

## Elements of Liturgy for November 1 All Saints' Day Witness

*What follows are a variety of selections for a suggested liturgy . These are intended as examples that you can choose from to use, but also please feel free to adapt these for your specific actions or to use your own prayers and readings, and/or to develop your own liturgy. This liturgy is designed to include a variety of faith witnesses. At the center is the reading of names prefaced by the Kaddish. We encourage organizers to recruit people from the variety of faiths to help lead this liturgy. Additional interfaith resources may be found at <http://www.afsc.org/2000/religious-resources.htm> and [www.faithfulamerica.org/soldiers.html](http://www.faithfulamerica.org/soldiers.html).*

### **Suggested order of liturgy:**

- Welcome and Opening Statement of Purpose
- Opening Prayer or reading
- Reading from the Qu'ran and Prayer
- Reciting of Kaddish
- Remembering the dead:

*Read the names of 2,000+ U.S. soldiers killed in Iraq. After every 20 names are read, sound the Buddhist bell to signify the death of 1,000 Iraqis. Observe silence until the sound of the bell has died out. (Groups may want to change readers after every 20 names when the bell has been rung.)*

- Prayer for Peace
  - Benediction
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### **WELCOME AND OPENING STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:**

We are here today at the offices of [name of Representative] to give witness to the human cost of the Iraq war.

We are here to honor the dead, both US military personnel and Iraqi citizens. We will read the names of the over 2,000 US soldiers who have lost their lives in Iraq. Since this war began, over 100,000 Iraqi citizens have lost their lives, more than we can possibly name, many with names we don't know. We will honor their lives and their deaths by sounding the Buddhist singing bowl after every 20 US names are read. Each sound of the bowl will represent the deaths of 1,000 Iraqi citizens.

We are here one year before Election Day 2006 to ask: "How many more of our sons and daughters will die before [name of Congressional representative] is called to account on Election Day 2006?"

We come together on this convergence of religious holy days: Sukkot, Ramadan, and today, All Saints' Day. While we represent a diversity of religious voices, we are united this day in one prophetic voice:

To call for an end now to the immoral and illegal war on Iraq and for the bringing of our troops home now;

To denounce our government's practices of torture, in violation of US law, of international law, of God's law. We affirm that all human beings are created in the image of God; any and all acts of torture and prisoner abuse shatter and defile that Image;

To insist that there be no permanent military bases left in Iraq;

To call for the end of the permanent war economy and the draining of resources into the Iraq war, giving priority instead to urgent domestic needs, including relief for hurricane victims.

We are here to keep faith with the living, to choose life and not death, that our children and our children's children may live. We are here to say to our government "study war no more"; we are here to do the things that make for peace.

### **SUGGESTIONS FOR OPENING PRAYER AND/OR READING:**

#### **Opening Prayer, from Dom Helder Camara:**

Come, Lord!  
Do not smile and say you are already with us.  
Millions do not know you,  
and to us who do, what is the difference?  
What is the point of your presence  
if our lives do not alter?  
Change our lives, shatter our complacency.  
Make your word flesh of our flesh,  
blood of our blood  
and our life's purpose.  
Take away the quietness of a clear conscience.  
Press us uncomfortably.  
For only thus  
that other peace is made,  
your peace.

#### **Opening Prayer: "A War Never Really Ends," from FOR Interfaith Statement**

We are Americans, US citizens  
Followers of many spiritual traditions  
Compelled to speak, for ourselves and for others.  
Convinced that war brings neither freedom nor peace.

Called to speak the truth as our faiths demand.  
May we be filled with the strength to seek peace.

War will not end when the guns are silent.  
Violence can never lead to peace.  
The government does not faithfully represent  
Our desires or those of the people of the world  
And so it becomes our obligation to speak and to act  
We will bear the responsibility  
We will claim our democratic power  
We will willingly accept what is required.  
We will stand against the forces of death.  
We will stand for life.  
May we be filled with the courage to seek peace.

Duty calls upon us to prohibit violence  
Directed at our helpless brothers and sisters  
To limit the monstrous domination of war  
To repair the ruin, whenever, wherever we can:  
The direct horrors inflicted on the people  
The damage to homes, lands, heritage, institutions  
The disruption of their eating, traveling, breathing, living  
May we be filled with the compassion to seek peace.

We grieve for the harm to our own country  
The degradation suffered here in common  
The contagion of fear and distrust  
The restriction of our freedoms  
The quashing of our dialogue and dissent  
We grieve the terrible wounding of those sent off to fight  
Children captured by the demons of war  
Who will suffer illness of body and spirit  
Whose families too absorb the blows of violence  
We grieve the rupture of families where a member is killed  
Parents, spouses, infants overcome with grief  
Losing a source of sustenance and survival  
May we be filled with the endurance to seek peace.

War will not fulfill those government promises.  
For it is based on lies, and lies have been told.  
Here we stand on truth, and stand together.  
United as one humanity, here we are.  
We grasp the horror of war in all its fullness.  
And embrace it with our joined compassion.  
May we be filled with the vision of peace.

