

Introduction

RABBI MIKE URAM, Chancellor, JTS

I am pleased to share with you *Fear and Wonder: Reflections on Uncertainty, Hope, and Renewal* for the Days of Awe 5787.

This year's essays—written by JTS faculty, leadership, and students—engage with the current moment we are living in: a time marked by fear and uncertainty, from rising antisemitism and the ongoing war in Israel to the profound questions raised by artificial intelligence. Drawing on our collective past and shared memories, personal stories, timeless Jewish texts, and the liturgy of the High Holidays, our contributors wrestle with these challenges and offer insight for navigating the present moment. They call upon us to transform what could be Days of Fear into Days of Awe, reminding us that *teshuvah* is always possible and that new beginnings and repair are always within reach.

I am deeply grateful to all of the contributors who bring their wisdom, creativity, vulnerability, and distinct voices to this collection. The variety of forms represented here—from scholarly reflection and personal essays to poetry, music, and images drawn from The JTS Library—reflects the extraordinary breadth and vitality of the JTS community. Together, these voices invite us to encounter the Days of Awe with renewed purpose: to sharpen our sense of what truly matters, and to connect more deeply—and more joyfully—to these sacred days and to one another in community.

I am especially thankful to Shelly and Larry Gross for their generous support of this initiative, which allows us to share these reflections with you.

May *Fear and Wonder* accompany you through the Days of Awe, offering moments of reflection, connection, and inspiration—and may it help us all move from uncertainty toward hope and renewal in the year ahead.

Shanah Tovah,



Rabbi Mike Uram, Chancellor, JTS

