

Trans Day Of Visibility Service Order

Welcome

This is a service to celebrate Trans Day of Visibility 2025 created by SCM's Trans Theology Group. This is a chance for us to gather together, however far apart we may be, and be held in the presence of God, who knows the children They create and love. This service has been designed to mirror and compliment the service put together for Trans day of Remembrance 2024, with this service focusing on celebrating the existence, resistance, perseverance and joy of trans people. Throughout the service we will experience poems, prayers, a Bible reading and time to reflect. Part of this reflection will include a video compilation of a wide range of trans Christians sharing what brings them joy. Thank you to all who have contributed to this with their vulnerable and beautiful delights. There will be many people on the screen sharing in this service and some of the words you hear and see have been shared by our trans siblings who can't do so publicly. As ever, take care of yourself throughout and after this service. Reach out to those who love you for support. SCM's Trans Theology Group would be honoured to support you if you contacted us with this request.

Opening Prayer

Loving God, you created my innermost being. You look at me with joy and love. You know what I hide from the world, You know and call me by name. We praise You for we are fearfully and wonderfully made. May Your presence be known in this space as we rejoice in your creation of our trans siblings, those who embrace the person You made them to be and are honoured to join You in the holy act of creation. Your works are wonderful, and this world has been blessed by people who transform and expand our knowledge of You. Shield the joyous Lord, carry us forward into this space that protects our joyful natures and celebrates our creation, exactly as we are.

Amen.

Who am I? - a poem by Joshua Tinker-Reid

I ponder gazing upon a smudge of glitter on my finger.
This body which is male,
this mind which is confused,
these nails which are painted,
these eyes which are hurriedly covered in makeup.

Who am I?

I feel like an outsider.

I feel like a fraud.

Where do I fit?

Am I meant to fit anywhere at all?

As I slowly excavate and discover

what a 'me' is,

I slowly discover more about

the expansive awesomeness of God's

creating power and love.

I am loved.

I am loved.

I **am** loved.

I am **loved**.

Reading

The reading is taken from the Gospel of John, Chapter 10.

¹“Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. ²The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. ³The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. ⁵They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” ⁶Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁷So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. ⁸All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. ⁹I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. ¹⁰The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

¹¹“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. ¹²The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. ¹³The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. ¹⁴I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, ¹⁵just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. ¹⁶I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So

there will be one flock, one shepherd. ¹⁷For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. ¹⁸No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”

¹⁹Again the Jews were divided because of these words. ²⁰Many of them were saying, “He has a demon and is out of his mind. Why listen to him?” ²¹Others were saying, “These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”

²²At that time the festival of the Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was winter, ²³and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the portico of Solomon. ²⁴So the Jews gathered around him and said to him, “How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, tell us plainly.” ²⁵Jesus answered, “I have told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name testify to me; ²⁶but you do not believe, because you do not belong to my sheep. ²⁷My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. ²⁸I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of my hand. ²⁹What my Father has given me is greater than all else, and no one can snatch it out of the Father's hand. ³⁰The Father and I are one.”

Video reflection

We asked Trans Christians to help us reflect in this service. What follows are their answers to ‘What brings you trans* joy?’

Video Description: A compilation of short videos. Each clip shows a sign with people's trans joys written on it. Some signs are held by their writer, others are on people's walls, desks, or outside, in places that represent the writer anonymously.

Music captions: Take o take me as I am, summon out what I shall be, set your seal upon my heart and live in me.

Receiving eucharist shirtless at Greenbelt after top surgery (being able to trust the goodness of my trans body). Jem (they/them), exploring a monastic vocation.

The found family who chose each other.

Spending time with other trans people. Talking to other trans friendly Christians. Keith (he/they).

God's unconditional love for me. Performing my poems. My packer. Being called 'Tom' or 'Sir' or 'guys'. Fr Tom, priest, poet, pilgrim, prophet.

My MPhil research into trans literature from Argentina!

Belonging to a church where I can see LGBTQ+ people of all ages thriving! Sorrel (they/them), SCM member.

Trans joy is mornings eating croissants in silly pyjamas with even sillier friends. The being radiantly myself in the beautifully mundane. I see it in the community that wraps its warmth around me. It is the ones who celebrate authenticity materialising everywhere around us. Trans joy beckons me, us, to love beyond limitations. To love wastefully. Sam (they/them), LGBTQ+ chaplain.

Being in queer spaces (especially Christian ones). Seeing other trans people thrive. When I can just exist and don't have to explain myself. Love (all types)! Isaac (he/they), student.

A sense of belonging.

