

I want to thank Rev. Russ, Amy, and the people of Unity of Fairfax for their talents and generous hosting. I also want to thank Chris McCormick, Board member of TGEA and FCPS Pride, for putting together the list of folks this year, assembling the names and photos and stories. It's a heavy emotional lift, and by her doing so she allowed me the time and the space to sit with the faces, each one of the faces, their names, and some of their stories.

I'm losing my voice - sinusitis and laryngitis. Yet many people in our communities are feeling like they are losing their voices, too. It's a challenging time, and yet I have seen such strength and resilience in our communities. We are powerful people.

We have been told what our gender was. We have been told by the doctor that birthed us... by paperwork... by parents... by society ... by everyone around us.

And we have said... I will take that under advisement.

Or, I am no longer accepting input on that.

And we have listened to a more powerful voice within.

For we are powerful beings.

That's why so many have denied us, oppressed us, tried to suppress us, and have committed the ultimate act of censorship against us: murder.

Because they fear change. They fear transformation. They fear us.

For we are mighty and powerful beings.

Let no one tell you otherwise.

Every successful liberation movement down through history has moved forward by building community and coalition. We need you. The word 'angel' comes from the Greek angelos, meaning messenger. So when we sang earlier, "Calling All Angels", we are calling for YOU. We need you: messengers of equality and liberation... messengers of hope and love and care. We are calling all angels. We are calling YOU.

For as we remember those murdered, we each must also remember to do our part: to fight against de-humanization... of ANY one. And we must rise up and make this world a better place... for ALL people...

And now... go forth whole and holy... and go forth remembering.

No Fear.... No Hate.... No Violence.

Go in Peace