Liturgical Offerings for a Trans Awareness Week/Trans Day of Remembrance Service

Please feel free to use any or all of these elements to incorporate an observance of Trans Awareness Week / Trans Day of Remembrance into your worship service. TDOR falls on November 20, so these would be appropriate for the Sunday preceding or following. When using these liturgical pieces, please credit: Rev. Bailey Eastwood, Student Christian Movement of Canada, 2026.

An Introduction(suitable for use in worship)

Today we'll be observing trans remembrance & awareness Sunday. Trans day of remembrance started in 1999 as a vigil to mark the one-year anniversary of the murder of a trans woman named Rita Hessler. The vigil commemorated not only her, but also all the other trans people who had lost their lives to violence the previous year. Now, Trans Day of Remembrance vigils are held around the world and the week beforehand we mark trans awareness week. This Sunday is an opportunity for lament, learning, and prayer. It feels more important than ever for us to mark this day given how trans rights are actively being eroded around the world. I'd venture many of us think of Canada as a safe place to be Trans - and it is more than many, but that has been rolling back significantly. So let us pray and let us sing, let us lament and let us hope and let us work for a world where justice rolls down like a mighty river, and hope and acceptance reign.

Videos

The following videos from the We Are Allies project (https://weareallies.ca/) could also be incorporated into your service

What is Transgender - longer video (8 mins) explaining trans identities from a number of speakers
https://vimeo.com/1220280817?share=copy

Call for churches to fight transphobia - short video from the Very Rev Dr. Carmen Landsdowne https://vimeo.com/1227462406?share=copy

Trans Theology - a bitesize (2 min) look at some trans-inclusive interpretations of scripture https://vimeo.com/1227799806?share=copy

SCM
100 years of justice

Suggested Readings, if not following the RCL:

•*This Body* by Jay Hulme
•Gospel According to John 2:19-25

Call to Worship

God created humanity in their own image -
woman, man, neither, both or in-between,
in all the individuality of our bodies and hearts
We are made in God's image
God called their creation Good
And so do we!
Let us sing praise to our God of expansive love.

Opening Prayer

Loving God,
when we feel the weight of suffering in the world is too much to bear;
Comfort us with your presence.
When fear and hate seem to be everywhere;
Strengthen us with Jesus' messages of love and hope.
When we want to do something, but don't know what;
Send the Spirit to guide and accompany us.
Amen.

Candle-lighting litany

Voice 1: We light this candle in honour of all trans, two-spirit and non-binary people whose lives have been lost to violence. May they be remembered as people with hopes and dreams, gifts and struggles, not only as statistics.

Voice 2: We light this candle in memory of all trans, two-spirit and non-binary people whose lives have been taken, directly or in-directly, by anti-trans laws and policies the world over. May we honour their memories by continuing the struggle for justice.

V1: We light this candle in mourning for all trans, two-spirit and non-binary lives lost to suicide. May we continue to work for a world where not a single person feels that their life is hopeless.

V2: We light this candle for all the trans, two-spirit and non-binary individuals being prevented from living their real and authentic lives. May they live to see a world where the closet keeps no-one prisoner.

V1: We light this candle for all the trans, two-spirit and non-binary children, youth and dependent adults forced to live in unsupportive environments. May they be surrounded by people who see and nurture their light.

V2: We light the Christ light as a reminder that Jesus stood, always with the marginalized, the oppressed, the misunderstood, the outcast. May we reflect His light of love in the world.

Prayer of Reconciliation & Grace

God of love,
We confess that we sometimes want to turn away from all the pain in the world. It feels too big and too heavy and we feel small and powerless. We confess that we are sometimes afraid to speak up because we don't know enough. We confess that sometimes the prejudices of the world lives in our hearts, and we feel ashamed.

In these moments, God, reach out to us with your grace. Give us the strength and the courage to learn and to grow and to try again. Surround us with the community we need to help us bear the weight of the world together.
Help us to always remember that your love and your grace are infinitely larger than even our deepest failures and shortcomings.
Hallelujah.
Amen.

Prayers of the People

V1: Loving God, we come to you now with the things that weigh on our hearts; our concerns, our hopes, our gratitude.

V2: We see the rise in anti-trans legislation across our country and we are afraid for all the harm they will do to children and adults alike.

V1: We see the rise in anti-immigrant sentiment in Canada and around the world. We are afraid for all those who are and will be barred from seeking better, safer lives, including those trying to flee persecution for their gender and sexuality.

V2: We see also that community organizing and mobilizing makes a difference, and that communities and countries can choose justice, kindness, and welcome. We rejoice when electors say NO to the far right and YES to historic numbers of trans, indigenous, Black and female elected officials.

V1: We fear for the world when we see the news of climate events and global conflict.

V2: But we hope for the world when we see neighbours helping neighbours and people everywhere trying to make a difference.

V1: When we are afraid, God, comfort us. Strengthen and equip us for your work of mending our corners of the world.

V2: And for the signs of hope that spring up everywhere, creating, surprising God, we give you our thanks and praise.
Amen.

Sending & Blessing:

We are called to go out from this place as ambassadors of love;
Leading with open and curious hearts,
Caring with brave and tender hands,
And advocating with voices courageous and clear.

And as you go, know that you carry with you today and always;
The love of God the Parent
The fellowship of the Holy Spirit
And the Peace of Jesus Christ.