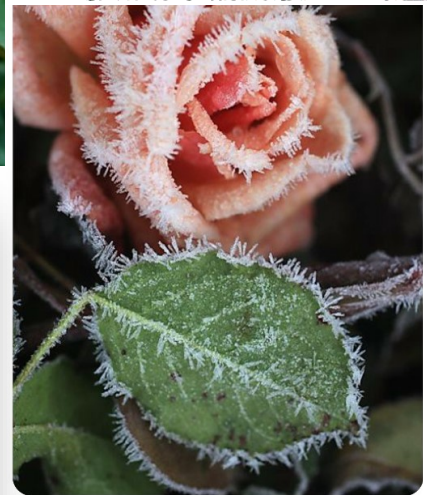


Sibyls Newsletter 100

June 2022



SIBYLS LOGO - ROBYN GOLDEN-MANN 28/MAY/2018



**STILL
GOING
STRONG!**

by

Popular Demand

.....or is it.....

Plain Stubbornness



Contents

2. Editorial
3. Chair's Message.
4. The 100th Newsletter by Jay Walmsley
5. Reflections from Retirement by Carol Nixon
- 6 - 7. Introduction to Sibyls, Website, Facebook, Services, Meetings, Weekend
8. Members' prayers and hopes
9. 'My Church' by HildaRuth Beaumont
10. Invitation from *Jenny-Anne Bishop OBE*
- 11-12. Your Body is not a Mistake by Jonathan Clatworthy
12. The Bill of Rights and the EHRC by Susan Gilchrist
13. Letter to P.M. about exclusion of Trans people from the ban on conversion therapy
14. The Happiest Day of my Life by Peter Raftery
15. 'Specially for Peter'. Trans faith
16. Trans law and politics
17. Trans health
- 18 - 19. Trans life
20. Trans world. Trans books and media

Dear Sibyls

Welcome to newsletter 100! (As Jay points out below, if we include the Sibylet, it might actually be 102, but never mind!) I have to share the honour of editing it with my predecessor, Carol, who has come out of “retirement” to use her skills, which far surpass my own, to add a bit of pzazz and bling to the presentation, as seems fitting. Carol has added her own reflections on the job of newsletter editor and Jay has written about how the whole thing got going and the vital part it played in the early years of the Sibyls. I am grateful to all Sibyls who have contributed, to this edition and all the previous ones. My own debt to the Sibyls goes far beyond that. When I first came out, it was more a question of being dragged kicking and screaming into transitioning rather than something that gave me immediate joy. I was fortunate to be made quickly aware of the existence of the Sibyls where I finally learned to accept that my identity as a trans woman was not the curse or cross I had been mainly thinking of it as but might, just possibly, be God’s will for me and a blessing! Healing for me started at my first Sibyls weekend and has continued ever since. So thank you all my dear Sibylline trans brothers and sisters (and enby siblings and cis allies!).

Sadly the need for the Sibyls is now as great as ever. Conservative religious bodies remain apparently intractably opposed to the very existence of trans people and you need no comment from me on how we are seen around the cabinet table in Downing Street. I’m not aware of any plans currently to send us to Rwanda or electronically tag us, but the government’s hostility to the trans community is palpable. Governments change and politicians come and go. The next lot might be better. Surveys show that a majority of people in the country are supportive of trans people but the government, perversely for a bunch of populists, has chosen to listen to the noisy transphobic minority. I wish I had much hope of the non-affirming churches changing since spiritual rejection, rejection by God, is the most wounding of all.

But let’s put those gloomy thoughts aside and celebrate this notable milestone. I have done my best over the years to produce newsletters that are interesting and informative and even, if possible, entertaining. I do not know how well I have succeeded because feedback and comment from members is exceedingly rare. Perhaps someone else could do the job better – if anyone feels like having a try, I will gladly hand over. If I am to carry on, do please let me have your thoughts on what I could do better, on what you like and what you don’t like!

Thank you, readers, (“fit audience though few”, as Milton said about readers of *Paradise Lost!*) for bearing with me over the years. It’s been a privilege and (mainly) a pleasure.

Pauline M 07581553357

Chair's message – Yvonne

Looking over my shoulder

I became involved in Sibyls about 50 newsletters ago. It was very important to me, a group that felt more constant than the social groups I travelled to occasionally. I found a sense of belonging when I was going through a time of troubled uncertainty and had no idea how things would work out. In those days, I was so fortunate to be able to share in Jay's tea parties and to enjoy the friendship of St Anne's services and chats. Some members do not have much local support, but once a year find great joy and strength in the Sibyls weekends. Over the years I have seen how the difference in Sibyls is faith and belief; it means that the conversation is not just about make-up, being 'read', and waiting for appointments; it is also about faithful lives, prayer and hope.

Looking up the road

Sibyls will continue to be a haven for people with widely differing experiences, but with two key things in common – members living with an inconvenient personal truth and upheld by a sustaining faith. Sibyls will work towards new ways of enabling friendship, mutual support and spiritual fellowship. There will always be a need for listening, sharing, and offering some wisdom from both joyful and sorrowful experience. There will be more younger people, more non-binary people, more trans masculine people. Some of the words we use will change – indeed some words need to change to better articulate the reality of true gender and trans lives, and to reclaim them from 'critiquing' detractors. There will be more public role models in politics and the church. Whatever social and political changes in the big wide world however, the personal journey will be repeated again and again: self-discovery, questioning, coming out, commitment, resolution. And with Sibyls' help, people will find the strength of faith in a God that loves us as we know ourselves. Read about it in the next 50 issues.



The 100th Newsletter

Jay Walmsley

My heartiest congratulations to the Sibyls on the publication of the 100th newsletter. A century not out! This is a huge achievement in which all those in any way concerned can take pride. Contributors, editors, production and readers – all have played a part but especially the editors for all their toil. A hearty well done to all.

