

Invitation to the Ninth Annual Genocide Memorial Service, July 16, 2017

Members of all faiths and ethnic groups are invited to participate in the annual Genocide Memorial Service to be held at 1 p.m. July 16, at 9916-154 Street, Edmonton, Alberta. This event is sponsored by the Unitarian Church of Edmonton and the Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education and Action.

Each year, individuals from different faiths and cultures, are invited to place a large stone in a memorial garden, inscribed with the name of a person, place, or event that involved the death of an individual or group caused by violence of any kind. In particular, the Memorial Garden and ceremony is dedicated to honor those who were murdered in the Holocaust and other instances where groups of people were eliminated by planned attacks on them.

After brief speeches, people are invited to place stones inscribed with the names of peoples who died violent deaths, in a dry riverbed on the property. They will say why it is important to honor the people whose names are inscribed on the stones. Time for conversation and refreshments follow the service.

The annual Genocide Memorial Service began as a witness to violence committed against human beings because of wars, greed, ethnic cleansing, slavery, gender bias, colonial appropriation of people and their lands, instances of neglect and political oppression, that resulted in mass extinction of helpless men, women and children.

We, the people, must speak out, must stand as witnesses to genocide, and never let the world forget that humanity stands in a pool of its own blood; this is unacceptable. It is hoped that we grow into a collective voice so powerful that our witness and protest is heard throughout the world, and others take up this cause against the horrible barbarity of genocide.

The stones in the Memorial Garden cry out against the murder of innocent people. There are ways to resolve conflict other than mass destruction of human beings, in the name of politics, greed and exploitation of resources.

Albert Einstein said, “Peace cannot be kept by force, it can only be kept by understanding...all my life I have hated war; it is the greatest curse of man’s history. It comes from absolute ignorance, absolute greed, and absolute cruelty...some paths a man takes cannot be retraced. Some acts can not be undone.”

Rev. Audrey Brooks, Unitarian Chaplain
& Member of the Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education and Action
audbrook@telusplanet.net Phone Audrey at 780-489-8842 for more information about placing your stone or other details. Plastic, weather proof plaques for the stones can be obtained from any engraving firm, such as Elite Sportswear located at 14703- 118 Avenue, or Alberta Stamp & Marking on 10435-79 Avenue.