

Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world's grief
a ritual for mourning the death of those we do not know
during the High Holidays

The grief that we feel when we learn about murders, terror attacks, and police violence around the globe is very real, very physical, very deep. But how do we mourn deaths in vast numbers? How do we recite vast quantities of names? And how do we mourn for the dead whose names and numbers we don't know?

As Jews, we've wrestled with mourning too many dead many times over. We know what to do - we say the names of we all we know, and stand together for those whose names we don't.

This ritual is intended to guide us through some of the losses of 2016. The names listed are both real people, real lives, real loses, and also placeholders, for there are so many more than we can list here: people killed in acts of group or state terrorism; women killed by intimate partners; the 855 people who have died at the hands of police so far in 2016; children killed by poverty and preventable disease; people killed by drones raining death; the obscene number of people killed by gun violence in the U.S. every year. We honor those whose names we don't know by saying aloud the names here.

Order of Service

1. Open with an introduction, then a song or niggun.
2. Invite people to spend time silently reading the names in the clusters. Ask them to choose ones they will say aloud.
3. Read "Each of us has a name" as a group, pausing between the stanzas. At each pause, invite people to say, all together, some of the names they have chosen.
4. Read Yolanda Pierce's "A Litany For Those Who Aren't Ready For Healing," inviting people to read aloud whichever lines speak to/for them. Some lines may have only one person, some will have many or all people reading them.
5. Close with readings from Dane Kuttler and Ross Gay, and then the song here or another of your choice
6. Say Kaddish

note: communities can substitute in other clusters of names as needed to reflect their own concerns

Say Their Names

A Few of the Black Men and Women Killed by Police

Randy Nelson, Antronie Scott, Wendell Celestine Jr, David Joseph, Calin Roquemore, Dyzhawn Perkins, Christopher Davis, Marco Loud, Peter Gaines, Torrey Robinson, Darius Robinson, Kevin Hicks, Demarcus Semer, Willie Tillman, Terrill Thomas, Ashtian Barnes, Jessica Williams, Michael Wilson Jr, Vernell Bing Jr, Doll Pierre-Louis, Devonte Gates, Ollie Brooks, Antwun Shumpert, Clarence Howard, Deravis Caine Rogers, Delrawn Small, Dalvin Hollins, Donnell Thompson, Paul O'Neal, Fred Barlow, Alfred Toe, Levonia Riggins, Terrence Sterling, Terence Crutcher, Tawon Boyd, Alfred Olango, Keith Lamar Scott, Philando Castile, Korryn Gaines, Kisha Michael, Gynnya McMillen, Meagan Hockaday, Jamar Clark, Alberta Spruill, Kayla Moore, Kyam Livingston, Miriam Carey, Michelle Cusseau, Tanisha Anderson, Sandra Bland, Rekia Boyd, Shantel Davis, Shelley Frey, Alton Sterling, Akiel Denkins, Gregory Gunn, Samuel DuBose, Brendon Glenn, Freddie Gray, Natasha McKenna, Walter Scott, Christian Taylor, Michael Brown Jr., Ezell Ford, Eric Garner, Akai Gurley, Laquan McDonald, Tamir Rice, Yvette Smith

A Few of the People Killed in the 2016 Bombing of the Istanbul Airport

Habibullah Sefer, Hüseyin Tunç, Muhammed Eymen Demirci, Merve Yigit, Ferhat Akkaya, Serkan Türk, Fathi Bayoudh, Özgül Ide, Erol Eskisoy, Abdulhekim Bugda, Göksel Kurnaz, Murat Güllüce, Mahmut Çizmecioğlu, Umut Sakaroglu, Mustafa Biyikli, Çağlayan Çöl, Ertan An, Yusuf Haznedaroglu, Gülsen Bahadır, Siddik Peçenek, Mahmut Mert, Adem Kurt, Abrorjon Ustabayev, Nisreen Melhim, Larisa Tsybakova, Sondos Shraim and her three-year-old son, Rayan, and the Amiri family from Turkey: Kerime Amiri, Zehra Amiri, Meryem Amiri, Hüda Amiri

