August 2022

Dear Faith Leaders,

The National Center for Civil and Human Rights, Equitable Dinners, and The Coalition to Remember the 1906 Atlanta Race Massacre invite you to recognize the 116th anniversary of the 1906 Atlanta Race Massacre.

During the weekend of September 16 to 18, 2022, we invite you to acknowledge this tragic event in your own way and in a manner appropriate to your plan of worship.

To assist you, we have provided an Invocation / Benediction. We hope it is helpful to you and we invite you to use it in total, in part or with adjustments. To learn about the history of the 1906 Atlanta Race Massacre, click here.

Best,
National Center for Civil and Human Rights

Invocation / Benediction for 1906 Atlanta Race Massacre

Commemoration Weekends
September 16 to September 18, 2022
September 23 to 25, 2022

These Days of 1906 Remembrance

I

For these Days of 1906 Remembrance...
Let us imagine persons in secret anticipation somewhere: the victims – yearning that what we do here today will lead to Justice for them and their families; the righting of wrongs, the healing of harms, and no more victims.

II

For these Days of 1906 Remembrance...
Let us imagine persons in secret anticipation somewhere: the perpetrators – yearning that what we do here today will lead to Rehabilitation for them and their families, and correction for the society that brought them up as children to hate. That this same society would go about: the righting of wrongs, the healing of harms, and no more victims.
III

For these Days of 1906 Remembrance...

Let us imagine persons in secret anticipation somewhere: the bystanders and spectators – yearning that what we do here today will lead to Courage and Compassion for them and their families, and for people like them; people like us, brought up to yield to the majority, to fear standing alone against injustice and oppression; who could not even imagine the changes that a generation like ours would attempt: the righting of wrongs, the healing of harms, and no more victims.

In continuance, For these Days of 1906 Remembrance...

If you are a praying person: Pray on behalf of the people – the victims, that there may be Justice on the earth.

If you are a forgiving person: Forgive the people – the perpetrators for the sake of the possibility of Rehabilitation.

If you are a generous person: Grant to the people – the bystanders and spectators the possibility of acting with Courage and Compassion to prevent the next cycle of victims.

And if you are a self-loving person: Let's work together to ensure that ourselves and our descendants will sustain Principled Action on behalf of all who share our common humanity.

Finally, for these Days of 1906 Remembrance...

Let us lift our voices together in solidarity by making this four-word affirmation of spiritual agreement - Amen / Ashé / Salaam / Shalom.

[Repeating together now:]

"Amen / Ashé / Salaam / Shalom"
"Amen / Ashé / Salaam / Shalom"
"Amen / Ashé / Salaam / Shalom"
"Amen / Ashé / Salaam / Shalom"

Adapted from the interfaith and inclusive Benediction drafted and delivered by The Rev. Dr. Theophus 'Thee' Smith of the Cathedral of St. Philip on May 1, 2002, to accompany the exhibition opening of "Without Sanctuary: Lynching Photography in America," at the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site, Atlanta, Georgia USA. Further adapted by Dr. Smith in 2021 and by the Rev. T.J. Frank, M.Div., for the 1906 Commemoration in 2022.