Joy in knowing that the beautiful expansiveness of God's creation – as exemplified by trans people – is an echo of but also just a glimpse of God's beautiful expansiveness, mystery, and all-encompassing embrace.

Freedom, community, space, comfort, flourishing, growth. Jake (they/them).

Trans community gives me joy! My strength comes from my sisterhood of trans women and femmes... the dolls are unstoppable! Naomi (she/her), SCM fundraiser.

When other people recognise there is something not-cis about me. A not-out-yet clergy person

Music performed by members of SCM Trans Theology Group, with thanks to Wild Goose Resource Group.

Take O Take Me As I Am

Words by John L. Bell & Graham Maule. Music by John L. Bell.

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Individual reflection

We come now to a time of individual reflection, continuing to rejoice in all those examples of trans joy that we just saw, and thinking of some of the ways that God inspires joy in us too. In a moment there'll be a couple of prompts on screen, that are offered to help us reflect. They're both taken from John 10, which we heard earlier in the service, with some thoughts and questions to help us explore how trans perspectives might help us experience God in new ways. Pause the video, and take however long you would like to reflect on one of them, both of them, or your own thoughts from this service. After this the service will continue with some prayers of intercession.

Individual reflection prompts on screen

'I came that they may have life and have it abundantly'

Many trans people find that being able to transition and to live authentically is life-giving, fulfilling, and an embodiment of God's abundance. Although trans healthcare is being made into a battleground that we must continue to fight for, we as trans people can still experience God's abundance and blessing in our transness. What are some of the ways in which you can recognise God's life-giving abundance either in your own transness or in transness in general? How do you hope to experience God's abundance in the future?

'I am the good shepherd. I know my own, and my own know me, just as the Father knows me, and I know the Father.'

Transition can be a process of getting to know yourself more authentically, and learning, or re-learning, how you relate to the world around you. How does it feel to be known by God, in all the ways you change and the ways you stay the same? How does your transness, or transness in general, shape who you know God to be?

Prayers of intercession

Let us pray.

God our Parent, on this day of trans visibility, we lift to you our prayers of intercession for the trans community. We thank you for the beautiful diversity of your creation. Thank you for the community you give us, the friends and chosen families we share. We thank you for our trans ancestors who have come before us, as their courage and determination still inspire us, and thank you for those who continue the fight for our visibility and rights.

God of our ancestors, inspire us to walk boldly in their footsteps.

You O Lord, who made the heavens and the earth, you made each one of us in your image. You, our God who transcends gender, delight when your people live in freedom, authenticity and joy. So too you mourn with us the violence and oppression experienced by LGBTQ+ people around the world.

God who calls us beloved, let our hearts be moved by the things that move yours.

While trans day of visibility is a time to celebrate the beauty and diversity of the trans community, we also remember those who are not able to live as their authentic selves. We remember those who suffer due to hostile environments caused by homophobic and transphobic ignorance. We pray for safety for our trans siblings, surround them with your love and shield them from harm. We pray for a world which is welcoming to all, regardless of sexuality or gender.

God who sees us as we are, hold us in your love and keep us safe.

Lord, we pray for a future free of hatred and fear, where queer people are not used by governments as scapegoats for their own political agendas or persecuted simply for existing. Lord, be present in the hearts of those in positions of power, turn them towards truth and justice. May your love surround those who are suffering, your strength uphold those who fight for change, and your peace sustain us all as we work toward a brighter, more loving world.

God of justice, break the chains of oppression and lead us towards liberation.

We hold in prayer trans youth, elders, and all those at different stages of their journey. Grant them community, friendship, and love, that they may know they are never alone.

We pray for trans people who are afraid. For those forced to hide their truth out of fear, who face threats at home, at work, or on the streets. Be their refuge and their strength. In moments of danger and despair, may they know they are never abandoned. In moments of fear, may they feel your presence beside them. And may we work to create a world where no one has to be afraid to live as their authentic selves. God of the outcast and the downtrodden, hold us in our times of need.

God, while we can sometimes feel hopeless, we remember that your love is greater than all the world's hate. We bring to you all our hopes, our fears, our despair and our love, for in you all things are possible.

God who walks beside us, guide our steps and strengthen our hearts. Grant us the strength to fight when needed, the space to rest when weary, and the freedom to exist without fear.

God of love and liberation, help us to build a world where all identities are honoured, where all expressions are cherished, and where love knows no bounds.

Lord hear these prayers and the prayers of our hearts.

Amen.

