

Detectable

Written by Rev. Mel E. Martinez, M.Div.

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Reader 1 (trans- gender woman): Am I detectable to you, in this room, in this place? With all my flair, my faults, my ever-changing, never-changing self? Do you detect my uncertainties and my biases?

Reader 2 (genderqueer or gender non-conforming person): Am I detectable to you? Have you noticed that I am here, who I am, what I am? Have you asked? Have you even thought to inquire what God did when God forged me in heavenly light?

Reader 3 (trans- gender man): Am I detectable to you? You can not possibly know me from a glance or chance encounter. I am more than the sum of my parts, my matter, or not-my-parts and not-my-matter.

Reader 2: To have both/and as my center, and either/or as my demise. Am I detectable to you, or does your glance move quickly away while you wrestle in your own mind about my own self?

Reader 1: Do you detect my hair product? Or do you just look for bosoms you can wallow in, and eyes you can fall in, and daint or no-daint to rescue me from? Am I detectable to you, as myself.

Reader 3: If you have a tumor removed aren't you better for it, but if I do am I not considered weak? Why? Just because a tumor may not kill me doesn't mean it's not killing my spirit to live with it. Am I detectable to you, as a member of the human race, with a human face...

Reader 1: For I am who I am, a child of "I will be who I will be" in a world of individuality provided only to the few. Am I detectable to you?

Reader 2: Coming to conclusions and mis-naming, mis-gendering, shrugging while you continue along your way unwilling to be unsettled? Am I detectable to you?

Reader 3: when did it become true that who I am is less important than who I am to you? Am I detectable to you?

All Readers: Am I detectable to you?

Congregation: And the voice of God said, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you;" And so shall we. Amen.

A Progressive Prayer for Congregational Engagement

On the issue of Visibility of Transgender People

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Leader: Let us join together in prayer today lifting up to God our gratitude and our shortcomings as we turn our minds and hearts to our transgender, gender non-conforming, and genderqueer siblings. Please pray with me.

Beloved God, Elohim, the “we” and “us” who formed humankind in Your image, receive our prayers this day. Aid us in the examination of the world around us, that those we encounter may receive in our gaze a warmth of welcome and siblinghood.

Response: Adonai, examine me.

Leader: Identify for us our faulty assumptions, and our need for assumption, when we encounter a beloved child of Your elaborate creativity. Help us notice our need for sameness, that it may be set aside in preference for your incredible diversity. A diversity in expression, and a diversity in identity, and a diversity in community.

Response: Adonai, notice me.

Leader: Observe for us and in us our biases for what we consider beautiful, and open our minds eye and our appetite to beauty well beyond our imaginations. Remind us to recognize the journey of transformation, that some of us are so fortunate as to bring what is hidden in one’s soul to what is evident in one’s presence.

Response: Adonai, recognize me.

Leader: Guide us in the multi-faceted ways in which we bear witness to Your incredible and vast expression of yourself, in the images of our siblings. That we may indeed regard Your complexity in shadow by aching shadow of human bodies and human spirits.

Response: Adonai, witness me.

Leader: Adonai, Ruler and Maker, Great Artist of color, shape, and texture, open us to our own complexities, such that we may never consider something as intimate as identity to be simple; but that we consider simplicity to be just the beginning of Your revelation among us.

Response: Adonai, reveal me. Amen.