In many ways the newsletter was fundamental in the organisation of the Sibyls. In the days when communication was by telephone or post, the newsletter carried information about what Sibyls were doing, what events or weekends were being held and when and where. Information, opinions, experiences, humour, it was all there. It was the glue that held the group together. It was the advertising medium needed to keep people informed and enable them to participate in events.

With a group like Sibyls which is small and likely to remain so, that ability to meet others and make friends for the journey was and is important. Sibyls could provide events and services but people were needed and they needed to know what was going on. The newsletter was the essential bearer of information to make it all happen.

Of course things have modernised. It did start with a newsletter set up on a computer. From the printed copy the number of copies needed had to be duplicated on a copying machine and then hand collated and inserted into an envelope with, thankfully, a computer label. Email and Zoom have made things much easier and I suspect Zoom is going to be very useful for Sibyls. Technology has improved Sibyls' finances. The major expense was duplicating and postage but email transmission saved all that.

The essential task of the editor to put together an interesting and informative letter hasn't changed since the beginning. It's not easy. To get people to provide articles or even a few words has always been a struggle; successive editors have been grateful for those who do contribute. All editors want contributions, be it a few simple words or a long thought-out article. That never changes. Editors need articles, always will.

What editors would also appreciate is feedback. They like to be reassured that what they are providing is what the members want. Of course appreciation is the most encouraging but constructive suggestions can be very helpful.

For the record I set out below the list of editors over the years. Technically this might be the 100th newsletter but there have been two more. The Sibylet was produced in 1998/9 and was not numbered into the series. But then that's Sibyls – there's always room for an exception.

1 – 9	1996 – 1998	Jay Walmsley
The Sibylet	1998 - 1999	Caroline Ramsey
10 - 27	1999 - 2003	Jay Walmsley
28 - 47	2003 – 2008	Jay Walmsley and Susie Withers
49 - 54	2008 - 2010	Susie Withers
55 - 63	2010 - 2012	Rosie Martin
64 - 66	2012 - 2013	Helen Mather
67 - 81	2014 - 2017	Carol Nixon
82 - date	2017 - date	Pauline Fleck



[Grete Stern Dream 15, 1949](#)

(Just to be clear - the illustration is an editorial comment, and does not represent Jay's sentiments!)

Newsletter 100

Reflections from retirement

By Carol Nixon (Editor of Sibyls Newsletter, editions 67 – 81)

When Jay founded Sibyls and the newsletter, a large proportion of the content was written by her, with good reason, as the best informed and best connected person. But she couldn't go on indefinitely. Subsequent editors were reluctantly forced into much the same pattern, because their appeals for material from members bore insufficient fruit.

With that history in my mind, I reacted with shock, dread and ultimately a sort of defiance, when Jenny-Anne, as a committee member, asked me if I would take on the task in May 2013, during the weekend at Whaley Hall. It felt like a challenge that might be fun.

Yes, I would do it, but on my terms. I wanted it to be visually attractive, unpredictable and entertaining, as well as to carry the essential Sibyls news. A friend here in Mid-Wales gave me a crash course in Microsoft 'Publisher', so that I could include pictures and artwork more easily, and I became a real nag, asking individuals to write specific articles*, which I promised to publish exactly as they had written them – unless they actually preferred to have me check them over.

As time went by, I also started including ever more information gleaned from the media, showing how matters relevant to our concerns were developing. This flow of information became more and more difficult to manage as the volume grew. I was eventually doing some work on it almost every day. In the beginning, the challenge had indeed been fun. But the amount of work and the rigid timetable I tried to keep to, gradually took the edge off my appetite for the job,

After three years I had had enough of this degree of commitment, and also my health was failing, so I was immensely pleased when Pauline agreed to take over. She has now been doing it for an amazing five years, and I take my hat off to her.

In retrospect, the biggest disappointment to me was the lack of feedback. I ought not to have been surprised, considering the difficulties earlier editors had experienced in eliciting material from the membership, but I genuinely thought that the abrupt alteration in the visual appearance of the newsletter would evoke responses. It hardly made a ripple. Some lovely members of the committee were kind enough to keep on commenting on the magazine, but otherwise I had no means of judging whether the effort I put in to making it look nice was worthwhile. Was anyone actually opening it?

There is nothing more soul-destroying than shouting into an empty cave.

In the days of email, it takes very little effort to let the editor know if her work has been done well, or needs improvement. I know that Pauline experiences the same.

PLEASE LET PAULINE KNOW IF HER WORK IS APPRECIATED!

Carol

**(Over the years I have found that asking for voluntary help of any kind – written material in this case – by speaking to a whole group is rarely effective. You have to identify an individual who you think has a specific thing to offer, and give them the confidence and the motivation to present it. One could say that it is just a refinement of the Army's method of obtaining 'volunteers'.)*

THE SIBYLS - basic information

We are a Christian Spirituality Group for Gender Variant People

Sibyls is a nationwide group for Christian transgender, non-binary and intersex people, partners and allies. Sibyls offer companionship along your journey, and supports advocacy work with churches and faith groups on behalf of trans people. Sibyls seek to fulfil the two great commandments of Jesus: to love God, and to love each other as ourselves, which we hope to do by -

Living faithfully - accepting yourself as you worship, and in day-to-day life

Spiritual upholding – encountering the freedom to pray and to seek God's will

Fellowship - sharing with Christians who understand what it is to be transgender

Listening – respectfully and confidentially to each other

Sibyls' website

Visit our website www.sibyls.co.uk to find more information on joining the Sibyls confidential mailing list; planned events, supportive churches and inclusive faith groups; resources, such as books and sign-posted web links.

Facebook Groups

There are two Facebook groups which enable Sibyls and other trans Christians to communicate and exchange views and news. They are:

- Sibyls Members' Group – send a request via Facebook to join this confidential group
- TranschristianUK – an open group, do join up if you are not already a member.