Recognizing our weakness  
We call on the Spirit of Mercy to guide us now.  
Nothing is stronger. The spirit will prevail.

Amen.

**Opening Reading, from Gandhi:**

When I despair,  
I remember that all through history  
The ways of truth and love have always won.  
There have been tyrants, and murderers,  
And for a time they can seem invincible,  
But in the end they always fall.  
Think of it – always.

**Opening Reading, from Albert Camus:**

The saints of our times are those who refuse to be either time's executioners or its victims.

**Opening Reading: "The Only Sermon", by Andrea Ayvazian**

if we dug a huge grave miles wide, miles deep  
and buried every rifle, pistol, knife, bullet, bomb, bayonet

if we jumped upon fleets of tanks and fighter jets  
with tool boxes, torches  
unwelded them dismantled them turned them into scrap metal

if every light-skinned man in a silk tie said  
to every dark-skinned man in a turban  
I vow not to kill your children  
and heard the same vow in return

if every elected leader agreed to stop lying  
if every child was fed as well as racehorses bred to win derbies  
if every person with a second home gave it to a person with no home  
if every mother buried her parents not her sons and daughters  
if every person who has enough said out loud I have enough  
if every person violent in the name of God were to find God

we would grow silent, still for a moment, a lifetime  
we would hear infants nursing at the breast  
hummingbirds hovering in flight  
we would touch a canyon wall and feel the earth vibrate

we would hear two lovers sigh across the ocean  
we would watch old wounds grow new flesh and jagged scars disappear

as time was layered upon time we would slowly be ready  
to begin

## **MUSLIM READINGS AND PRAYER**

From the Qu'ran: Surah 2: Al Baqarah 183, 185, 186

183. O ye who believe!  
Fasting is prescribed to you  
As it was prescribed  
To those before you,  
That ye may (learn)  
Self-restraint –
- 185 Ramadan is the (month)  
In which was sent down  
The Qur'an, as a guide  
To humankind, also clear (Signs)  
For guidance and judgment  
(Between right and wrong).  
So every one of you  
Who is present (at his or her home)  
During that month  
Should spend it in fasting.  
But if any one is ill,  
Or on a journey,  
The prescribed period  
(Should be made up)  
By days later.  
Allah intends every facility  
For you: He does not want  
To put you to difficulties.  
(He wants you) to complete  
The prescribed period.  
And to glorify Him  
In that He has guided you:  
And perchance ye shall be grateful.
- 186 When My servants  
Ask thee concerning Me,  
I am indeed  
Close (to them): I listen  
To the prayer of every suppliant when he calleth on Me:  
Let them also, with a will,

Listen to My call,  
And believe in Me:  
That they may walk  
In the right way.

From Surah 2: Al Baquarah 286

“Our Lord!  
Condemn us not  
If we forget or fall  
Into error; our Lord!  
Lay not on us a burden  
Like that which Thou  
Didst lay on those before us.  
Our Lord! Lay not on us  
A burden greater than we  
Have strength to bear.  
Blot out our sins,  
And grant us forgiveness.  
Have mercy on us.  
Thou art our Protector:  
Help us against those  
Who stand against Faith.”

Prayer: **Prayer for Peace in Iraq and Throughout the World**

O God of Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad! Bring peace and tranquility to the people of Iraq who have been plagued with pain and suffering;

O God! We appeal to you bring our soldiers back safe and help our nation to be one that is given to truth and justice

O God! We call you with your beautiful names: the One, the Holy, the Sovereign, the Just, and the Peace. We call with love and sincerity to bring peace to our world and guide our steps to do what is right and what pleases You.

O God! You are the Source of Good, the Guardian of Faith, the Preserver of Safety, the Exalted in Might, the Supreme: All Glory belongs to you! Help us to see our glory in serving you and upholding the values of compassion and justice on earth.

O God we beg you to forgive our sins and ask you not to hold us accountable for mistakes and missteps we did or were done in our names. Our Lord give us the humility to recognize our mistakes and limitations, and the strength and courage to choose right over wrong and justice over pride.

O the Eternal and Compassionate Lord! Fill our hearts with your Love, and help us to love one another, and show compassion to your servants throughout the world and your creation.

O God! We ask you in submission and humility to allow wisdom to triumph over vanity, truth over falsehood, and love over hate.

Amen

## **RECITING OF KADDISH:**

### MOURNER'S KADDISH (transliterated)

Yit-ga-dal v'yit-ka-dash sh'mei ra-ba b'al-ma di-v'ra chir-u-tei, v'yam-lich mal-chu-tei b'cha-yei-chon u-v'yo-mei-chon u-v'cha-yei d'chol beit Yis-ra-eil, ba-a-ga-la u-viz-man ka-riv, v'im-ru: A-mein.

Y'hei sh'mei ra-ba m'va-rach l'a-lam u-l'al-mei al-ma-ya.

