

# Trans Pride Shabbat Planning Guide

**Thrive:** *The Jewish Coalition to Defend  
Trans and LGBTQ+ Youth*



**This Pride, let's intentionally carve out space to celebrate our transgender, nonbinary, and intersex community members by adding Trans Pride-focused Shabbat programming and creating safe, abundant communities that advocate for the world we all deserve.** Pride is a time to celebrate our resistance and resilience. We follow our queer and trans Jewish ancestors who built community, harnessed joy, and made the world a better place for the LGBTQ+ people to come. We will continue to fight for equality and against harmful rhetoric and policy. Together, we show that we are here, we aren't going anywhere, and that our communities are beautiful, joyous, generative spaces of love and belonging.

**We invite you to join us on June 26 to host a Trans Pride Shabbat.**

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**Trans Pride Shabbat**

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Celebrate transgender Pride in community

*suggested date:*  
**Friday, June 26**

[keshetonline.org/trans-pride-shabbat](https://keshetonline.org/trans-pride-shabbat)

**[Click here](#) to download the customizable graphic!**

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## Planning Trans Pride Shabbat

- **It is crucial to ensure that trans+ community members are involved** in the visioning and planning of Trans Pride Shabbat. And just as important, be careful not to expect them to answer every question or do all the work.
- **Get clear on goals!** Given the multiple emotional layers of trans identity today, it's essential to define the goals of your community's Trans Pride Shabbat. This may include fostering a sense of belonging, celebrating trans ancestors and community members, and taking action together in your community or state.
- **Make Trans Pride Shabbat accessible to all members of the congregation**, including those with disabilities. Choose an accessible area, provide American Sign Language interpretation if needed, and offer alternative formats for printed materials.

# Putting The Service Together

## Prayers

Add prayers and relevant readings to your service that span a variety of experiences and tones. Here are some options:

- Twilight People Prayer by Rabbi Rueben Zellman
- A Prayer for Transgender Justice by Rabbi Emily Aviva Kapor-Mater
- Blessing for Black TGNC Folks by Martin Rawlings-Fein
- Queer/Chosen Family Gender Neutral Blessing for the Children by Rani Silverman
- Poems for a Gender Transition Ritual (interpretations of Psalms) by Dr. Joy Ladin
- A Prayer for LGBTQ+ Rights SCOTUS Hearings by Lily Solochek
- Prayer for One who Transitions, by Eitan Meshullam Chai
- Transgender Prayer by Jill Weiss
- Asher Yatsar (The One Who Forms): a prayer of gratitude for our bodies for all genders by Rabbi Elliot Kukla
- God of Love by puck glass

Prayer and liturgy are an expansive category. If you know of a piece of text that is meaningful to you or others planning the service, add it as well!



## Signage and Decoration

Keshet and SOJOURN have a variety of signage that can help make your Pride clear and designate your space, during Pride month and beyond, as safe and welcoming to LGBTQ+ people.

- LGBTQ+ Safe Zone stickers
- Trans Jews Belong Here sign
- Southern Jews for Trans Rights sign and sticker

## Torah Service

Below are some inspiration and starting points for Divrei Torah on this year's Trans Pride Shabbat Torah portion, *Parashat Chukat-Balak*.

