

**Worship Resources
for the
Transgender Day of Remembrance
November 20, 2012**

These worship resources are written by the Rev. Jay Wilson, who describes himself as a queer and genderqueer transguy, autistic and disabled. He also identifies as a Lutheran postmodern, third-wave feminist, academic geek, disability rights activist, and social justice advocate. Jay completed his Masters in Social Work from College of St. Catherine/St. Thomas University and completed his Masters in Divinity from Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota.

November 20 is set aside each year as the International Transgender Day of Remembrance. Started in 1998 by Gwendolyn Ann Smith, transgender activist, as a way to memorialize Rita Hester, who was violently murdered in Allston, Massachusetts, the day has evolved and grown such that today it is marked internationally in more than 185 cities in 20 countries.

The Transgender Day of Remembrance has historically been a day to remember those who have been murdered as the result of ignorance and transphobia. It is a day set aside to call attention to the violence, extreme discrimination, and alienation towards those in society who are transgender.

Congregations are encouraged to offer a petition in your worship services in recognition of the Transgender Day of Remembrance during the Prayers of the Church, either this Sunday or the next, November 18 or 25, 2012.

For more information on the Transgender Day of Remembrance, see www.transgenderdor.org

Confession and Forgiveness I

by the Rev. Jay Wilson

In the name of the Parent, and of the Child, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation,

Come to the help of your people as we mourn the loss of the dead on this Transgender Day of Remembrance. Turn us from our pity, despair and fear toward full relationship with you and all of our neighbors.

Give us the courage to challenge oppression, both gender-based or based on our other ways of dividing and conquering. Love us into including *all* of our neighbors. Give us the light to examine ourselves, our comfort, privilege and fear, and turn us toward relationship.

May your Holy Spirit lead us to open our hearts to you and one another in confession, and be opened to your forgiveness and renewal.

Amen

Confession and Forgiveness 2

by the Rev. Jay Wilson

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

Gracious God, Have mercy on us.

We confess that we have turned from you and from your claimed people.

We have given ourselves to the powers of sin in division, bickering, bullying, isolation, hatred, fear and oppression.

We have sinned against you and your people in judgmental thoughts, careless words, and fearful deeds; by what we have said and done, and by what we have left undone.

We have left members of our community isolated and alone.

We have not confronted hatred and violence.

We have left our own privilege and sexism unexamined.

We have failed to notice and challenge gender oppression in, with, and under our racism, ageism, classism, ableism, sizism, binary thinking, and all the other ways we oppress.

We have turned away from hunger and poverty, turned our backs on the suffering of most of our world.

We have loved our own comfort more than we have loved others.

We have put our gender norms before our love for you and for our neighbors.

Turn us again toward you, bringing us into full relationship through your Spirit with all of our neighbors. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us to walk in the ways of the table-turner, the oppression-healer and the community-builder. Let your Holy Spirit speak through us and guide us into community.

Amen

Confession and Forgiveness 3

by the Rev. Jay Wilson

God, the relationship of Parent, Child and Holy Spirit, has loved us into a relationship as we are, broken and dead, and brought us into new life in relationship with God and one another.

By grace we have been saved. In the name of Jesus, we are forgiven.

Jesus, who approached the woman at the well, we give you thanks that human ideas about gender have not stopped you from sharing your love with us. Grant us passion and hope for renewed relationship, bringing our whole selves into your work of building our communities with our neighbors. Move us to share your love, to work for a day when transgender saints are remembered in every church after dying at the end of long lives in the midst of families, churches and communities, honored and whole.

Amen

Prayers of the People Petitions

by the Rev. Jay Wilson

With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, let us pray for the church, all of us in our need, and all of God's creation.

God who wept, weep with us as we remember the hatred, violence and fear that killed Your holy children whom we remember today. Weep with us for those whom we lost to gun shots and beatings. Weep with us for those we lost in acts of violence between strangers, and those lost to child abuse, partner abuse, killed by people who were close or killed by people who had power over them. Weep with us for those we lost to suicide and smoking, to recklessness, to drinking, drugs, and self-hatred. Weep with us for those we lost to preventable diseases, to tuberculosis and malaria, to AIDS and hepatitis, to mental illness, heart disease, and cancer. Weep with us for those who we lost to lives shortened by poverty and stress. Weep with us for those who died alone and isolated. Weep with us, and then remind us that for you, death is not the end of relationship with you or with each other. Bring us from Good Friday to Easter, to celebrate and remember the beauty and diversity of gender in your people along with the gender non-conforming Mary Magdalene, who was the first to know of your rising.

We give thanks for your transgender saints whom we lost this year to violence : Sonia, Brenting, Githe, Popinha, Guilherme, Paola, Deoni, Carla, Agnes, Chiquinha, Saroya, Rosita, David, Coko, Tyrell, Menakshiammal, Paige, Rebekah, Leandro, Brandy, Anil, Chrissie, Thapelo, Tracey, Secil, Tiffany, Laryssa, Kendall, Kyra, Victoria, January, [*add any others from the community or from the www.transgenderdor.org website*], the saints we know of but not of their names, and those who died unknown. We remember those whose stories were buried with

them, whose families or officials who named them or reported their deaths in a way that did not honor their gender. We know you know the names of their hearts. We hold that you know them by name even when we do not. Neighbor them to us. Keep them in our hearts, and move us toward deeper community with transgender and gender non-conforming people across your world.

Jesus, friend of Mary and Martha and Lazarus, be real with us and keep us real. Mourn our dead with us, comfort us and draw us near to you. Be with us, even as you are with those who we have lost. We wish we could see the raising of Lazarus, but we only see the grave. Remind us of your command to the crowd when you raised Lazarus from the dead; after calling him to come out, you called the crowd to “untie him.” Give us the strength and love to untie each other from all that ties us too tightly:

Untie us from gender stereotypes and gender norms.

Untie us from the sexism that affects us all, and all of the ways of oppressing that tie us to the grave.

Jesus, friend of Lazarus, tell us as you told the crowd: to untie each other, and lead us into life free from the bounds of all that holds us to the grave.

Welcome us into your community, and don't ever let us forget to welcome all your people.

Help us to see each person's death clothes, and to offer the encouragement to join us in whatever clothes they feel most comfortable. And open the crowd's hearts to welcome people in the clothes of their hearts.

Clothe us in appreciation of the beautiful diversity of all of our bodies.

Clothe us in wholeness that includes bodies of all sizes and abilities.

Clothe us to welcome genuinely, without self-righteousness or fear.

Free us from viewing women and girls as lesser.

Free us to welcome without fears about bathrooms. And free us to make sure our bathrooms are open and accessible to everyone.

Free us to be choirs where all voices sing the parts that fit, to small groups and retreats based on community rather than binary gender, to education for youth that matches the rainbows of gender you have created.

Welcome us to new life where we are free to live in whole relationship with one another.

Holy Spirit, move us out of our limited comfort and fears, into boldness to be neighbors. Move us to meet our neighbors where they're at. Move us to challenge the fear, hatred and oppression in our homes, schools, churches, societies, and governments. Move us to let go of the ways we confuse human gender rules with your law for us, toward being ourselves and helping others to be themselves. Move us to new life in community with all transgender and gender-nonconforming people across the world. Move us to new relationships with the people around us, freed to cast aside the ties of stereotypes and hierarchies. Move us to a world where transpeople are employed, valued, housed, loved and honored.

Holy Spirit, breathe new life into your churches, that we may wholly and fully accept transgender and gender non-conforming people in all roles, from Sunday School to choir, from the pulpit to coffee hour.

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