INTERSEX REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE

Sunday 8 November

2pm



St Peter's, Te Aro, Wellington

Informal Welcome and notices

Greeting

We welcome everyone to this service of Remembrance and Solidarity.

In this service we honour those lost because of shame and stigma experienced.

This time together also acknowledges the harm caused by shame and stigma which negatively influences us all.

We also take time to celebrate what it means to be people of diversity and uniqueness, created and loved by God, in all our beauty and brokenness,

Together we commit to be people who create environments where all can be appreciated and all may thrive.

A Gathering prayer

Loving God, we gather in Your presence,
celebrating the rich diversity of Your creation
and the fullness of our identities.
You have formed us in Your image:
beautiful, unique, and beloved.
Let this time of worship
be a sanctuary of affirmation and love,
where all are welcomed as they are,
and all are celebrated for who they are.

A bell is rung



Opening Poem *by Dr Rogena Sterling*

(Intersex Aotearoa Board member, Lived Experience)

Intersex spiritual guardians, we call
The life essence you provide us all
And ensure our social role and place

Society desires only males and females, intersexuality abhor
no social respect – we cannot come beyond the door
Society deems as intersex, no space

They attempted to make us the 'right' version
The trauma imposed on life, body, and person
Born, wrong, medically fixed as male or female to socially replace

We do pray for those who have harmed us so
We reclaim recognition, respect so we can grow
Guardians, hear our call to protect our person, our place.

A bell is rung



Silence, as central yellow and purple candles are lit.

Background and explanation

Dr Rogena Sterling

A Psalm of response *We join in the words in bold type*

Psalm 139: 1-4, 12-18

O God, you have searched me and known me.
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from far away.
You search out my path and the places where I rest:
you are acquainted with all my ways.

Even before a word is on my tongue,
O Lord, you know it completely.
You guard me from behind and before,
and cover me with your hand.

It was you who formed my inward parts;
you pieced me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Marvellous are your works,
and you know me through and through.

My body was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.
In your heart were written
all the days that were formed for me,
when none of them as yet existed.

How deep are your thoughts O God:
and how great is the sum of them.
I try to count them—they are more than the sand;
I come to the end—I am still with you.

Prayer of Confession

(acknowledging that we don't always get it right,
and we want to commit to being more welcoming and compassionate, to ourselves and to others.)

Loving God, we confess that we have not always loved
as You have called us to love.
Too often, we have failed to honour the dignity of others.
Too often, we have failed to honour the dignity of ourselves.
Forgive us when we forget that each person
is made in Your image,
and help us to extend grace and compassion to all.
Forgive us, God,
for the times when we have excluded or judged,
and when we have absorbed hurt, instead of giving it to you.

Help us to be Your hands and feet in the world,
embracing all people with the love You have shown us.

Assurance of Pardon

Hear this good news:
God's love for us is unconditional and never-ending.
We are forgiven and set free
to love one another boldly and authentically.
Thanks be to God!

A message of hope

Dr Rogena Sterling

Prayers

With hope in our hearts, we bring the cares and concerns of our community into the Divine presence...

Loving God, we bring before You our prayers for the world, for our communities, and for ourselves.

For those who have been rejected or harmed by others because of their identity, we pray for healing and for spaces of safety and affirmation.
All: **God of love, hear our prayer.**

For those who struggle to reconcile their faith and identity, we pray for peace and the assurance that they are wonderfully made by You.
All: **God of love, hear our prayer.**

For the potential of this space, we give you thanks and ask for your grace to grow into the fresh life that we need, inspiration to be ourselves in your presence and joy of connection with each other in your Spirit.
All: **God of love, hear our prayer.**

Memorial activity

Attendees are invited to light a candle
... in memory of someone,
... as a prayer for a situation or person who needs healing and help,
... or as a commitment to something that they will do
to make the world a more inclusive space for intersex people

Sand trays dotted around the space. Go to whichever one you prefer, to light your candles and place them.



Music will play as this is done.

A song of solidarity

O when the saints,
Go marching in,
O when the saints go marching in,
How I want to be in that number,
When the saints go marching in.

O when the sun,
Begins to shine,
O when the sun begins to shine,
How I want to be in that number,
When the sun begins to shine.

O when the saints,
Go marching in,
O when the saints go marching in,
How I want to be in that number,
When the saints go marching in.

Thanks

Final Notices

People will be available by the side altar to talk if anyone needs this.

Sending out

We have gathered as God's people, created in the Divine Image—diverse, beautiful, and beloved.

All: **We have come with hearts open to love,**
embracing our whole selves, as God has embraced us.

We are not strangers here, but children of God,
woven together in the tapestry of faith and family.

All: **In this sacred space, we have celebrated the diversity of God's creation, knowing that we are all wonderfully made.**

Leader: Let us continue to respond with courage and joy
to the God of love and grace, who calls us by name.

All: **We are called, we are chosen, we are beloved! Thanks be to God!**

Refreshments

Thank you for coming today.

Please join us for refreshments

Intersex Aotearoa

