

A time of reflection when you can't attend a funeral

*When someone you love dies, saying goodbye in some formal way is important. This is one of the reasons that throughout the generations we have gathered for funerals and memorial services. With the current restrictions on movement in place it may not be possible for everyone to attend a funeral. This short act of worship may help you say your formal goodbyes whilst in your home. Nothing is compulsory, do only what feels right and helpful. The words we offer are a mix of the funeral liturgy and original materials. Where you see the symbol **N**, we invite you to say the **name** of your loved one. We make some music suggestion but feel free to use what is appropriate. If you are using this online there are links to the music via YouTube, just click the underlined link.*

GATHERING IN GOD'S PRESENCE

*Light a candle, maybe place it near a photo of **N** and take a moment to sit quietly.*

You might like to listen to a piece of music (eg [Gabriel's Oboe by Ennio Morricone](#)).

Words of comfort

"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end, they are new every morning." (Lamentations 3:22)

God says: "I will never leave you: I will never abandon you." (Hebrews 13:5)

Opening prayer

Read this prayer out loud.

Loving God, I hold **N** before you

I thank you for the good times
we shared together.

I hold before you the challenging times.

Be close to me, and to all those people
who knew and loved **N**.

May we know the peace of your presence
today and in the days to come.

I know there are no words I can say at this
moment to take away the pain.

I come as I am knowing you bind us
together in love; in this world and the next.
So, take this moment and help me know your
presence with me, now and always. Amen.

A TIME WITH GOD'S WORD

The Bible has a lot to say about the meaning of life and God's command over death itself. We turn to Scripture, as generations have done before us, that from them we might draw comfort and strength. Below are two passages often used at a funeral. Read them aloud if this is helpful.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul.

He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;

for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—
they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long.

John 14:1-6, 27

[Jesus said] "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going." Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me ...

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let

your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.

[You may also like read these passages: Psalm 121; Ecclesiastes 3:1-14; John 6:35-40; Romans 8:28, 31-35, 37-39; 1 Corinthians 15:51-57]

TIME TO REFLECT

Think about what you have read. Which words particularly speak to you?

The Gospels tell us that Jesus appeared to his disciples on Easter Sunday (three days after his death) and said to his friends: "Peace be with you", and "Do not be afraid".

What do you need to hear from God today?

Now take a few moments to think about the person who has died. If you are with someone else, share your memories together.

- *What was special about them?*
- *What was the best thing you did together?*
- *When you think of the person who has died, what song or special place or time comes to mind?*
- *What would you like to say to **N**, if they were here now?*
- *What particularly would you like to thank God for about their life?*

Take time to be still

*You might like to listen to **N**'s favourite piece of music, hymn or worship song. Or you could listen to Gymnopedie No.1 by Satie.*

A time of prayer

Loving God,
you tell us to look forward to a day
when your kingdom shall come
and your will be done;
a time when there will be no more sorrow
and death and when every tear
will be wiped from our eyes.
Until that time comes,
help us to find comfort in your love.
I commend **N** to you,
grant them your eternal peace.
I pray for **N**'s family, friends, neighbours
and colleagues and for each person
who is so much poorer
now **N** is no longer with us in the same way.

You might like to list people who you would like to pray for.

Support us all in the days ahead. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power,
and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

A TIME TO LEAVE THE ONE WE LOVE TO GOD'S LOVE AND CARE.

If you are able, read aloud:

Travel on **N** from this world,
in the name of God the Father,
who created you in love;
in the name of Jesus Christ
who sets you free from sin;
in the name of the Holy Spirit
who brings us all into new life.
Rest in peace, in God's love, now and forever.
Amen.

You might like to listen to "In Paradisum" from Fauré's Requiem.

Closing prayer

Gracious God
Support me and all who loved **N**
in the days ahead
and give us the comfort you have promised,
until the time comes when we can remember
not just with sorrow but with joy.

Blow out the candle and spend a few minutes in the quiet.

[Jesus said] "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die will live, and everyone who lives and believe in me will never die." (John 11:25-26)

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