Yit-ba-rach v'yish-ta-bach v'yit-pa-ar, v'yit-ro-mam, v'yit-na-sei, v'yit-ha-dar, v'yit-a-leh, v'yit-ha-lal sh'mei d'ku-d'sha, b'rich hu, l'ei-la min kol bir-cha-ta v'shi-ra-ta, tush-b'cha-ta v'neh-cheh-ma-ta da-a-mi-ran b'al-ma, v'im-ru: A-mein.

Y'hei sh'la-ma ra-ba min sh'ma-ya v'cha-yim, a-lei-nu v'al kol Yis-ra-eil, v'im-ru: A-mein.

### MOURNER'S KADDISH (translated)

May the glory of God be extolled, and God's great name be hallowed in the world whose creation God willed. May God rule in our own day, in our own lives, and in the life of all Israel and [the world], and let us say: Amen.

Let God's great name be blessed for ever and ever.

Beyond all praises, songs, and adorations that we can utter is the Holy One, the Blessed One, whom yet we glorify, honor, and exalt. And let us say: Amen.

For us and for all Israel and [all our world], may the blessing of peace and the promise of life come true, and let us say: Amen.

May the One who causes peace to reign in the high heavens, cause peace to reign among us, all Israel, and all the world, and let us say: Amen.

May the Source of peace send peace to all who mourn, and comfort to all who are bereaved. Amen.

## **KADDISH OF MOURNING**

May the Great Name rise before our eyes:  
The Name that weaves together  
all the names of all the beings in the world.

May our hearts and eyes weave  
All these names together in one Name,  
the double spiral that underlies all life.  
And may we also see the Great Name

Pulsing at the heart of our own names.

For in the Great Name  
There remain forever present  
the names of all those who have touched our lives,  
even those we can no longer touch;

The names of those we love,  
Those who were our enemies,  
Those whom we have intimately known,  
And those whose names we know only from a list,  
Only as a number.

Far beyond all praise and poetry,  
all celebration and all consolation,  
Is this Great Name.

And yet we lift our voices and our breathing  
In the act of life that gives the Name  
Its meaning.

We lift especially today the names  
Of those who died a violent death;  
Those who were killed by those who bear the Holy Image,  
Killing those who also bear the Holy Image.

For this civil war within Your Being,  
This tearing of God's Image at Itself,  
Your Self,  
we know that you are inconsolable  
And so are we.

Our only solace is to beg you:

You Who make peace and harmony  
In the ultimate reaches of the universe --  
Touch our souls,  
Teach our minds,  
Open our hearts,  
Guide our bodies,  
To make peace within ourselves, among ourselves,  
Within and among the children of Abraham,  
The children of Sarah,  
The children of Hagar;  
A peace that weaves together in reconciliation  
All Yisrael, all Yishmael,

All the communities that call out Your many Names –  
And even beyond,  
All those who dwell upon this planet.

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*By Rabbi Arthur Waskow, director of The Shalom Center [www.shalomctr.org](http://www.shalomctr.org).*

## **PRAYERS:**

### **Prayer for Peace, by Rev. Kathleen McTigue:**

May we open our eyes.  
May we keep our eyes open  
Even in the face of the suffering  
Our enemies inflict on us,  
Even in the face of the suffering we inflict.  
May we see deeply with our open eyes  
To the common wind that fills our lungs,  
That fills our enemies' lungs.  
With our open eyes, may we see the pathways to peace.

May we open our hearts.  
May we keep our hearts open despite the pain of the world.  
May we keep our open hearts ready,  
Leaning toward forgiveness, leaning  
Toward the sound of a strange new harmony that blends  
The discord of our troubled race into something  
Rich and resonant, rising.  
May our open hearts keep us brave.

May we open our spirits.  
May our open spirits guide us  
In the ways of hope.  
May our spirits, flung open to the light of hope  
Despite all the shadows that float between  
Show us the way to come home to ourselves at last  
And live on this sweet earth  
In peace.

### **World Peace Prayer**

Lead [us] from death to life, from falsehood to truth.  
Lead [us] from despair to hope, from fear to trust.  
Lead [us] from hate to love, from war to peace.  
Let peace fill our hearts, our world, our universe.

### **Poem, by Israeli poet Zelda:**

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.

## **BENEDICTIONS:**

### **Words of Commissioning**

Go now to keep on taking the next steps for peace.  
Go now to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God.  
Go now in peace to be the peace that we seek and pursue.

### **Adapted from Ted Loder's "Guerrillas of Grace"**

Let us go forth from here toward what counts but can only be measured  
in bread shared and swords become plowshares,  
in bodies healed and minds liberated,  
in songs sung and justice done,  
in laughter in the night and joy in the morning,  
in love through all seasons and great gladness of heart,  
in all people coming together in the beloved community.

### **"Shaking the Tree", by Jeanne Lohmann**

Vine and branch we're connected in this world  
of sound and echo, figure and shadow, the leaves  
contingent, roots pushing against earth. An apple

belongs to itself, to stem and tree, to air  
that claims it, then ground. Connections  
balance, each motion changes another. Precarious,

hanging together, we don't know what our lives  
support, and we touch in the least shift of breathing.  
Each holy thing is borrowed. Everything depends.