Contact Sibyls committee

By post - c/o 10, Ffordd Las, Rhyl, LL18 2DY

By email - enquiries@sibyls.co.uk

Sibyls' Listening Service

We know that sometimes it is necessary to talk to someone who understands the basics of being transgender and Christian. If a listening conversation could be of particular help, you can call any of the following:

Jenny-Anne Bishop

jennyannebuk@yahoo.co.uk Telephone: 01745 337144 or 07500 74195

Yvonne Wood

Yvonne-wood@outlook.com Telephone 01279 833499 or 07595 087207

Pauline Fleck

pauline.fleck@btinternet.com Telephone 07581 553357

Meetings for personal conversation and sharing

It is possible that some of you would appreciate the opportunity for more personal conversation on Zoom, rather than the regular large sessions. We can help arrange meet-ups for just three Sibyls - this would enable easier direct conversation and sharing (with some ground rules). If you would like this please email yvonne-wood@outlook.com and we will see what is possible.

The Sibyls newsletter Archive is now available on

<http://sm.gndr.org.uk/newsletters3/newspaperarchiveopen.html>

Also orders of service liturgies etc for past events are available at

<http://sm.gndr.org.uk/meetings3.htm>

2022 Services and Events

We are currently planning the following events:

Sibyls Zoom Services and Fellowship Meetings

will take place **ONLINE** at 19:00 on

Monday 25 July, Thursday 25 August, Monday 26 September, Tuesday 25 October, Friday 25 November, Wednesday 21 December.

In-person services and gatherings

on Thursdays 18:00 at St Anne's Church Soho London:

11 August, 13 October, 8 December 2022.

These services and gatherings are **NOT ONLINE**

The Sibyls weekend

This will once again be at Purley Chase but at the later date of **4-6 November** – make a note in your diaries.

My Hope, my Prayer

We all face major hurdles in understanding ourselves, coming out, becoming true and accepting God's love.

These are the words of three Sibyls.

Jonathan

My hope is for people to accept people who are LGBT and not to look down on them.

My prayer is for everyone in LGBT and to let them know that they are loved and cared for.

Martin

The prayer I use most often is the Jesus prayer:

'Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me'.

I also pray for the gift of reverent fear and humble love, as Julian of Norwich recommends. My hope for everyone is that 'you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge'

Amy Bosworth

It's been said that faith is the bird that sings in the dark just before dawn.

What motivates that bird?

Well, sometimes we just need to **stand up** / get ready to act. We don't need to actually do anything dramatic, big, or world changing, just stand up/get ready to act.

Once we are standing up/ready to act, things look different. The impossible now has a different perspective. Yes, it may still be impossible, but we are now in a position to / are ready to act, whereas a moment back we were **not** able to act. Nothing has actually changed, but everything is different.

Sometimes I look at things around me and it all seems a bit much.

- Maybe it's trying to get a "new" Baptist Minister to accept that trans persons (like me) are not living in sin every single day.
- That being on the transgender spectrum (or simply not meeting the "expected" heteronormative living pattern) isn't about sexual activity, it's about being made as we have been made. Without flaw, without defect or just without someone in a position of power "feeling" that something is different and thus must be wrong. And that I can be loved for who I am.
- Maybe it's trying to get a poorly car to a garage in an urban area when I live in a rural area, and it has a fault that can spit the gears into neutral (and need a motoring club engineer to clear a fault - to let me continue my journey) for apparently no reason.

So my hope is the longer term "goal", and my prayer is for the first teensy weensy step on that journey.

Gracious God, please look on your children facing seemingly impossible situations and grant them peace and tiny victories along the way.

My Church *HildaRuth Beaumont*

My journey from David to HildaRuth has only taken off in the last couple of years, during which I realised with conviction that I am much happier and at ease with myself if I dress and present as a woman. I'm 76 years old but, better late than never.

So just over a year ago I found myself divorced, living on my own in a two-bedroom flat in a small retirement block in Kemp Town in Brighton. One week after moving in and announcing myself as HildaRuth, Jill, one of the other residents, asked me if I'd like to go to church with her.

I did. The reception could not have been more welcoming. On the light-hearted side the older ladies in the congregation are not backward in coming forward with advice and guidance on what I'm wearing including which of my several wigs suits me best. Occasionally we take a 'golden girls' photo as here.

I've even had one of the younger ladies in the congregation say, 'Hilda, you always look so good I'm having to up my game!' Praise indeed!

On a more serious note, the way in which I've been accepted has been very important to me and more than validated my decision to become HildaRuth.

I'm now one of the regular greeters for the Sunday morning service and on the PCC. St George's holds a special place in the locality because it includes a community centre, located beneath the church in what used to be the crypt, a café in the church itself open five days a week 10.00 – 15.00, and surrounding gardens providing an oasis of calm in a busy place.

I've always had difficulties with Christian belief, but, nonetheless, I'm convinced that the Anglican Church has huge potential for good in the world, particularly through St George's in Kemp Town. Here I think it can provide sanctuary for all those within its parish boundaries and beyond, of all faiths and no faith, from the bleak, meaningless and hollow lives so many live. I'm both proud and humble that I've been accepted by St George's and can play my part in this work.



Golden girls - HildaRuth (second from right)

This is so good to read -
Certain bishops please note!
(Deputy Editor)

Invitation from Jenny-Anne Bishop OBE

The Metropolitan URC LGBTIQ+ Congregation is becoming more active:

< <https://metropolitanchurch.org.uk/> >

We have a **live** LGBTIQ+ service in Church on the 3rd Sunday of the Month at 4.30 pm at Wilbraham St Ninian's United Reformed Church, Corner of Wilbraham Road/Egerton Rd South, Chorlton, Manchester M21 0UB (*The church's true postcode is M21 0XJ but we suggest you use M21 0UB for online maps and satnavs.*)

We continue to run a weekly LGBTIQ+ Sunday service at 4.30pm (London Time) **by Zoom** with some online involvement for everyone.

