

to the present. And I can't tell you what a difference that has made in my life.

Day after day, I would pick up the Bible to read, maybe 15 minutes before the schoolbus came, and what I read that day would be something that later on, a couple hours later, I would face at school. Whether it would be something dealing with one of my classmates or a hard test or being sick, it doesn't matter.

□ 1845

They say the Bible is living and active, and it really is. That is one thing that makes it so special, because it is very, very powerful.

There have been many instances in my life where the Bible has made a difference for me. But I want to certainly say the most important verse is not just because it is the word of God; it is because it points me to how I can have a personal relationship with him. And that is John 3:16.

I don't know about you, but I love football. Many times when you watch a football game, somebody is holding up a poster that says, "John 3:16." I hope you go and read what that says because it is so powerful. It says, "For God so loved the world." That is what makes this different than other religions. God is a god of love, and because He loved the world, He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. It goes on and says, "For God did not send his Son to condemn the world but to save the world through him."

I believed that when I was 9 years old, and I am so thankful to have the privilege of knowing God and that God has made a way for each one of us to know that.

I would, this week, encourage all of us to get our Bible off that shelf, dust it off, open it up, and experience knowing God, hearing from Him, and receiving the hope, healing, and help that only God can provide.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Missouri for her passionate and powerful words.

Our last speaker now before we conclude our hour is from the great State of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT).

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, John Adams, our first Vice President, such a prominent fixture within the Continental Congress, Declaration of Independence, so important to our founding, such a strong antislavery personality—and he was very, very learned, constantly reading—said: I have examined all the religions, and the result is that the Bible is the best book in the world.

Patrick Henry, who gave the stem-winding speech that moved so many to support the Revolution, said: The Bible is a book worth more than all the other books that were ever printed.

Benjamin Rush, also a Founder, a dear friend of John Adams, said: "By renouncing the Bible, philosophers

swing from their moorings upon all moral subjects. . . . It is the only correct map of the human heart that has ever been published."

And I love what C.S. Lewis said in his book "The Case for Christianity." He was discussing dualism, this idea that there are two equal forces in the universe and that they are at war, and we don't know how it is going to come out.

He said there is a war going on, but it is not between two equal forces. It is between a master and a rebel, and we happen to live in rebel-occupied territory. Basically, he goes on to say, can you imagine being behind enemy lines and getting a message from your home headquarters and you don't even pick it up and read it?

Those of us who are Christians, we believe that God gave us this book of messages, just like C.S. Lewis said. Unfortunately, many don't pick them up.

It is well known that Thomas Jefferson, though he was not a deist, believed the Bible, not all of the miracles. But the story is told that he was coming down—and CRS has verified he came to church every Sunday here in the Capitol. He usually rode his horse. When Madison came every Sunday—he was here in D.C.—he came down to the Old House Chamber.

But someone asked Jefferson: Where are you going this Sunday morning?

He said: I am going to church in the Capitol.

He had a big Bible under his arm.

He said: But you don't believe everything they do.

He said: Sir, I am the highest elected magistrate in this country. It is imperative that I set the proper example.

I thank my friend for setting that same proper example.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for his words, and I thank him and all the others who have spoken here tonight from all over this great country of ours for their heartfelt comments.

It has been an honor and a pleasure for me to commemorate National Bible Week this evening. I am grateful to my colleagues who joined me to honor, respect, and commemorate the Word of God.

Mr. Speaker, the prophet Isaiah, thousands of years ago in this book right here, the Bible, in Isaiah 40:8 says: "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever." Those are powerful and true words.

Civilizations have risen and fallen, generations have come and gone, yet here today, on November 20, 2019, we are still celebrating the enduring Word of God given to us starting thousands of years ago.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 3, 2019, the gentlewoman from Massachusetts (Ms. PRESSLEY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. PRESSLEY. Mr. Speaker, before I begin, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of the Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Massachusetts?

There was no objection.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of Rita Hester, a Black transgender woman killed in the Massachusetts Seventh District, for whom Transgender Day of Remembrance was established in 1999.

I rise today because, 20 years later, many more lives continue to be stolen. This year, we have been robbed of at least 22 transgender people because of hate, fear, and vitriol—22 souls, the majority of whom are Black transgender women; 22 people whose families, friends, and partners are forever marred by grief; 22 experiences of secondhand trauma for transgender people everywhere.

