

**A Candlelight Vigil
for
the One-Year Anniversary of Katrina**

Gathering Music

Music in the faith community's tradition and focused on the need of Katrina victims for hope of justice.

Opening Prayer of Remembrance

This prayer remembers before God these realities: How small humans are before the powerful forces of nature. How our lives can be changed in a moment. What has been lost: people, the familiar routine, recognizable places. How loss hurts. The disorientation that occurs in the midst of great loss. What has been found? We found neighbors who risked their lives for us, shared what they had with us, opened their doors to those who had lost everything, became a family for us. We lament what Katrina uncovered because of human brokenness: years of blindness to the struggles of the poor; business as usual as the social structures crumble that support prosperous, joyful, human living for all people. Because of human greed: people who lied to receive benefits to which they were not entitled. Wicked people used this disaster to profit at the expense of others. We lament our own impotence and failure to act. A time of silence may be useful to remember people known to our congregation who are caught in this crisis. BUT, like the psalmist of old, we remember that we are not without hope, for you, oh God, are with us. To stand up... to see the path before us now... to speak truth to ourselves and to power... to claim the gifts God provides for all people. That is why we are gathered to hear your word... to find ourselves... and the path that corresponds to your will.

The Scriptures

Several different people read scriptures appropriate to this community.

A Song of Hope

A soloist, choir, or congregational hymn

The Telling of a Personal Story of Katrina

There are members of the Katrina diaspora in almost every Gamaliel community. Hopefully some of these people have found their way to our congregations and are known to us. If not, the local ACORN chapter may be able to connect you to someone who has a personal story to tell. The story includes what happened and the struggle for the future.

A Song that Celebrates Courage

A soloist, choir or congregational hymn

An Offering

Gamaliel congregations may continue to support our ACORN partner or some other need uncovered by Katrina.

The Prayer for Action and Hope

A bidding prayer or other prayer appropriate to this community that asks God to guide and bless our actions.

Candle Lighting Ceremony

As we light these candles, we remember
those who lost their lives
those who gave their lives for others
those who became light by their presence and acts of kindness
those who are becoming light as they work for new beginnings

A Song of Resolve

A hymn in the faith community's tradition sending the people into the world to work for justice and to join the struggle.