To Join the weekly Zoom Service at 4:30 every Sunday afternoon please use the following zoom link.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88502951623>

Meeting ID: 885 0295 1623

One tap mobile

+442080806592,,88502951623# United Kingdom

+443300885830,,88502951623# United Kingdom

We also provide a **URC Daily Devotional** here:

< <https://us13.campaign-archive.com/?u=8958e2851d933a7a389a9f51c&id=99fe4caf1c> >

Unique North Wales and TransForum Manchester Transgender social and support Groups:

Unique has returned to running four live meetings a month:

- 1st Thursday evening 7.30-10 pm in Bangor
- 2nd and 4th Friday Morning (10.30 am to 12.30 pm) in the community house in Rhyl
- 3rd Thursday evening (8-11 pm) in Prestatyn.

Full details here: <[Unique Transgender Network - Page 3 \(uniquetg.org.uk\)](#)>

We are also running our Trans & Non-Binary (TNBI) on-line Virtual Support groups:

During these difficult times, physical distancing does not have to mean total social isolation!

Unique(< www.uniquetg.org.uk >) and TransForum (< www.transforum.co.uk >) are working with our associated trans support groups in North Wales, Manchester, Crewe and Cardiff to provide on-line meetings using Zoom.

Please join us to socialise and to raise any **TNBI** issues you might have. As we are on Zoom you are most welcome to join us from all over the UK (and beyond)

Unique hosts a meeting every **Thursday evening 8.00 - 11pm BST**

each **Saturday afternoon 3.30 pm - 7.00 pm BST**

If you would like to join the Unique Zoom meeting just click on the link below to be admitted (you may be asked to download the Zoom app onto your computer or phone if you do not already have it):

<<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/77583683876?pwd=TW9sc2ZRZ0Y2ZEdOazJjenhNWGs4Zz09> >

If you log in from your own Zoom Account: **Meeting ID: 775 8368 3876 Password: 130237**

If you have any difficulty with any of the events please contact Jenny-Anne at < jennyannebuk@btinternet.com > or 07500-741955

ONE to ONE Meetings for Gender Diverse People

We can also offer some one-to-one meetings on-line (by Zoom, Facebook Messenger or Skype), or in the **Rhyl Community House**.

For more details please contact **Kathy Dear**: kathy@uniquetg.org.uk or

Jenny-Anne jennyanne@uniquetg.org.uk or Phone 01745-337144

Modern Church Living in Love and Faith conference 18-20 July:

<https://modernchurch.org.uk/events/2022-conference-living-in-love-faith-and-hope>

Your body is not a mistake

Jonathan Clatworthy

I am a cis male, so it's kind of Pauline to invite me to write for you. My sympathies for the trans community are partly motivated by personal experiences which are different but – to me at least – feel parallel.

My parents, born a bit more than a century ago, were old-fashioned for their age. Father was an Anglican Catholic priest with a strong sense of duty. My teenage agonisings were about sex. Desperate for a sexual partner, I was brought up in a culture where the only permitted sex was within heterosexual marriage - and men should not marry before they had an established career and a mortgage. Ethical debate was almost entirely about sex: say you had doubts about someone's 'morals' and you were implying that they were sexually active. Most churches refused to accept divorce. Contraception was publicly disapproved of, whatever people did in private.

So I spent many of my early years with a strong sense that my body didn't fit the mould. I shouldn't be like this. I should be ashamed of myself, not because of what I had done (I hadn't, and that was the problem) but because of what I was.

[With my vicarage upbringing, I asked myself: 'Why has God made me like this?' The traditional answer, in Western Christianity, was Original Sin: things went wrong when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit. And because Augustine didn't have our understanding of the birds and the bees, the entire human race, including you and me, was at the time inside Adam's scrotum.](#)

Even in my teenage years I could see the problem. You can't just blame Adam, Eve or the serpent. If God is in charge of the universe, God is still responsible for what you and I are like. Why does God set things up like this? If God isn't just being nasty for the fun of it, what's the point?

Here is the parallel. Trans people are often disapproved of simply because of being trans. Yet none of us can choose what we are. What we do may be our own choice, but we don't choose our bodies. We get what we are given.

Although I don't have much to complain about – I'm white, middle class, in receipt of an adequate pension, etc., – I know what it's like to have that inner turmoil, constantly afraid of other people finding out what I am really like, constantly guarding secrets that must not be divulged even to the closest of friends.

Eventually I read enough history to realise that the rules I had been taught were creations of my society. Other societies are different. It mattered to me that the Hebrews of the Bible, just like contemporary Babylonians and Egyptians, took it for granted that when their children reached puberty it was time to find marriage partners for them. That too had its problems, but different ones. I wouldn't have had those teenage agonisings, but I dread to think what kind of girl my parents would have considered suitable for me.

Simply being aware that other societies have different values raises the question: are the values of our society the best ones, or can we improve on them? For those who experience being disapproved of just for what we are, it's an important question. How can we answer it?

Today one of the possible answers is the atheist one: we exist by accident. We are the product of unthinking, unintended physical matter obeying unthinking, unintended laws of nature. Our lives have no purpose. All moral judgements are fictions created by human minds, with absolutely no truth value. Objectively, nothing is ever right or wrong. Trans people, and the demonisers of trans people, are equally products of a directionless evolutionary process, just doing what we have evolved to do.

It's very difficult to conduct our lives on this basis, and I doubt whether anyone really does. Atheists find ways round it. The dominant voices in British society today disapprove of what other societies have often accepted as normal: racism, slavery, rape.

...continues on next page

The alternative to atheism is that there is some kind of intelligent mind behind the design of our lives. This means there is a higher moral authority from whose perspective we can judge the failings of our own society. What that intelligent mind is like has been debated for thousands of years.

