's voice will now be silenced,  
No-one's rights will be denied.  
Every seeker will be welcomed,  
Every song will now be heard,  
That's the path You came to show us;  
that's the power of Your word.

Let us overturn the tables  
Where salvation is for sale;  
Tell the lonely and rejected,  
Fear and shame will not prevail!  
For the friends we've lost to hatred,  
Keep a candle burning bright:  
That's the path You came to show us,  
Let us lift them to the light.

For the way You came to teach us  
is the way of love and care;  
Love uniting and transforming;  
love for everyone to share.  
None rejected or excluded,  
no-one told they don't belong,  
That's the path You came to show us;  
Your deep love cannot be wrong!

## **Your Love Protects Me**

Tune: 'Bunessan' (Scottish traditional, used in 'Morning has Broken' by Eleanor Farjeon)

Your love protects me when pain seems endless,  
I'm not afraid when You're by my side;  
When I'm alone, abandoned and friendless,  
You are my hope, my helper, my guide.

Your love protects me in times of grieving,  
Comforts my soul and dries up my tears,  
Stops me despairing, keeps me believing,  
Gives me the strength to conquer my fears.

Your love protects me when haters hurt me,  
You're by my side when things fall apart;  
You won't forget me, you won't desert me,  
You are the healing light in my heart.

Your love protects me, Your love reminds me,  
All that I've lived through, all I can be;  
Through all the dark times, Your love still finds me,  
Helping me grow and setting me free.

## **The Love Beyond Names**

Tune: 'O Worship the King' – Wm. Gardiner's Sacred Melodies, 1815

We knock at the door; You welcome us in,  
We ask and You give; let healing begin!  
No longer excluded, cast out or betrayed;  
No longer despairing, no longer afraid.

Let that which was broken now be made whole,  
Bring joy to each heart and comfort each soul,  
No longer rejected, no longer alone,  
You call us by name, and we're claimed as Your own.

Bring peace to each stressed and overwhelmed mind,  
And walk by the side of those left behind;  
Bring hope to the hopeless and those filled with fear,  
And show the abandoned that Love's always near.

For You are the beat that powers each heart,  
The force that inspires all music and art,  
The flow of each well-spring, the light of all flames,  
The source of all healing, the Love beyond names.

## Hymn of the Pilgrims

Tune: King's Weston, Ralph Vaughan Williams, 1925 (used in 'At the name of Jesus')

We have come so far and travelled for so long,  
Have you heard our prayers now, have you listened to our song?  
Life can seem so hard and troubles never end:  
Still we trust in You, our loving faithful friend.

We have chased the dream and we have lit the flame,  
Shared our joys and our sorrows, as we called on your name,  
Let us feel Your power, guide us in your ways,  
Through the darkest night we will proclaim Your praise.

We have lost so much and shed so many tears,  
Sought You in the silence through the long and lonely years,  
Still we seek Your mysteries through our fervent prayer,  
Never giving up, but trusting You are there.

We have felt abandoned, we have felt alone,  
Yet we are Your people, and You claim us as Your own.  
Hold us in your arms now, call us to your side,  
Till at last we stand and speak our truth with pride.

We have judged our friends and we have missed the mark,  
Still You send Your compassion, like a candle in the dark.  
When we're trapped in thoughts of all we did not do,  
You call us to Love that leads us home to You.

We have sung together, we have shared our tales,  
Still Your Love, always constant, never falters, never fails.  
Shining through our stories, even our mistakes,  
When we crave forgiveness, Love is all it takes!

We have set the table, we have broken bread,  
Let us share it together, leaving no-one unfed.  
Bless our hearts' communion, bless our bread and wine,  
Sacred yet embodied; human and divine.

We have kept the faith and put our trust in You:  
See us standing strong here, know our love is always true.  
Bring us transformation through Your holy breath,  
Till at last we taste the Love transcending death.

## **Hymn of the Mourners**

Tune: 'Repton' by Hubert Parry (used in 'Dear Lord and Father of mankind')

Who else can comfort us the way You do?  
For through Your love we're healed;  
Bereaved by death, we call to You,  
With every breath, give our all to You,  
In Your light our hope's revealed;  
In Your light our hope's revealed.

Take up the fragments of our broken hearts,  
And fuse them with Your gold,  
Though flesh must die, still Love survives,  
And Love, in time, renews and revives;  
There are stories yet to be told;  
There are stories yet to be told.

So in this grieving-time, let souls unite,  
With courage to go on;  
Our flames of love keep burning bright  
For those now hidden from our sight  
Your compassion makes us strong:  
Your compassion makes us strong.

Your Love reminds us all are welcome here,  
As earth returns to earth,  
And dust to dust, we feel You near,  
We learn to trust, and cast out fear,  
Through your promise of rebirth:  
Your promise of rebirth.

As your Beloved once anointed you,  
Pour out your healing balm,  
Through all our anguish and our grief,  
Your ceaseless Love will bring relief,  
O still small voice of calm,  
O still small voice of calm!

## **Treasured**

Tune: 'Blaenwern' (used in 'Love Divine, all loves excelling')

There was one who taught the excluded,  
Healing those whom no-one would touch;  
There was one who welcomed the hungry,  
True compassion just meant so much.  
There was one who invited the outcasts,  
Seeking people who didn't belong:  
There was one who taught their disciples  
How to love, for Love can't be wrong!

There is one who still lives among us,  
Loving Presence always right here...  
Lets us know we're more than our stories,  
Sets us free from our grief and fear,  
There is one who's still leading us onwards,  
Challenging us when we're sure that we're right,  
When we think we've found all the answers,  
Guiding us 'til we find the Light.

There is one who tells us we're treasured,  
Made to match God's perfect design;  
There is one who calls us beloved,  
Says, 'My child, you were always mine!  
Come and eat at my table, you're welcome,  
I will never show cruelty to you;  
When you're lost, that's just when you'll find Me,  
Where you're broken, My light shines through.'

There's a peace we cannot imagine,  
There's a Light beyond lights we've known,  
There's a power that always unites us,  
Helps us know that we're not alone;  
Soon our gifts will be woven together,  
There's a treasure that they will reveal,  
There's a dream we're building for ever,  
There's a future we're making real.