People killed while dancing at Pulse nightclub, June 11th, 2016

Akyra Monet Murray, Alejandro Barrios Martinez, Amanda Alvear and Mercedes Marisol Flores, Angel L. Candelario-Padro, Anthony Luis Laureano Disla, Antonio Davon Brown, Brenda Lee Marquez McCool, Christopher Joseph Sanfeliz, Cory James Connell, Darryl "DJ" Roman Burt II, Deonka Deidra Drayton, Eddie Jamoldroy Justice, Edward Sotomayor Jr., Enrique L. Rios, Jr, Eric Ivan Ortiz Rivera, Frank Hernandez, Franky Jimmy Dejesus Velazquez, Geraldo A. "Drake" Ortiz-Jimenez, Gilberto Ramon Silva Menendez, Jason Benjamin Josaphat, Javier Jorge-Reyes, Jean C. Nieves Rodriguez, Jean Carlos Mendez Perez, Jerald Arthur Wright, Joel Rayon Paniagua,

Jonathan Antonio Camuy Vega, Juan Chevez-Martinez, Juan Pablo Rivera Velazquez, Juan Ramon Guerrero and Christopher Andrew Leinonen, Kimberly Morris, Leroy Valentin Fernandez, Luis Daniel Conde , Luis Daniel Wilson-Leon, Luis Omar Ocasio-Capo, Luis S. Vielma, Martin Benitez Torres, Miguel Angel Honorato, Oscar A. Aracena-Montero, Simon Adrian Carrillo Fernandez, Paul Terrell Henry , Peter O. Gonzalez-Cruz, Rodolfo Ayala-Ayala, Shane Evan Tomlinson, Stanley Almodovar III, Tevin Eugene Crosby, Xavier Emmanuel Serrano Rosado, Yilmary Rodriguez Solivan

Trans Women of Color Murdered in 2015/16

Papi Edwards, Lamia Beard, Ty Underwood, Yazmin Vash Payne, Taja DeJesus, Penny Proud, Bri Golec, Kristina Infiniti, Keyshia Blige, London Chanel, Mercedes Williamson, Jasmine Collins, Ashton O'Hara, India Clarke, K.C. Haggard, Shade Schuler, Amber Monroe, Kandis Capri, Elisha Walker, Tamara Dominguez, Keisha Jenkins, Zella Ziona, Monica Loera, Jasmine Sierra, Maya Young, Demarkis Stansberry, Kendarie Johnson, Quartney Davia Dawson-Yochum, Shante Thompson, Keyonna Blakeney, Reecey Walker, Mercedes Successful, Deeniquia Dodds, Amos Beede Goddess Diamond, Dee Whigham, Skye Mockabee, Erykah Tijerina, Rae'Lynn Thomas, T.T., Crystal Edmonds, Jazz

Each of Us Has A Name

Zelda, translated by Marcia Lee Falk

Each of us has a name
given by God
and given by our parents
Each of us has a name
given by our stature and our smile
and given by what we wear

Each of us has a name
given by the mountains
and given by our walls
Each of us has a name
given by the stars
and given by our neighbors

Each of us has a name
given by our sins
and given by our longing
Each of us has a name
given by our enemies
and given by our love

Each of us has a name
given by our celebrations
and given by our work
Each of us has a name
given by the seasons
and given by our blindness
Each of us has a name
given by the sea
and given by
our death.

A Litany For Those Who Aren't Ready For Healing

Dr. Yolanda Pierce

Let us not rush to the language of healing, before understanding the fullness of the injury and the depth of the wound.

Let us not rush to offer a band-aid, when the gaping wound requires surgery and complete reconstruction.

Let us not offer false equivalencies, thereby diminishing the particular pain being felt in a particular circumstance in a particular historical moment.

Let us not speak of reconciliation without speaking of reparations and restoration, or how we can repair the breach and how we can restore the loss.

Let us not rush past the loss of this mother's child, this father's child...someone's beloved son.

Let us not value property over people; let us not protect material objects while human lives hang in the balance.

Let us not value a false peace over a righteous justice.

Let us not be afraid to sit with the ugliness, the messiness, and the pain that is life in community together.

Let us not offer clichés to the grieving, those whose hearts are being torn asunder.

Instead...

Let us mourn black and brown men and women, those killed extrajudicially every 28 hours.

Let us lament the loss of a teenager, dead at the hands of a police officer who described him as a demon.

Let us weep at a criminal justice system, which is neither blind nor just.

Let us call for the mourning men and the wailing women, those willing to rend their garments of privilege and ease, and sit in the ashes of this nation's original sin.

Let us be silent when we don't know what to say.

Let us be humble and listen to the pain, rage, and grief pouring from the lips of our neighbors and friends.

Let us decrease, so that our brothers and sisters who live on the underside of history may increase.

Let us pray with our eyes open and our feet firmly planted on the ground.

Let us listen to the shattering glass and let us smell the purifying fires, for it is the language of the unheard.

God, in your mercy...

Show me my own complicity in injustice.