I have come to believe that it is well described in the first chapter of Genesis. (I won't describe my reasoning here: I wrote a book about it, *Why Progressives Need God*.) The point is that we have been created as an act of generosity, so that we may experience life as a blessing. When we don't it's because humans have also been given freedom to mess things up, for ourselves and other people.

It is society, not God, that likes to simplify humanity by classifying us into a distinct set of types. It is society, not God, that passes judgement against anyone who doesn't fit one of its predetermined molds. God, meanwhile, makes billions of people, every one unique.

Although I came at it from a different life experience, I'm convinced about this: if your body doesn't fit a socially accepted category, it's the socially accepted categories that needs changing.

Every society has its intolerances. Every society demonises some minority or other. Still, some societies are more tolerant than others. Our great success story of recent years has been the increased tolerance of gays and lesbians. There are plenty more intolerances still to be overcome.

Jonathan Clatworthy is a Church of England priest. Before retirement he worked as a parish priest, university chaplain and tutor in theology, philosophy and ethics. He writes and blogs on current affairs from a liberal Christian perspective

The Bill of Rights and the EHRC

Susan Gilchrist

The United Kingdom Equality and Human Rights Commission is an independent statutory body with the responsibility to encourage equality and diversity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, and protect and promote the human rights of everyone in Britain. It enforces equality legislation on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

As an independent statutory body, it has a duty to hold the Government into account. However, the Government also appoints members to its board. The EHRC has become involved in a toxic dispute over the protection of transgender people. I find no evidence that the EHRC has taken any meaningful account of the viewpoints of the Professional Institutions. This leads me to believe that it has produced advice and guidance that exclusively supports the present Government agenda which pursues the gender critical approach.

That raises the question of politically motivated government appointments to the board of any statutory body, and if the present government is intent on forcing its UK Bill of Rights through Parliament as quickly as possible, and with minimum scrutiny, that must give us particular concern. Giving Parliament "the greatest possible weight" in court decisions means Parliament and the government will have the power to dictate how courts should interpret human rights. Thus, the ability to prevent such government misuses will be destroyed.

Please write to your own MP about this, using your own words AND SEND HIM/HER THIS LINK:

<http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/037B-UKBillofRightsConcerns.pdf>

The link gives the full text of this document and additionally contains my own critique of the current EHRC approach and the present controversy. They are extracted from an extended course of ten presentations. You can find the full set at Gilchrist, S. (2022): "Christian Communities, Transgender People and Christian Traditions" (Draft): <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/037B-PresDoctrinesDisputesTransPeople.pdf>

The following papers may also be relevant

Gilchrist, S. (2021a): "Gender Identity, Feminism, and Transgender People": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/250P-GenderIdentityAndTrans.pdf>

Gilchrist, S. (2020f): "Managing Transgender Conditions Correctly: A Commentary on the Bell v Tavistock Case": <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/documents/249P-JudgmentResponse.pdf>

A full bibliography is available at: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/articles/bibliography.htm>

Monday 4th April 2022
Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA



Dear Prime Minister,

On the Ban on Conversion Therapy Excluding Trans People

Conversion to Christianity is the event or process by which a person responds joyfully to the glorious embrace of the eternally loving and ever-merciful God. It has nothing to do with so-called 'conversion therapy' – pressure put by one person on another to fit their expectations; the attempt to induce vulnerable and isolated people to deny who they truly are.

To be trans is to enter a sacred journey of becoming whole: precious, honoured and loved, by yourself, by others and by God.

To allow those discerning this journey to be subject to coercive or undermining practices is to make prayer a means of one person manipulating another. It is a wrong-hearted notion of care and a wrong-headed understanding of conversion. Every church should be a safe space that affirms people in being who they are, without fear of judgement.

We see no justification for the ban on so-called 'conversion therapy' excluding trans people.

Yours respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Chalke".

Convener to the writing group
Revd Canon Steve Chalke, Baptist Minister and Founder of Oasis Trust

Rt Hon Dr Rowan Williams, Former Archbishop of Canterbury
Revd Canon Sarah Jones, St John the Baptist church, Cardiff,
Revd Canon Rachel Mann, Area Dean of Bury and Rossendale
Revd Alex Clare-Young, URC Minister
Revd Jide Macaulay, Founder & CEO of House Of Rainbow
Very Revd Rogers Govender; Dean of Manchester Cathedral
Very Revd Joe Hawes; Dean of St Edmundsbury
Professor Susannah Cornwall, Professor of Constructive Theologies, University of Exeter
Rt Revd Dr Alan Wilson; Bishop of Buckingham
Revd Paul Bailey; Pentecostal minister
Revd Dr Sam Wells, Vicar of St Martin-in-the-Fields, London
Very Revd Dr David Ison, Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, London
Very Revd Andrew Nunn, Dean of Southwark Cathedral, London



One of the happiest days of my life

Peter Raftery

It's the 28th May 2016 and I can't believe that I'm getting married today to a wonderful, beautiful woman called Pru. We had met on-line 5 years before, emailed and spoken on the telephone. We were getting on well but hadn't met up as we lived a distance apart. We had shared some sensitive things and I decided to tell 'my big secret'. I had become Peter sixteen years ago and was very comfortable in my skin. I wanted to be honest and had decided that it was better to tell someone early in a relationship, rather than wait, worry, agonise and maybe be rejected again. I spent hours writing an email, sent it and then I waited. Pru replied with a lovely message. She told me that she had been rather taken aback at my revelation but had gone for a very long swim in the pool and thought it through and decided that she should meet me. We arranged to meet

up the next day half-way for dinner. We met, chatted, laughed and had a great evening. She took hold of my hand on the way back to the cars and we arranged to meet up again very soon.

