



**FAITH IN
HARM REDUCTION**
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Invocation from the NYCDOHMH LifeSaver Awards Ceremony

–Erica Poellot, October 5, 2017

May the words of my mouth, and the meditation of our hearts, be acceptable in your sight, my God.

I am acutely aware of the duality,
of the tension alive in this moment,
in our gathering here.

We gather to celebrate
those who have survived,
and
those who have saved the lives of others.

We also gather to remember
the lives of our beloved lost.

We gather to honor the living,

and to remember,

To remember and hold space
for those who are no longer with us

We are witnesses to this moment.

Witnesses to the union
of soulful darkness and spiritual light

To the union
of silent repose and passionate healing

To the union
of immeasurable joy and fruitful sorrow.

To the union of all that have gone before, all that are, and all that are yet to come.

Feel the weight of this duality in either palm,

bring them together

and we pray,

May this tension be our life force,
our way forward,

from remembering

to love

into action.

Amen.

My heart is deeply moved by all that we have been able to save,

by who we have been able to resurrect.

It is also moved by whom we have been unable to save.

You saved over 255 lives.

And we were unable to save, over 1,362 fearfully, wonderfully
made in the image of all that is divine and good lives,
in this city, last year alone.

So let us remember

together,

make space for those no longer with us in body,

honor the lives we desperately wanted to resurrect, with a commitment to press on,

and hold in love and comfort those among us who live with pain and with grief.

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Following a moment of silence,

please join me in keeping alive the spirit of the beloved we have lost to overdose,

calling them each by name.

Saying of the names

We love you.

We are witnesses to your life and the knowing that it was worth saving.

Your memory will be our light for the way forward,

a way that compels us to resurrect again and again your living and our love for you.

In all the holy names, Amen.