

# Rabbi Denise Eger's Speech at the #WeAreOlando Candlelit Vigil at L.A. City Hall

Dear friends, we've heard lots of speeches but let us not forget that it's time to mourn. There will be a time for action. There will be a time for voting. There will be a time for rising up. But tonight, we must mourn our loss. We must mourn those amazing, precious souls in Orlando who can never be replaced.

I want to share with you words of Rev. Troy Perry who was so upset and distraught he couldn't be here. For those of you that don't know, Rev. Perry founded the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Churches, right here in Los Angeles, in 1968. Rev. Perry was one of the people that helped found the Christopher Street West parade - the first march to commemorate Stonewall in this country.

And these are his words tonight: "Today, all I can do is pray and cry. 46 years ago I helped plan, with two other men, the first GLBT Pride parade in world history. I planned to attend the parade yesterday, but all I can do is pray and cry. Today we are, in our community -- our friends, our families -- we who are going to celebrate, but many of us can only cry. I pray for all the martyrs of this tragedy in Orlando, Florida: those murdered in this terrorist act, those injured in the hospital, all their families and friends, we pray for you. This is not the first time that our community has felt despair, and sadly, it probably won't be the last. None of us are going back into the closet. We will stand for our rights." Rev. Elder Troy Perry concludes, "But please forgive me, I am still crying."

Yes, our hearts are broken. And it is time to mourn our dead. So let us take a moment - a moment of silent prayer, meditation, to your Higher Power, to your God, to your Source, to no Source at all, but to the Planet itself:

Bless these precious souls. These 50 precious souls whose lives were broken and cut short all too soon. We ask for their souls to be at peace. For their families and their friends and their lovers to be healed of their broken hearts. Let their murder not be in vain. Let it be a lesson to each of us, and to our nation, that the fight for LGBT equality is not over. Let us not be complacent, thinking we have won the day, for there is much work left to do. Bless those who need healing from their wounds - a healing of spirit, and a healing of body. And teach us, O Source of the Universe, to be Your messengers in this world of justice, of truth, of love, of love, of love, of love, of love, of love.

And together, let us all say, Amen