We spent every weekend together after that. It was a wonderful feeling to look forward to Friday evenings and driving down the M6 to Warwickshire. I was loved and accepted as Peter and was very, very happy and so was she. Pru introduced me to classical singing and I surprised her by proposing in song, altering the words of the Beatle's song, at her singing summer school, on one knee with an engagement ring in my hand. The whole room was in tears. That's the only time I've seen Pru speechless. So, we set a date and got planning. Our vicar was great and our wonderful friend Ruth filled the church with flowers and baked us a four tier wedding cake. My mum and my aunt travelled over from Dublin for the ceremony and I joined them and my son John, who was my best man, for breakfast on my wedding morning. Sadly, my dad was too unwell for the journey and my sister refused to come. John and I went up to the church early as I was then a church warden. The sun was shining and I had a huge grin from ear to ear. My new suit fitted, ties were tied and John and I welcomed everyone. The church filled up, my Sibyls friends were there looking as gorgeous as always, some of Pru's choir came to swell our church choir, the organ was playing and then Pru arrived, looking as beautiful as ever.

She came into Wagner's 'Ride of the Valkyries' wearing her special horned headdress but half-way down the aisle she took it off (she says symbolically!). It was a wonderful service full of joyful singing and a great sermon woven around music. We are part of a group of five churches and everyone was invited to the church and shared Prosecco and wedding cake after the service before we headed off for afternoon tea with family and close friends.

The tea party was great fun and afterwards Pru had arranged for a pianist and some of her friends to sing for us. The sun shone, more friends arrived, more food, the dancing began and we were the last to leave – tired but very happy. Not far to go – we only lived around the corner! It was a fantastic day. We have just celebrated our 6th wedding anniversary and I am looking forward to many, many more.

Specialty for Peter

At a wedding ceremony, the pastor asked if anyone had anything to say concerning the union of the bride and groom.

It was their time to stand up and talk, or forever hold their peace.

The moment of utter silence was broken by a young beautiful woman carrying a child.

She started walking toward the pastor slowly.

Everything quickly turned to chaos.

The bride slapped the groom.

The groom's mother fainted.

The groomsmen started giving each other looks and wondering how best to help save the situation.

The pastor asked the woman, "Can you tell us why you came forward? What do you have to say?"

The woman replied, "We can't hear in the back."



Trans faith

Church Times article on LLF working group on trans people:

https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2022/8-april/news/uk/house-of-bishops-gender-identity-proposals-criticised?fbclid=IwAR04AyJsGuojcQdCKAnP75LTkAzvHVSGUoIMQtAIWRgRHi_hByMWTsCxi04

Vicky Brett's response to Angela Kilby on trans conversion therapy:

https://viamedia.news/2022/04/13/is-the-conversion-therapy-ban-a-muddle-a-response-to-angela-kilby/?fbclid=IwAR0NBoxrOLToUKXrffR8oFzy_I8-dzT6qZktPnePjnru4rgDdDMQlfpEyiQ

The mom of a trans son founds her own church:

https://www.lgbtqnation.com/2022/05/mom-founds-church-protect-trans-sons-rights/?utm_source=LGBTQ%20Nation%20Subscribers&utm_campaign=afd53027d5-20220513_LGBTQ_Nation_Daily_Brief&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c4eab596bd-afd53027d5-431451745&fbclid=IwAR0y7SBCv2UaMIOEveKFhbzC8LhxZgadnFWKdv1hYd76SBek5nG9ois1WeU#.Yn9Vjl_6234.facebook

A trans/non-binary Catholic reflects on their faith:

<https://www.newwaysministry.org/2022/04/20/new-memoir-connects-non-binary-poets-experiences-to-the-message-of-easter/>

The Holy Spirit at Pentecost: blazing gender-fluid inspiration:

https://qspirit.net/pentecost-holy-spirit-brings-lgbtq/?fbclid=IwAR0noXCTjYqDI6N_dFz_osxjvJR8QrEiQTIAPkA67-bOWFVLxOk4-mkUyhw

Rev Junia Joplin: “I am a woman because I do womanhood”:

https://goodfaithmedia.org/i-am-a-woman-because-i-do-womanhood/?fbclid=IwAR36_HyTj26PDzi8vbjqBdrbHH6uOdtf2YfnpnLTusx8_I TRTmoYuX4HxQ

Great sermon by Junia Joplin:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kLGJOEJbg9s>

Rachel Mann leads Sunday Worship on R4 celebrating Pride:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/m0018nhf?partner=uk.co.bbc&origin=share-mobile&fbclid=IwAR0cm3SOKx6KmVlidFF3fbpzmDvboYrgkHsdbrX6zIwz9ya4aJJX8Sawr1k>

Nicky Burr’s trans/spiritual/health journey:

<https://gohealth.org.uk/podcasts/learning-to-heal-gender/?fbclid=IwAR0MBm0kK5EIUwDJ9Kur6Mq229WNLerQYuou7WZob2QjRVQGPC-vYVYICj0>



Trans law and politics

82 LGBT groups withdraw from Government conference over exclusion of trans people from conversion therapy.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-60988210>

Alex Clare-Young speaks to ITV news about the pain suffered by trans people subjected to conversion therapy and reflects on that experience:

<https://alexclareyoung.co.uk/2022/04/05/speaking-sorrow-writing-joy/?fbclid=IwAR2yul2rSlluCCRSr6NkT7yjbVYQvn8bW5GaMAh4Vn-B80RHuqpKHeqv8zM>

Trans Catholic’s shocking experience of conversion therapy:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/apr/28/conversion-therapy-trans-person-torture-uk-government>

House of Commons debate on exclusion of trans people from conversion therapy ban: <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2022-06-13/debates/066BEE43-BF73-4FC2-B740-B789C37232F3/TransgenderConversionTherapy>

Shocking EHRC guidance on use of single-sex spaces by trans people:

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/separate-and-single-sex-service-providers-guide-equality-act-sex-and-gender>

