

*The following is not a statement to sign, but rather a call to make, share, and use together — crafted by 100+ diverse faith leaders — which says, in part:*

We will ask God to help heal our land with a moment of mourning and honoring those many who have died, often without their loved ones around them. We come together both to weep and to rejoice for those lives which have been lost. We shall mourn the loss of so many Americans, many known only to families and friends, coworkers and neighbors. We will mourn family members and friends whom we loved; worked and worshiped with; ate, played, and prayed with; important members of our communities, some who were on the front lines of caring for and serving others; and those we passed on the street with a smile and nod. By God's grace, we will mourn with families who have not been able to memorialize, mourn, or properly bury their COVID dead.

Our lament will also honor hard truths we have learned during this pandemic: Our suffering has been unequal, elders have been vulnerable and alone, black and brown neighbors have borne disproportionately both the brunt of sickness and death and the front lines labor of fighting this disease. Native communities, our land's original caretakers, have been particularly hard hit — as they have been so many times in the past. Asian Americans have been targeted by hateful words and actions. Our prayers for the healing of the nation must acknowledge the brokenness of our democracy and rededicate ourselves to repair the injustices this pandemic has revealed, even as work for the healing of those who are afflicted with the virus.

... This momentous and tragic 100,000 marker will not be an empty data point on death's grim graph; rather we will remember those whom we loved and pray for both healing and hope — for our nation and the world. As a people we have borne this pandemic's cost in the lives of our loved ones; as a nation we shall honor and mourn them together.

As faith leaders we must help to lead our congregations, communities, and country in this time of grief and lament in a way that will lead us forward more united as a country to address the very real challenges we face ahead. And that we must do together.

*Lament: A Day To Mourn - Jim Wallis, Sojourners, 5.27.20*