

In the 18 months between September 11, 2001, and March of 2003, the United States invaded, conquered, and abandoned Afghanistan, rejected the UN inspection findings in Iraq, and ignored the UN's refusal to sanction war. Though more than fifteen million people met in the cities of the world and cried out against war, the U.S. invaded Iraq anyway. And though the U.S. quickly declared victory, U.S. and coalition soldiers continued to kill Iraqis, most of them civilians, and continued to be killed.

Each day more Americans are finding reasons to have less faith in their leaders. If they had not already, they are now coming to believe that those leaders lied and distorted the truth, and sent their sons and daughters into harm's way to fulfill a private plan that was conceived long before 9/11.

What, then, do we say to our 11,000 medical evacuees, to our 2,200 wounded? What do we say to the 800 families of our dead, to the forty U.S. families of those who killed themselves? What do we say to the nations we asked to help us fight this war? What do we say to the nations we have attacked, and to the surviving husbands and wives and parents and children of those loved ones who *our* loved ones have killed? What do we say to the dead?

We must know why this happened, who was responsible, what might have been done instead. We must know the truth because much harm has been done in our names. Now, for ourselves and for the dead, we demand the truth.

While we try to gather the truth and the information needed to act responsibly in the next presidential election, and before our leaders consider new wars, we have a responsibility to attend to that our leaders have ignored.

The Mourning Project does what people have always done during and after war: we gather and we mourn for the dead. Not just as grieving parents, as friends and loved ones, but as ordinary people who are sickened by war, as citizens not only of this nation, but of the world, and as members in common with all humanity.

We mourned for the dead of 9/11, and now we mourn for the dead again: the American and allied soldiers, and the Iraqis and Afghans. None of them, soldiers or civilians, could escape the demands and forces of their governments any more than they could escape the bombs and bullets that destroyed them.

There is little comfort we can bring to the families of the dead. But we do share some of their loss. For as much as we are a part of the same humanity, the same family, it is our loss too. As fellow human beings we are moved to honor and remember them. We gather simply because this is what people have always done when members of their community have died.

It is not enough to express our anger in the streets and in the voting booths. Anger alone cannot prepare us to change the world.

So we gather to reject this senseless and wholly unnecessary mass murder called war.

We hope that through these gatherings we may find the strength to demand peace. We hope that we may find the courage to march again in the streets, and the endurance to lobby our governmental representatives, and to organize our neighbors, in the belief that this nation, and all nations, can find other means than war to resolve their conflicts.

Once a month we take this time to mourn for the dead, so that we can continue to fight for the living. Please join us.

The ceremony in the park takes less than a half-hour. Tall boards, listing the names and numbers of the dead from 9/11, the war in Afghanistan, and Iraq, stand in the center of the Plaza. Participants may choose to hold a vigil candle.

Each month a few people are scheduled to speak, sometimes giving an inspirational or political message, sometimes offering a eulogy or prayer for the dead. The names of those killed in the last month are read, and a few moments of silence are observed while the participants come forward to place their candles by the lists of names. The ceremony is closed with announcements and farewells.



1. **Please join us** at 7 PM on the first Thursday of any month, in the Japanese-American Memorial Plaza, in Waterfront Park just north of Burnside. This is a free, community ceremony, open to all faiths and convictions. Please bring your family and friends.

2. **Ask your community leaders** to endorse the Mourning Project, to spread the word to their members, and to consider being a speaker at one of our gatherings.

3. **Create the Mourning Project** in your community, in your own city, at a day, time, and place of your choosing. We will gladly share our resources and Web page.

4. **Your contributions** are gratefully accepted. Our expenses are minimal, but real. The Mourning Project is a registered nonprofit entity in Oregon, but not a 501(c)3 organization, so contributions are not tax-deductible.

Endorsers include:

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
Living Earth – Gatherings for Deep Change
Church of Scientology, Celebrity Centre
Cascadia Magical Activists
West Hills Universal Unitarian Fellowship,
Social Action Group
Physicians for Social Responsibility, Oregon
Portland Catholic Worker
Christ the Healer, U.C.C., Portland
Veterans for Peace, Chapter 72

Our Mission is to build public understanding of the true costs of war.

Our Web site is:

www.theMourningProject.org.

It contains a complete list of the known names of the dead from this war, and the text of the ceremonies each month. It is updated monthly.

If you have questions, would like to be notified of changes in the Web site, or would like to be reminded of gatherings, please leave your contact information with us at:

info@theMourningProject.org,

or

(503) 344-5084.

Your name and contact information will never be divulged or shared with anyone, for any purpose.

Additional copies of this brochure may be obtained by contacting us, or by downloading and printing them from our Web site.

the Mourning Project



We first gathered at 7 PM on New Year's Day, 2004, to mourn for all the dead of this war. We try to understand how and why it happened and our part in it. To fight for the living, we begin by mourning for the dead.