....https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/apr/04/trans-people-can-be-excluded-single-sex-services-if-justifiable-says-ehrc?fbclid=IwAR16sCqSmK8yv18VuyPlaXqAFFJECb_xdEqIB4BDnUpaJvS3r8Kv67Z3Hds

...EHRC guidance “legally non-compliant rubbish”:

<https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/ehrc-single-sex-spaces-guidance-could-lead-employers-into-unlawfulness/?fbclid=IwAR0qdPoBrBF5GDR76MINJZ0IzfNh8SOpjnvREO7NarIVa9odQkAOLOB1Pw>

Labour needs to make clear where it stands on trans rights:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/apr/06/labour-policy-gender-back-trans-rights-boris-johnson>

...typically The Guardian fails to make clear where it stands by simultaneously publishing an article in defence of “sex-based rights” for women:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/apr/06/labour-policies-trans-women-rights-gender-recognition-act>

....50 Tory MPs might rebel:

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/apr/07/uk-conversion-therapy-ban-transgender-people-tory-mps>

Trans people deserve an apology – even The Times allows a Tory MP to say so:

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/trans-people-deserve-an-apology-0mctksp6b?fbclid=IwAR1WmWaYIQJOtFghegJcbloSSJh-9rYpPb24qQWqkY-wx01sOJ5KdOakVHI>

Attorney general says schools don’t have to accommodate trans children – yes, really:

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/may/27/attorney-general-says-schools-do-not-have-to-accommodate-childrens-gender-wishes>

Newly elected trans councillors:

<https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2022/05/06/labour-trans-councillors-kira-lewis-dylan-tippetts/>

Clear majority support ban on conversion therapy for trans people, poll suggests:

<https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2022/04/12/conversion-therapy-ban-trans-yougov-boris-johnson/>

Watered down CT ban in Queen’s speech:

<https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2022/05/10/queens-speech-conversion-therapy-ban-trans/?fbclid=IwAR1NbEQDBu5vssTA-V78GmNdELHrdqOmMwUyewvh09kuP2aJPUrVRTSVQH4>

Should “legal sex” be abolished?

<https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2022/05/11/legal-sex-gender-future-legal-project-research/>

Sajid Javid says trans health services for children “bordering on ideological” and “too narrow”:

<https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2022/04/21/sajid-javid-tory-nhs-gender-services-trans/>



Trans health

NHS guidance on treatment of gender dysphoria:

https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/gender-dysphoria/treatment/?fbclid=IwAR0igY2cBc4CpSXJbpmsnknPy6gbsmSjMNJhsvydf9lIjjBMy5_351MVFbM

Horrors of trans conversion therapy: one trans man’s experience:

https://inews.co.uk/news/long-reads/trans-conversion-therapy-patient-speaks-out-psychiatrist-reported-1641330?fbclid=IwAR1UHedOZ6cqleJfiN_mMiOlBnIAG59JyR1umUpg4ZkoFKzvsBZVyIJypCs

BMA supports ban on conversion therapy for trans people:

https://www.bma.org.uk/bma-media-centre/ban-on-conversion-therapy-must-extend-to-every-member-of-the-lgbtqplus-community-says-bma?fbclid=IwAR32gLufbCBqRkWPc_GPNLvj_PyAHHnW9ZWrvKQoq5D013WG4VDNLahEK84

Javid calls for review of treatment of trans children (he shockingly compares defence of trans children with racism):

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/apr/24/sajid-javid-plans-review-of-impact-of-gender-dysphoria-treatment>

Large-scale multi-country study of effect of pandemic on health of trans people:

“In sum, it appears that the COVID-19 pandemic has an extraordinary impact on the transgender population in upper-middle-income and high-income countries, and that transgender people might suffer under the severity of the pandemic even more than the general population. This is due to the intersections between their status as a vulnerable social group, their high number of medical risk factors, and their need for ongoing medical treatment. The COVID-19 pandemic can potentiate these vulnerabilities, add new challenges for transgender people, and can therefore lead to devastating consequences such as severe physical or mental health issues, self-harming behavior, and even suicidality.”

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/26895269.2021.1986191>

Dr Helen Webberley competent, tribunal finds:

<https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/welsh-doctor-who-ran-transgender-23777090.amp?fbclid=IwAR02EHSgvCOIQtYExdgmfJkl00ipYVgOqhZ7QrFBCuDaSdzrtMpwmH2rQ5A>

No scientific basis for binary view of sex:

<https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/voices/stop-using-phony-science-to-justify-transphobia/?fbclid=IwAR011uI98WqC5MQvTPEjQFZaYJeaAVVW9dskIP5oA8u7-li7D-KQQIXbtX0>

Can trans women have period-related symptoms?

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/can-trans-women-get-periods?fbclid=IwAR0zrkoBx01KdJrmqD9FQRUIYM2kMKoFnLDjrWsmlawC7ikfM3I5bCXrDz8#summary>

Some extraordinary case histories from neuro-divergent, disabled and chronically ill trans patients:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5e8a0a6bb02c73725b24dc9d/t/625db8607ab59a0ff0b3f75b/1650309239532/Nobody+teaches+you+how+to+be+a+patient.pdf>



Trans life

Great article by Sophie Grace Chappell, OU trans professor of philosophy: “trans people don’t owe cis people, or anyone else, an explanation of why they’re who they are. No more than gay people do, for instance, or black people or Jewish people, or any other historically stigmatised minority. Our right to exist as transgender people is not conditional on our being able to prove it, by demonstrating the truth of something called “gender ideology” (our gender ideology, that is, not the rest of society’s). The onus of proof is not on us transgender people *at all*. It is on those who want to exclude us. By what right do they discriminate against us? By what right do they demonise us, marginalise us, gaslight us, ridicule us, patronise us, in ways that no one would accept for a minute of any other minority?”:

<https://viamedia.news/2022/04/21/trans-figured-experience-trumps-theory/?fbclid=IwAR2-0oYv1f6SvGLLQ4JoytqU8UUQEiY7HWDMTXANekFXkpQu53God1CmGc4>