Among them we remember: Dana Martin, Jazzaline Ware, Ashanti Carmon, Claire Legato, Muhlaysia Booker, Michelle "Tamika" Washington, Paris Cameron, Chynal Lindsey, Chanel Scurlock, Zoe Spears, Brooklyn Lindsey, Denali Berries Stuckey, Tracy Single, Bubba Walker, Kiki Fantroy, Jordan Cofer, Pebbles LaDime "Dime" Doe, Bailey Reeves, Bee Love Slater, Jamagio Jamar Berryman, Itali Marlowe, and Brianna "BB" Hill.

May they rest in peace and power.

Today, we remember still others not included on this list because their missing persons reports remain uninvestigated or because they are misgendered and deadnamed after their death because the people closest to them refused to recognize their truths.

We remember those who die from preventable illnesses, poverty, and violence as a result of discrimination in healthcare, employment, education, and housing.

We remember transgender women Johana Medina and Layleen Polanco, victims of an unjust and cruel immigration and criminal legal system.

Mr. Speaker, colleagues, the transgender community deserves to be seen safe and celebrated. However, due to this administration's policies that continue to neglect, unfairly target, and commit violence against them, this is not the case.

However, so as not to define the transgender community only by their trauma, today, I also rise to lift the talents and strengths of this community.

I honor you, my transgender friends, for your bravery to honor your truths, for intentionally creating a beautiful and rich community, and for being role models as leaders of social change.

I stand before you committed to listening to your needs, to recognizing and centering transgender lives, not just today but every day, and to being your partner in ending this devastating crisis.

Last week, I introduced the People's Justice Guarantee, a resolution that reaffirms our collective right to live free from injustice. I rise today resolved in the fight to ensure our rights to dignity, liberation, and justice—justice for transgender people, justice for all in America.

Mr. Speaker, it is now my pleasure to yield to the gentleman from the great State of California (Mr. TAKANO).

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Massachusetts for yielding.

I know the gentlewoman has read the names of the Black trans women who were taken from us far too soon due to bigotry, hatred, and transphobia that is running rampant in our country, but if she will permit me, I will also enter their names. I will read them aloud. I believe we should honor them not just once but many times over.

So, I rise in honor of Dana Martin, Jazzaline Ware, Ashanti Carmon, Claire Legato, Muhlaysia Booker, Michelle "Tamika" Washington, Paris Cameron, Chynal Lindsey, Chanel Scurlock, Zoe Spears, Brooklyn Lindsey, Denali Berries Stuckey, Tracy Single, Bubba Walker, Kiki Fantroy, Jordan Cofer, Pebbles LaDime "Dime" Doe, Bailey Reeves, Bee Love Slater, Jamagio Jamar Berryman, Itali Marlowe, and Brianna "BB" Hill.

These are the names we know of transgender and nonconforming people who have been killed in America in the year 2019, so far.

We cannot ignore this epidemic that is plaguing the trans community. We cannot forget their stories. We cannot stop fighting to protect trans lives.

On this Transgender Day of Remembrance, we remember their names.

I would like to say also that I appreciated that our Speaker met today with actress and activist Ms. Ross, who is quite a champion of transgender people. Our Democratic Caucus chairman, HAKEEM JEFFRIES, led a roundtable. Many Members of Congress appeared at that roundtable to listen to the needs of the transgender community. I thank them for showing their support today.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for those powerful words. Like the gentleman, I agree that we cannot say those names enough.

Mr. Speaker, it is now my pleasure to yield to the gentleman from the great State of Missouri (Mr. CLEAVER).

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her work in this area, which is desperately needed.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak on today's Transgender Day of Remembrance.

For 20 years, November 20 has marked a solemn day in the LGBTQ+ community. Vigils are held in

communities nationwide in honor of all the transgender people who were senselessly and dementedly killed for simply being who they are.

I told my transgender friends and families: Never seek to change who you are. Be exactly who you are.

Transgendered women of color are especially vulnerable to violence and are 4.3 times more likely to become homicide victims than all women, according to the Human Rights Campaign.

This year alone, at least 22 transgender and gender-nonconforming Americans have been killed in the United States. Ninety-one percent of them were Black women.

I am sad to say that three transgender people of color were murdered in the greater Kansas City area, two in my congressional district.

