

We Are Worlds: A Memorial Reading for Transgender Day of Remembrance

By Rabbi Becky Silverstein, SVARA Faculty

Jewish tradition teaches that we are both partners with Gd in creating the world and that we are each a world unto ourselves. On Transgender Day of Remembrance and Resilience, we acknowledge and mourn the loss of worlds to gender-based violence and honor the ways in which members of the trans community partner with Gd daily to create their own worlds and the world in which we live.

We mourn as part of or alongside the trans community. We mourn sacred beings whose lives were narrowly defined, their dreams abruptly halted. We mourn the sparks of possibility lost to our world when they were killed. We see that those who live at the intersection of multiple oppressed identities bear the brunt of this violence — naming that the lives lost are Black lives, Indigenous lives, Asian lives, trans women more frequently than trans men and nonbinary people.

We see the trans people in our communities and the world, the ways in which their own becoming demonstrates resilience in the face of interpersonal and systemic violence. As members of the trans community, we might pause to consider if we have fully seen and honored each other as we move through the world. As those walking beside the trans community, we ask ourselves how we can support trans thriving.

Our world is filled with beauty reflected from our individual worlds. May the memories of those we've lost carry their beauty forward, and may those of us who are alive continue the sacred act of being.

