

A Prayer for the Service of Light and
Remembrance:
Remembering our Homeless Neighbors

At the
First United Methodist Church of Dallas
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By
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Dallas, Texas

Everyone has a name

Everyone has a name
given to him by God
and given to him by his parents

Everyone has a name
given to him by his stature
and the way he smiles
and given to him by his clothing

Everyone has a name
given to him by the mountains
and given to him by the walls

Everyone has a name
given to him by the stars
and given to him by his neighbors

Everyone has a name
given to him by his sins
and given to him by his longing

Everyone has a name
given to him by his enemies
and given to him by his love

Everyone has a name
given to him by his holidays
and given to him by his work

Everyone has a name
given to him by the seasons
and given to him by his blindness

Everyone has a name
given to him by the sea and
given to him by his death.

Everyone has a name.¹

¹ By the poet Zelda, translated from the Hebrew by Marcia Falk

Lord God on High, Compassionate Parent, Protector of All, we thank you for the sacred names you have bestowed upon those souls we mention today. Their unique qualities and gifts endowed by you as their creator to give to this world in their special way has been important, has been noticed and has been a blessing. For that is Your treasure to us, to be created in Your image and therefore meaningful to this world, critical to its survival and worthy of our respect and love. But the truth we know today is that "...we cannot merely pray to You, O God, to end war; For we know that You have made the world in a way that man must find his own path to peace within himself and with his neighbor.

We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to end starvation; for you have already given us the resources with which to feed the entire world if we would only use them wisely. We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to root out prejudice, for You have already given us eyes with which to see the good in everyone if we would only use them rightly. We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to end despair, for You have already given us the power to clear away slums and to give hope if we would only use our power justly. We cannot merely pray to You, O God, to end disease, for you have already given us great minds with which to search out cures and healing, if we would only use them

constructively. Therefore we pray to You instead,
O God, for strength, determination, and
willpower, to **DO** instead of just to **PRAY**, to
BECOME instead of merely to **WISH**.”²

May we always merit the blessing of Your care
and concern as you watch over our going forth
and our coming home, every single day.

Amen.

² Rabbi Harold Kushner, 'When Bad Things Happen to Good People.'