Brooklyn Lindsey was a 32-year-old Black transgender woman. Those who knew her say she was intelligent, had a good sense of humor, and was loved by many. By many accounts, she was outgoing and happy. She enjoyed dancing, helping others, and wanted to be a life coach.

On June 25, she was found shot to death on an abandoned porch in Kansas City, Missouri.

□ 1900

Jamagio Jamar Berryman, also known as Ja'leyah Jamar, was 30 and a Black gender nonconforming person. Ja'leyah was passionate about fixing and working on cars, designing hair, and spending quality time with family.

They were shot and killed in Kansas City, Kansas, on September 13. They left behind a 5-year-old daughter named Ja'Mya, their parents, seven siblings, nieces and nephews, and many others who loved them deeply.

And most recently, Brianna "BB" Hill was a 30-year-old Black transgender woman who was fatally shot in Kansas City, Missouri, on October 14. Brianna was a beloved member of her community, a fan of the Kansas City Chiefs, and loved spreading joy by sharing funny videos on her Facebook page.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development has removed requirements for applicants for homeless funding maintain antidiscrimination policies and demonstrate efforts to serve LGBTQ+ people and their families.

The Department of Defense has implemented a ban on transgender troops.

These are just a few instances that shows that the United States of America—at least the administration—is in the midst of a nervous breakdown.

Change is still needed to protect the LGBTQ+ citizens nationwide.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the for gentlewoman for allowing me to speak.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for those words and for telling us more about those who were prematurely robbed of all that they had to contribute to this world. It is important that we continue to bring

their names into this well, into this august institution, so that we are compelled to continue to do this work, understanding that this is—behind every number—this is not about statistics. These are about people, people of flesh and bone who loved and were loved.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from the great State of New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN), my friend and sister in service.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding to me and for leading in this Special Order hour.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here tonight to remind my colleagues and the world that our transgender community needs us.

Bigotry, hate, and violence against transgender people has reached a level that requires a whole day devoted to simply remembering everyone who has lost his or her life. This year alone, over 300 have been murdered.

That is to say nothing of the transgender people who were bullied or harassed to the point of taking their own lives just simply for accepting every part of themselves.

There is no doubt in my mind that an administration that has endorsed hate at every turn and outright exclusion of our transgender friends and family is part of the problem. Our actions in this body need to be part of the solution.

I am proud to be a part of the Equality Caucus Transgender Equality Task Force, and I am determined to see us continue to take real steps that will protect the rights and the freedoms of all people.

As a founding chair of the Congressional Caucus on Black Women and Girls, I am committed to recognizing the value and need of our transgender sisters.

As the chair of the CBC's Emergency Task Force on Black Youth Suicide and Mental Health, I am actively working to ensure transgender youth receive the support and the care and the love to overcome the hate of our society.

This is a community in dire need, and I join my colleagues and so many others in stepping up and speaking out.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for the opportunity to speak.

Ms. PRESSLEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her leadership and for always fighting for those too often ignored, left out, and left behind. We are grateful for her.

Now, just as I close, as we wrap this Special Order hour, Transgender Day of Remembrance is about remembering lives we have lost too soon, but it should also be about remembering the bravery of transgender people everywhere. I rise again to acknowledge the contributions, often overlooked, of transgender women of color who have been champions of social change.

It was transgender advocates in my district who established the first Transgender Day of Remembrance in 1999 in honor of Rita Hester, a Black

transgender woman described as vivacious, outgoing, and loved by many people.

On this day, I rise to remember the transgender women of color who were catalysts for the LGBT rights movement in the United States and around the world. We remember the bravery of Miss Major Griffin-Gracy and the late Sylvia Rivera, and Marsha P. Johnson in the face of the police who violently raided the Stonewall Inn in New York City in 1969, detaining and arresting people simply for being themselves.

When faced with compounded transphobia, racism, sexism, and homophobia, transgender people have marched and resisted. When confronted with structural barriers, transgender people have organized and advocated.

I remain committed, along with the dedicated members of my team—and I want to issue a special thanks to Jenny Curt for her contributions to today's Special Order hour—committed not only to lifting the stories of those lives lost, but to working in partnership, legislating boldly. I see their power; I honor their activism.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

NATIONAL TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. DEAN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GARCÍA) is recognized for the remainder of the hour as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Madam Speaker, before I begin, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the subject of the Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Madam Speaker, first of all, I would like to thank Representative PRESSLEY for dedicating this time in honor of the Transgender Day of Remembrance and, of course, naming many of the victims of violence who have met this fate simply for being who they are. As a member of the Equality Caucus, I am proud to call her my colleague and my friend.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN).