### The legacy of resilience and celebration amidst challenge will help us survive these times. (Chukat)

- In verse 20:1-2 we say a final goodbye to Miriam, prophet and sister to Moses and Aaron. In doing so we don't get much more information other than that she has died and was buried in Kadesh followed by the Israelites now being without water. Later in the parasha Aaron also dies and we learn who his successor will be. We also eventually find out Joshua will be the successor of Moses. However, we don't find out who will take Miriam's place. **We know that all three were considered the leaders of Israel, so why does Miriam get less attention after all she has done for her people?**
- We know Miriam was quite significant. The Torah mentions her specifically leading Israelites out of Mitzrayim with timbrels and singing. There is also midrash that tells us the Israelites were provided with water on the merit of Miriam. **Miriam teaches joy and celebration, nurturance and love, resilience and hope.** What Miriam brings to those who come into contact with her cannot be captured by a specific moment, city, battle, or commandment. As Rabbi Bradley Artson points out, "Without Miriam's efforts, no one would have been able to listen to the words of Moses or to study God's Torah."
- What if Miriam had already been working on having her lessons passed down to generations to come by the people she wandered the desert with. She gave them hope in Egypt before they crossed the sea. She leads them in songs and dances of resilience. She nourished the Israelites with water showing them when you need a spark of the divine, you will find it.
- **Who are the teachers and changemakers that propelled us into the current fight for Trans and LGB+ liberation? Who helped pave the way for where we are now? What does music, dancing, and celebration help sustain us in the fight for equality? How do you nourish yourself during challenging times? How can you help nourish your community? How do you celebrate the wins? Who inspires you to keep going?**

## Torah Service cont'd.

### Listen to the voice telling you what's right (Balak)

- Balak, King of Moab, sends a message to Balaam to curse the Israelites, for whomever Balaam cursed and whomever he blesses is blessed. God tells Balaam not to curse the Israelites for they are blessed! Still, Balaam gets on his donkey and starts his journey. Three times an angel from God appears, but only Balaam's donkey can see it and eventually will not go any further for Balaam. Confused Balaam beats the donkey who points out she has been taking him where he asks so why would Balaam think she stops without reason. Once Balaam listens, the angel of God appears to him and tells him he will continue to Balak, but will offer a blessing to the Israelites instead of a curse.
- We're living through a time of polarization and divisiveness is showing up in different parts of our communities. Speaking up for what we know is right can feel scary and sometimes takes great courage! We also might feel like our individual voice can't make much of a difference.
- **It's imperative we listen to that voice that tells us to speak out for the safety and dignity of trans, nonbinary, and intersex people in and out of our communities.** It's important that we name injustice when we see it and take action wherever we can. We are all created b'tzelem elohim, in the image of the Divine, which means we are all born with innate worth and we are all born with innate ability to do holy and just work.
- As individuals we have the ability to make a big impact, often not even getting to know the true extent of it! Every action causes a ripple effect and can help someone else get through the day, access care, or inspire others to take action. **When we cultivate courage and resilience we can change the course of history.**

[For trans pride sermon starters for the other Torah portions we'll be reading in June, click here!](#)

## Taking Action

Here are a few examples of ways your congregation can incorporate action for the trans community into your Pride Shabbat.

- Initiate communal learning, dialogue, and planning with the following questions:
  - What are the current challenges or protections to trans rights in your state?
  - What bills were passed or didn't pass in this past legislative session in your state?
  - Check out our June 2026 Legislative Priorities doc!
  - How can your congregation or community help address the needs/dangers/gaps created by these attacks?
- Use this link to take action!
- Write postcards to legislators! Reach out to Keshet to request postcards to reach out to your legislators and tell them trans rights are non-negotiable.
- Facilitate an art build! Is there an upcoming rally or event you can create signs for? Include a Trans Pride Shabbat art table where attendees can make signs and organize a group from the synagogue to show up together.
- Write messages of support to trans youth with Point of Pride to remind someone they are supported and seen.

## Additional Resources

- Talking About Anti-Trans Legislation Through a Jewish Lens - The Thrive Coalition
- The Role of Jewish Community Spaces Amid Hostile Legislation for LGBTQ+ Youth - The Thrive Coalition
- SOJOURN's Southern and Jewish Pronoun Guide
- Towards a Trans-Inclusive Feminism - Keshet
- Trans Youth and Athletes Belong in Sports - Keshet
- We're in This Together: A Letter to Trans and LGBTQ+ Jewish Youth - Keshet
- Services and Resources for Trans People and Their Families - Keshet
- Federal legal and policy threats timeline - HRC
- Know your rights FAQ - GLAD Law