

"Surrounded by God's Light"

The following interfaith service of remembrance and hope for September 11, 2002 has been prepared by the Dobbs Ferry, N.Y., faith community. ELCA and LCMS churches may use this as a guide to any services they may be preparing.

Surrounded by God's light is the theme for the ecumenical service of remembrance and hope for 9-11 at Greenburgh Hebrew Center, Dobbs Ferry. Chairs for worshippers will be arranged in the middle of the room. Four tables, one on each side, will frame the outside of the room. Many little, unlit candles will sit on each table. A larger single candle will be at each table and will be lit after each of the four scripture readings signifying God's Word as "the light to our path". Toward the end of the service, participants will be invited to stand and move to the table nearest them, light a candle in memory of a lost loved one from the WTC disaster, and say their name aloud. After lighting a candle each person will be invited to stand in a huge circle outside the tables symbolizing that the light of God which surrounded us, now is our center...and we stand united in a circle to bear the light/love of God for the world.

Prelude music

(The gathering will be a time of quiet reflection and personal prayer. Two or three piece string ensemble to provide music.)

Words of welcome

After a brief welcome, the shofar will sound (Jewish tradition of blowing the shofar as a call for God's people to remember God and for God to remember God's people. The two sounds to be made symbolize "mourning" and "exuberance", since humankind often experiences both virtually simultaneously.)

Hymn

(TBA)

Opening prayer

Psalm 139:1-12 (responsively leader and people)

Readings:

(Each followed by silence and the lighting of the larger candle on one of the four tables.)

Genesis 1:1-5

"Then God said, 'Let there be light...'"

John 1:1-5

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it."

Exodus 3:1-8b

"There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush..."

Isaiah 60:20

"...for the Lord will be your everlasting light, and your days of mourning shall be ended..."

Lighting ceremony

Local teen choir will sing as the people light their candles of remembrance and hope.

Closing prayer

(Followed by the blowing of shofar - one long tone.)

Benediction

The evening continues with a time of fellowship and refreshment in adjoining room. Those who want to remain in prayer and silence can do so.