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, and still I rise. And I rise tonight with a degree of sadness because we have this day, this national Transgender Day of Remembrance.

It is a sad thing such that you have to have an occasion such as this. You should never have to set aside time annually to remember those who have lost their lives to violence. But because it happens, we must be here.

What Dr. King reminds us was right then and is right now: "Injustice any-

where is a threat to justice everywhere." Injustice against the trans community is a threat to every community.

It seems that murder of Black transgender women is becoming almost a crisis in this country. Fatal antitransgender violence in the United States is on the rise, and most of the victims are Black transgender women: the largest number of transgender homicides, a record number in 2017, 29 killed; last year, 26 killed, most of them Black.

Why is this happening? Well, one reason might be because this administration tends to promote a narrative that marginalizes people who are already being marginalized. Such a narrative has a means of trickling down.

The tone and tenor of society is set by those at the top. Those at the top have to be mindful of the messages that they send.

So I am honored to observe this day, and I would like to speak very tersely about someone whose story cannot be told in 5 minutes.

Itali Marlowe was my constituent. She was found in the driveway of a local residence, shot multiple times, the 19th trans person to die by violence in our Nation this year. All but one of these victims has been a trans woman of color.

This day allows us to memorialize those who have been murdered as a result of transphobia. But I pray for a day when this day will no longer exist, when all people will be accepted in a society that proclaims liberty and justice for all.

INCOME INEQUALITY AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING RIGHTS

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois. Madam Speaker, tonight, we find ourselves at a troubling time for all workers across the country: Income and wealth inequality are at an all-time high, and union representation is at a historic low. These facts mean that all workers have a harder time making ends meet.

It is time to reset the balance of power in our economy between working people and corporate interests.

For decades, collective bargaining rights have been under relentless assault, especially by the Republican Party, in an effort to disempower working people and hand our democracy to corporate America. Tonight, I am proud to bring together my colleagues from the Congressional Progressive Caucus and our friends to talk about the PRO Act.

The Protecting the Right to Organize Act is a landmark step to restore the rights of working people to join unions and collectively fight for fair wages and working conditions.

The PRO Act rebalances the scales between workers and corporations by enacting strong enforcement measures against employers who violate labor laws, strengthening the right to negotiate and organize unions, and empowering workers to report abuses of their rights.

I thank my colleagues for joining me to stand up for workers and their right to organize.

I also want to recognize the true creators of wealth in our economy, the working men and women of America.

To begin tonight's deeper conversation, I call on a person who represents a district that has been at the heart of growing the economy and driving the economy for average Americans over a long period of time. He comes from trade union organizing and represents an overwhelmingly working-class district in the great State of Michigan.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN).

Mr. LEVIN of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from the great State of Illinois for organizing this special session to talk about what I consider to be the single most transformative piece of legislation that we are considering right now, the PRO Act, the Protecting the Right to Organize Act.

And why would it be so transformative? Because, as Representative GARCÍA mentioned, inequality of wealth and income has grown to proportions we have not seen in 100 years in this country.

From 1980 to 2014, income for the bottom half of earners, the whole bottom half of American workers, grew 1 percent; whereas, income for the top 1 percent grew 205 percent.

And why? Because workers have lost all voice and power in this economy. Workers do not have the freedom to form unions.

At its high-water mark in the late forties and early fifties, a third of American workers had collective bargaining, and they built the middle class in this country over the post-war decades. Today, 6 percent of workers in the private sector—6 percent—have collective bargaining, have unions, and so they have no real ability to get their fair share of the American pie and to rebuild the American Dream.

The PRO Act would do so much to change this.

Truly, it reminds me of my days organizing nursing home workers, kind of a long time ago, in the 1980s, in Michigan and Indiana and Massachusetts and Rhode Island. It was so hard for workers to form a union. Their employer could do almost anything, and that is true to this day.

□ 1915

So, for example, your employer can make you go in a room, and if you refuse to attend, they can fire you. And the sole purpose of the meeting is to tell you how bad forming a union would be for both of you. They can make you individually go into their office and tell you that the union would be a bad thing.

This kind of intimidation tactic has led to a crisis in our economy. And people like to talk about free markets and capitalism. All I want to see is a free market for worker organizing in this