A Lesson in Trans Joy – by Otter Jung-Allen

1. Trans pain is currently a certainty.
2. Trans beauty is currently an *inevitability* .
3. When I am asked about my genitals on a daily basis,
It is not my fault when I start getting creative with my answers.
Honestly, I should start telling everyone there's a black hole there.
Because I could say anything,
And some theorist would still find a way to prove it doesn't exist.
4. Teenage trans boys look like tiny children for a reason.
Three words: movie, ticket, discount.
You might ask, "well, is looking like a newborn really worth it
Just to get a few dollars off a movie?"
Yes.
For Straight Outta Compton,
You're damn right it is.
5. At some point, trans people can't do much else to piss off the family.
I mean, I've literally named myself after a semi aquatic mammal.
In their eyes, I've kind of hit the ceiling for nonsense.
If I burned the house down, they'd just say.
"Eh.
As long as you don't ask
For any more button down shirts,
We're good."
6. Being trans is being on the best game show in the world:
How Far Can I Go Before My Grandma Stops Buying It?
One round for each invasive question!
GRAND PRIZE: Watching the look on her face when I say,
"Actually, they botched the surgery
And now I have a cactus down there."
7. We know we're different.
Not everyone has fluctuation in their back pocket.
Not everyone moves like unanswered questions.
Allow me to recognize how fine we are.

I mean, look at us!
Look at our baby faces and
and Adam's apples
and painted nails
and two hair beards.
They can't stop debating us
Because our beauty is miles past thesis
And the rest are running to catch up and hypothesize.
They keep us on the streets
Because our hands are too pure
For homes washed in hand-me-down hate.
They don't believe us?
We don't need them to.
Mortals never do believe it when they see magic, anyway.

8. We pack our pride like armor.
Like bigots pack ammunition.
Like phoenixes pack resurrection.
We have too much flight in us to entertain ideas so earthbound.
We are a chorus of our own making.
Bodies and voices with bliss in the background.
Don't they know that they cannot kill a people who have built themselves?
We do not burn like bones do.
We are rebirth remixed.
Our ashes glitter!
The smoke is singing!
Even in death or dysphoria,
We pick fights with our ghosts!
9. Let them come at us.
They will never catch us off guard when we are this trained in transition.
We've got endurance like oceans
And bodies like water: all fluidity and freedom.
We flood towns with this!
Why else would they call us a trend
Unless we were in high demand?
Our self love is nothing short of commodity.
Of relic.
Of beaten down and glo'd up.
Of overwhelmed and overwhelming as a consequence!
There is nothing more holy than correcting how they talk about your halo.
There is nothing more royal than shedding old titles
To find new ones that sound more regal.

Look at us reign!
All us insecure and estranged kids,
And still “*never be cis to save my life*” kids!
Look at us *be* .
Not in spite of ourselves
But because of ourselves.
Not in Death’s face
But behind his back
So we don’t give him the satisfaction.
10. This has been your lesson in Trans Joy.

Closing prayer

Life giving God, You call each one of us to a vocation of acceptance and visibility, revealing your image, in which each of us is created.

Your very nature is love, a love which surrounds each one of us, and calls us to be exactly who we are.

Despite those who place restrictions, conditions and monopolies on your Almighty Love and Grace, who tell us that we cannot be loved as we are, every aspect of our being is known, and is loved, more deeply than we could ever imagine. Because you, Lord, are unconditional, infinite love.

Lord, this day and every day, give us courage to live as our authentic selves in a world where this becomes increasingly difficult.

Let us make your love known to all those who feel as if they cannot be who you created them to be, and by your love bring us all into dignity and visibility.

Christ was born a human, flesh of our flesh, that you Lord might live in our story, knowing our bodies and our struggles and our joys and loving us without exception.

Christ suffered, died and was resurrected to reveal to us that your love cannot be extinguished by any power of oppression, evil or destruction, and we are called to let your love reign in our communities and our world

Lord, bless all those communities where trans visibility and trans joy are expressed freely, loudly and without conditions.

And by your grace, let us transform our world of exclusion and hiding into a world of welcome and visibility, because our lives matter to you.

Amen

Blessing - Fr Tom Barnabas Wallis

May the God of love, our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer, who loves you with an unconditional love and calls you by name, bless you and all those who support, encourage and affirm you.

May God comfort and strengthen you for all that lies ahead. May Jesus shine light where there has been darkness, bring healing where there has been hurt and give you the courage and safe spaces to be your true self. May the Holy Spirit touch your lives and bodies with God's transforming love.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be upon you, all those who you love and all those who love you, and remain with you now and always. Amen.