Convict me for my indifference.

Forgive me when I have remained silent.

Equip me with a zeal for righteousness.

Never let me grow accustomed or acclimated to unrighteousness.

READ

to love each other may require
Dane Kuttler

And G'd says: to love each other may require more discomfort than you're ready for. To love each other, you may have to interrogate and scrub at the most embedded, complacent, defeated pieces of yourself. To love each other, you may have to call down your justifications, to haul back your excuses, to calm your snapping, snarling fears. Anything less than showing up as you've been called to show up is not love.

READ

A Small Needful Fact
Ross Gay

Is that Eric Garner worked
for some time for the Parks and Rec.
Horticultural Department, which means,
perhaps, that with his very large hands,
perhaps, in all likelihood,
he put gently into the earth
some plants which, most likely,
some of them, in all likelihood,
continue to grow, continue
to do what such plants do, like house
and feed small and necessary creatures,
like being pleasant to touch and smell,
like converting sunlight
into food, like making it easier
for us to breathe.

READ

Do not be daunted by the enormity of the world's grief. Do justly, now. Love mercy,
now. Walk humbly, now. You are not obligated to complete the work. Neither are you
free to abandon it.

Rabbi Rami Shapiro based on: Rabbi Tarfon,
Michah 6:8, Pirkei Avot

SING

לֹא עֲלֵינוּ / Lo Aleynu

Lyrics drawn from Pirkei Avot
Music by Karen Escovitz

לֹא עֲלֵינוּ הַמְּלָאכָה לְגִמּוּר,
וְלֹא אָנוּ בְּנוֹת / בְּנֵי חוֹרִין לְהִבְטֵל מִמֶּנָּה

Lo aleiynu ham'lacha ligmor, v'lo anu b'not/b'nei chorin l'hibateil mimena....
It is not upon us to complete the work, neither are we free to desist from it....

יְתוֹם / Mourner's Kaddish

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי בְּרָא כְרַעוּתָהּ וְיִמְלִיךָ
מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיֵּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל
בְּעָגְלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב יֹאמְרוּ אָמֵן.
יְהִי שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמָא וְלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא.
יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמֵם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה
וְיִתְהַלַּל שְׁמֵהּ דְּקֻדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְעָלְמָא לְעָלְמָא מִן כָּל בְּרַכְתָּא
וְשִׁירְתָּא תְּשַׁבַּחְתָּא וְנַחֲמְתָּא דְּאִמְרֵן בְּעֵלְמָא וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.
יְהִי שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.
עוֹשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל
כָּל יִשְׁמַעְיָאֵל וְעַל כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵבֵל וְאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

*Yitgadal veyitkadash shemey raba be'alma divra hiruty veyamliv
malhutey behayeyhon usvyomeyhon uvhayey dehol beyt yisra'el
ba'agala uvizman kariv ve'imru amen.*

Yehey shemey raba mevarah le'alam ulalmey almaya.

*Yitbarah veyistabah veyitpa'ar veyitromam veyitnasey veyit-hadar veyitaleh
veyit-halal shemey dekudsha berih hu le'ela le'ela min kol birhata
veshirata tushbehata venehemata da'amiran be'alma ve'imru amen.*

*Yehey shelama raba min shemaya vehayim Aleynu ve'al kol yisra'el ve'imru amen.
Oseh shalom bimromav hu ya'aseh shalom Aleynu ve'al kol yisra'el ve'al kol yishma'el ve'al kol
yoshvey tevel ve'imru amen.*

Mourner's Kaddish

Elliott batTzedek

So often am I lost,
yet through the pall, yet through the tarnish, show me the way back,
through my betrayals, my dismay, my heart's leak, my mind's sway,
eyes' broken glow, groan of the soul—which convey all that isn't real,
for every soul to These Hands careen. And let us say, amen.

Say you will show me the way back, my Rock, my Alarm. Lead the way, Oh my Yah

And yet in shock and yet in shame and yet in awe and yet to roam and yet to stay
and yet right here and yet away and yet —“Halleluyah!” my heartbeat speaks,
for You live, for You live, in all this murk and too in the clear and too in our wreckage.
You are the mirror of our souls, let us say: amen

Life may harm me, rob me, ream me raw, try me, even slay me
Over all You will prevail. And let us say: Amen

Say You shall loan me a tomorrow, Say You shall loan another day to all who are called
Yisrael and all called Yishmael and all called We and They, and let us say, Amen

Sources

Say Their Names: gathered from the Web, including #SayHerName, AP story on Istanbul, and advocate.com

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