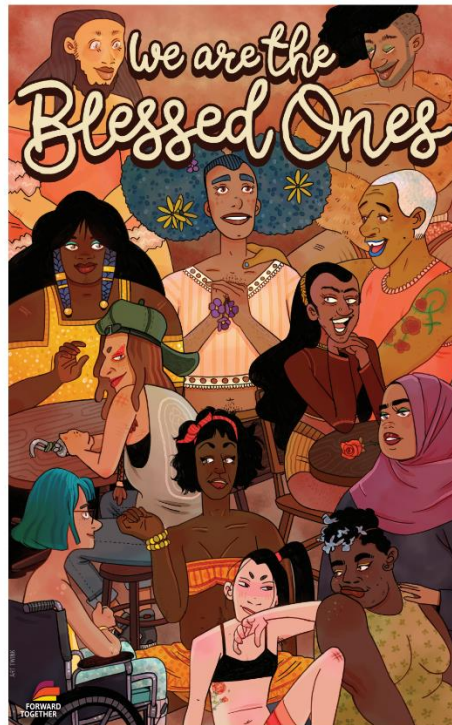




*Presbyterian
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Trans People Are The Blessed Ones

We are deeply saddened by the news of hate turned deadly once again when on Saturday evening, a gunman armed with an AR-15 assault style rifle opened fire on the people celebrating and dancing inside Club Q, a gay nightclub in Colorado Springs, CO. Because of the deadly design of an assault style rifle, in only minutes, the gunman killed five people and injured 25 others before club patrons stopped him and used his own gun to hold him until he was taken into police custody.



This tragedy happened on the eve of Transgender Day of Remembrance. A day set aside to honor transgender and gender-nonconforming people killed by violence. According to a report from the Human Rights Campaign, at least 32 people have been killed this year but the number is likely higher due to the

difficulty in collecting data because some victim's deaths may go unreported and others may not be identified as transgender or gender non-conforming.

These past few years have been especially frightening for those in the LGBTQIA+ community as they have become a favorite target of Christian Nationalism and the politicians who exploit fear and hate to gain power. This hate-filled rhetoric combined with easy access to weapons designed for the sole purpose of killing as many people as possible lead to real life dangers.

In an average year, more than 24,200 hate crimes in the US involve a firearm—67 a day.

Hate-motivated violence and homicides are not the only form of gun violence impacting LGBTQ+ communities. Studies show that LGBTQ+ people, especially LGBTQ+ youth, are at a higher risk of contemplating and attempting suicide. And access to a firearm triples the risk of suicide death. According to The Trevor Project, 45% of LGBTQ+ youth have seriously considered a suicide attempt in the past year and nearly one in five transgender and nonbinary youth had attempted suicide.

I am proud to say there is a group of Presbyterians in the heart of Texas who are embodying the love of Christ and going about the work of making the new heaven and new earth Jesus talked about manifest here on earth - kin-dom community.



kin-dom (not a typo) community is an intentional, brave space for all people to explore and cultivate spirituality. This past summer, kin-dom held its first faith based camp especially designed for LGBTQ youth ages 12-17. To learn more about the life affirming and life saving work kin-dom community is doing, [check out this video on kin-dom camp 2022.](#)

We know many of you are in relationship with many in the queer community and their allies and want to share a few more resources as people feel the impact of this attack.

Other LGBTQ+ Resources:

- [LGBT National Hotline](#) - The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) National Hotline provides telephone, online private one-to-one chat

and email peer-support, as well as factual information and local resources for cities and towns across the United States. Dial 888-843-4564 for support during the hours found here.

- [The Trevor Project](#) - The Trevor Project provides 24/7 crisis support for transgender and nonbinary youth between the ages of 13-24. Text START to 678-678. Call 1-866-488-7386.
- [BlackLine](#) - This resource is divested from the police. BlackLine provides a space for peer support, counseling, witnessing and affirming the lived experiences to people who are most impacted by systematic oppression with an LGBTQ+ Black femme lens. Dial 1-800-604-5841 for 24/7 support.

We stand in solidarity with the trans people and acknowledge that gender violence and gun violence are connected.

In grief with you,

Rev. Deanna Hollas
Gun Violence Prevention Coordinator, PPF

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Artist: Art Twink, in collaboration with poet xoài phàm. On their collaboration, the artist and poet wrote: "As trans people of color, we rarely get a moment to play. To laugh. To relax. To enjoy ourselves and each other. We rarely are given relief from the constant possibility of assault. The news that swallows us all year round rings of Black trans femmes being murdered gruesomely. In our process together, we wanted to center joy: the joy of sisterhood, of relationships among trans people, and of love. Our art speaks to the deep love that carries on lineages of trans brilliance, whether our bodies are living or dead."

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