

Conclusion

When we are weary and in need of strength,
when we are lost and sick at heart,
We remember x

When we have a joy we long to share,
when we have decisions that are hard to make,
We remember x

At the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter,
At the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of spring,
We remember x

At the blueness of the skies and in the warmth of summer,
In the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of the autumn,
We remember x

At the rising of the sun and at its setting
We remember x

And/or

The Lord is here, God's spirit is with us.

We need not fear

God is with us.

We are surrounded by love

God is with us.

We are immersed in peace.

God is with us.

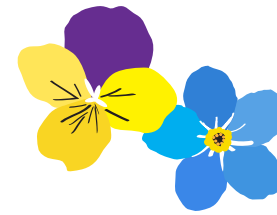
We rejoice in hope.

God is with us.

We travel in faith.

God is with us.

Amen



Season of
Remembering

A Community Remembers

Loss AND HOPE

Thanks, Pray, Remember

An inter-generational service for remembering those who have died over the past year

NB: this service has been designed to include those who may have experienced loss for the first time, for example of a grandparent, and/or been unable to go to the funeral.

- Families and friends gather in the space, which might be church, or the church hall. It would also be possible to hold this service in a different location that is important to the local community. If it is not a church space, then take time to create a prayer station or central focus which includes a cross, candles or similar items.
- When planning the service, take time to include younger members of the gathering in choices and offer opportunities to participate, as appropriate. People may be invited to sit in a circle, if space permits, allowing for physical distancing.
- Remember to think about live-streaming/recording to enable others to connect with this service
- Those attending could each be invited to carry with them an object or picture that reminds them of the person they are remembering. You may also want to place an individual paper leaf/tea light on each seat if you are going to have a prayer tree or candle stand.
- The service follows the same liturgical shape as a more formal 'memorial service, with gathering, listening, response and dismissal. It will also include a prayer of commendation. It can be led by any licensed minister, or co-led to include lay people or someone from the family.

The Prayer of Commendation [invite everyone to clasp their own hands together]

Almighty God,
As you bring us face to face with our mortality,
we thank you for making each one of us in your own image
and giving us gifts in body, mind and spirit.
We thank you now as we remember and honour
All those who have died this year.
We trust them to your mercy,
and pray that you will show us the path of life,
and the fulness of joy in your presence. **Amen.**

The Lord's prayer

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever.
Amen.

Final music and/or images

Play recorded music as appropriate

Readings including Psalm 23 [which may link to the funeral service, and could be spoken together]

Invite one or two people to share their story, as appropriate.

Reflection on God's story – a short talk that links the families story to the great story of God's love revealed in Jesus.

Prayers:

Invite people to take a moment to write on their leaf, and then come forward individually to place it around the prayer tree, or to come forward and light a candle. NB observing all regulations and guidance relevant at that time.

This, for some, may be the moment when they say their 'goodbye'.

And/or

Invite people to be still and draw circles on their own hands, or imagine a series of decreasing circles as the minister or other person leads prayers on these themes:

Circle one – large enough to cover your whole hand.

A prayer for the world that we love and all that is difficult and disappointing.

Circle two – a smaller circle in the centre of your hand.

A prayer for all those who are grieving this day.

Circle three – a tiny circle right in the middle of your hand.

A prayer for all of us here to discover more about God's love and following the way of Jesus Christ.

We gather:

The minister/leader welcomes everyone in these or similar words:

Welcome . All of us are here today because we are grieving the loss of someone we care about. We may have been unable to go to the funeral to say goodbye, or to show our support. We may have special memories of them that we want to share. We will be bringing all sorts of feelings as we look back over the year and to the people we are thinking about particularly today. We are going to thank God for all that has been good, to share some stories, to remember God's great love for us, and pray for one another as we remember that those who have died have been commended to God's love.

Prayer:

Father in heaven,
we thank you that you made us in your own image
and gave us gifts in body, mind and spirit.
We thank you now for all those we love but see no longer.
As we honour their memory
make us more aware that you are the one
from whom comes every perfect gift,
including the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Time for Thanks [based on Psalm 136]

Invite everyone to count across their fingers, silently naming on each finger a person who has died or a situation related to them for which they are thankful.

Light a large candle of thanksgiving before saying the following:

Blessing and thanks to God
Who created our world
And shapes our lives
God's love lasts forever

Thanks be to God
Who gives us friends and families
To laugh and cry with us
And show us love each day
God's love lasts for ever

Thanks be to God
For people who care and help,
Who work for healing
And show us kindness
God's love lasts forever

Thanks be to God
For faithful love and joyful living,
For good memories
And hope for tomorrow
God's love lasts forever.

Amen

Time For Remembering

Listening and reflection

'May our tears speak'

God of all, the world has changed so much.
There is so much that we have lost, and so many that we grieve.
May our tears speak where our words cannot.
God of community, the distances have grown between us.
There are spaces that have we missed and others that we have created.
May our tears speak where our words cannot.

God of the church, we have missed the times to be together and to hear each other's stories and the story of our faith.
May our tears speak where our words cannot.

God of peace, we weep for those whose passing we have not been able to mark, and for those whose grief we cannot ease.
May our tears speak where our words cannot.

Poem [by Dorothy Woods]

Some there are who can never be present
Though closer than breath.
Some there are who can never be lost
Though a million miles separate forever.

Invite people to come forward and drop a stone into a bowl as a sign of their sadness.