

Minister's Meditation
Service of Reflection and Mourning
The Rev. Anthony P. Johnson
September 11, 2001 - 7 PM
First Unitarian Universalist Church of Essex County
Orange, NJ

We have been hurt today.
We have been violated today.
I do not want to fix blame.
I want to let us hurt.
Our nation has been violated.
Our sense of security has been broken.
Our comfort in this world
-- a comfortable world for most of us here --
Our comfort has been shattered.

Thousands are dead.
How many thousands we do not know.
Thousands of individuals...
 with names...
 with ages...
 with faces...

Who -- we do not know yet.
But very likely someone you or I know is among the dead or injured.

We have been hurt today.
We have been violated today.

And we do not yet know the whole of it.

Who violated us?
 Why?
 Why today?

And what must we do in response?
 As a nation?
 As individuals?

I heard someone say, "I bet I know who did it."
Someone else said, "We knew with Oklahoma City and we were wrong."
 I do not know.
 I am not ready to speculate.
 I am still numb.
 But I am beginning to hurt.

I am beginning to feel the pain.
I am not yet angry.
But I will be angry.

And I pray
-- oh do I pray! --
that no matter how much we hurt...
no matter how violated we feel...
no matter how angry we get...
That we...
as individuals...
as a nation...
Will find the wisdom we need in the days ahead.

--The Rev. Anthony P. Johnson