

**A Litany for Those Slain By Violence
and Traumatized By Those Called to “Protect and Serve”**

April 26, 2015

Leader: A sound is heard in Ramah, the sound of bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children. She refuses to be comforted, for they are dead.

Assembly: We pray for the families of children who have been slain by violence, left to die on streets with less dignity than is given to animals.

Leader: A sound is heard in every city. Communities are weeping generationally for their children. Our daughters, like Monae Turnage, Natasha McKenna, Tanisha Anderson, Yvette Smith, Aiyana Stanley-Jones, and Rekia Boyd. Our sons, like Tyrone West, Anthony Anderson, Michael Brown, Walter Scott, Eric Harris, and Freddie Gray.

Assembly: As people of God, we weep for the lives of our daughters, sons, mothers, fathers and other loved ones who instead of enjoying the fullness of their life’s journey, have become victims of hate, victims of war, and victims of violence.

Leader: Now, let us rise up and interrupt these rushing waters of violence that leave our communities wounded and paralyzed, traumatized by internal disintegration and state terror. Let us rise up and demand this nation abandon its affair with beliefs, practices and laws that are rooted in militarism, justified by racism and propped up by systemic inequities.

Assembly: We will rise up against laws rooted in evil that have no concern for life, nor any concern for God’s love. We will rise up until justice rolls on like a river and righteousness like a never failing stream.

Leader: Oh Lord, we commit ourselves to seeing each other the way that you see us. No matter our age or race, we are precious gifts made in your image, created with transformative purpose and unlimited promise.

Assembly: And for that cause, we pledge to be hedges of protection for one another’s lives, we pledge to stand against anything that threatens their potential or promise.

All: We embody the universal spirit of *Ubuntu*, “I am because we are and because we are, I am.” We are all Rachel crying for the children! Therefore, we pledge to lock arms in solidarity with the families of the slain. We pledge to let our voices be heard all over this nation and the world, for we know we are called to do what is just and right.

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