....an interesting interview with Sophie:

<https://www.philosophersmag.com/interviews/219-sophie-grace-chappell-talks-sex-and-gender?fbclid=IwAR2caDFrI037rVkytQAYhQdY4soDRSVX4oPkPqzFJ5nZAd6FJaf8C8NPZeU>

Robin Golden-Hann’s story (trans ordinand, artist and stonemason):

<https://hersalisburystory.com/stories/robyn-golden-hann/?fbclid=IwAR0WqtggTxr1cfmNbr-GTigEAZbExeecePx1KNrueEBXmYDRaiKuMzU4X8>

All trans women football team:

<https://www.mylondon.news/news/lgbtq-football-team-make-history-23567972?fbclid=IwAR3Nq1bPumu8 QcGiB1kAdpf1WynEYI2vZ Em9ORz9HyU6bAyZzZWTKVr3w>

Trans brothers who transitioned in 1930s:

<https://twitter.com/elierlick/status/1520805459166482432?s=21&t=5Xn8TGKt1uVHnryzPi82sA&fbclid=IwAR0ZJf8LJ1NF8xDBWpY01WhCcsOGsacbeID878dumvzLcYEWrNPiMWf96KI>

The company JKR keeps:

<https://medium.com/@missfredawallace/jk-rowlings-bottomless-brunch-bcbfebe57cba>

From binary trans identity to a non-binary (a-gender) identity:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/aug/07/my-life-without-gender-strangers-are-desperate-to-know-what-genitalia-i-have?fbclid=IwAR1Z IFzXPx3ERYBZ1B12Bnc3FDvDN3-KuhunGI5Kf9eqrGuflvfOmzqP7E>

Boris Johnson says trans women should not compete in women's sports:

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/apr/06/johnson-says-trans-athletes-should-not-compete-in-sport-that-does-not-match-biological-sex>

Other (better informed) people disagree:

<https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2022/04/07/boris-johnson-trans-women-sports/>

<https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2022/04/07/trans-women-sports-ban-ioc-caster-semenya/?fbclid=IwAR0yynUy2ULBTQkDix0i5jM5LSxeEa0K4MuZhQRB4GYnEIFRsZyWQ-6CI>

..more from BBC on trans women in sport:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/athletics/61332123>

...and a view from scientists:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/61346517>

...trans women swimmers banned from elite competition if they transitioned after age of 12:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/swimming/61853450>

...Meg Rapinoe's view:

<https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2022/06/19/megan-rapinoe-trans-rights-time/>

...possible legal challenges to exclusion of trans women:

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/jun/22/trans-swimming-ban-sports-lawyers>

...German football says trans people can chose the team they play in:

<https://www.theguardian.com/football/2022/jun/23/transgender-footballers-in-germany-can-choose-men-or-women-team>

Few trans children change their minds, research suggests:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/05/04/health/transgender-children-identity.html?fbclid=IwAR01CAL6nMzLunZCNpRFwCxDGVmuYunxD88qSnIYwZUKNNA-0ICE-PoPxHM>

Hannah and Jake Graff's second baby:

<https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2022/03/31/jake-hannah-graf-trans-parents/>

UK's slide down European ranking of LGBTQ+ friendly countries continues:

<https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2022/05/12/most-lgbtq-friendly-countries-europe-uk-rainbow-map/?fbclid=IwAR3iF6GZQ2W08YUy19ty2d-NTXDWn9lqYXQf-En-wt7T4DnSLW AqACYhI>

LGB Alliance given National Lottery grant:

<https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2022/06/12/lgb-alliance-national-lottery-community-fund-helpline-charity/>

Sarah Savage, founder of UK's first Trans Pride:

Survey shows British public broadly supportive of trans rights:

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2022/jun/16/britons-not-bitterly-polarised-over-trans-equality-research-finds>

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/jun/16/twitter-trans-rights-gender-identity-report>

Sweet romance between trans woman and cis lesbian:

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2022/jun/13/how-we-met-i-noticed-she-was-transgender-and-remember-thinking-she-seemed-sweet-and-shy>



Trans world

Trans Hungary: interview with trans heroine Emilia:

https://theheroines.blogspot.com/2022/04/interview-with-emilia.html?fbclid=IwAR02NSTsnPgAfuCANRtiC28MJn0gzPcY7n3CNeHSwCPJsBUW7M_6gSs6yI

Trans Scotland: it's getting worse according to survey:

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/apr/26/young-lgbt-people-scotland-bullying-worse-homophobia>

Biden's IDAHOBIT statement:

https://www.lgbtqnation.com/2022/05/biden-issues-statement-international-day-homophobia-transphobia-biphobia/?utm_source=LGBTQ%20Nation%20Subscribers&utm_campaign=18340865fa-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2022_05_22_02_48&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c4eab596bd-18340865fa-430631441&fbclid=IwAR1SvkAJJoPIOcc6CUQRVERrjTswitD5IV9IwbIkTOFefSSxvzXyT0EuzyMM

Trans Canada: trans population tiny – but growing:

<https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2022/06/08/trans-non-binary-census-data-canada-uk-stonewall-nancy-kelley/>

US Colonel's trans story:

https://online.fliphtml5.com/dchey/wwce/?fbclid=IwAR3uxMI9bxQO9FmjVJTzd571ARUNRPNiLJBfxbd2bi_sLeXkUVqjJPzwk_A#p=26



Trans books and media

Guardian' top ten trans love stories:

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2022/may/18/top-10-trans-love-stories-at-certain-points-we-touch-lauren-john-joseph>

Black trans prayer book:

<https://www.them.us/story/black-trans-prayer-book-religion-faith-healing/amp?fbclid=IwAR1dnpltquxWhGlXENZO9Woz9p17EnvZFn0BrU1RrRFvWlZhzkQJoNeungI>