

Service of Remembrance

This short ritual is designed for people who cannot attend the funeral of someone close who has died, due to lockdown and other Covid19 restrictions. It is meant to be a “home church” service.

Gather the household together on site or digitally (in the case of a community gathering remotely) and pray this ritual before or after a meal or a special time of the day that suits your family/community/group. It could be at the time the funeral actually takes place. Choose a designated leader or share the parts as appropriate and assemble all materials. Organising this beforehand, means that the prayer will have an uninterrupted flow.

Materials needed:

- Table
- Cloth
- Bible/prayer book
- Cross
- Water in a bowl
- Candle
- Photographs/objects special or meaningful to the deceased
- Letters or drawings to/of the person who has died
- Music (portable speaker/laptop/phone/CD player etc)
- Copies of this service for participants



GATHERING

Begin with a short silence or a hymn from the list at the end of this document in order to focus attention on prayer. Light a candle as a symbol of the baptismal candle of the person who has died.

All make The Sign of the Cross.

Leader: Peace be with you.

All: And with your Spirit.

Leader: We gather today/tonight in memory of — (insert name) —.

Pause for a minute of silence.

He/She was special to us all.

We ask God to receive — (insert name) — into the joy of the resurrection, may he/she rest in the peace of Christ.

Pause

PLACING OF CHRISTIAN SYMBOLS

Invite family members to place a cross, Bible or prayer book or other special objects and photos onto a designated space. As the object is placed onto the space, its relationship to the person's faith/spirituality is explained briefly.

For example:

These are — (insert name) —'s rosary beads.

— (Insert name) —loved to pray the rosary.

Each short explanation is followed by:

May God now receive her/him into eternal life.

Pause





BLESSING OF SYMBOLS

Participants offer a gesture of blessing of the objects on the prayer space eg. sprinkling of water, lighting of incense.

Participants can then place a written note/ or drawing for the person who has died on the prayer space.

INVITATION TO PRAYER or OPENING PRAYER

Leader: We are here to pray for — (insert name) — who is now with God.
We pray for ourselves in this sad time, that God gives us strength and consolation.
Pause

God our Father, we believe that you raised Jesus from the dead.
We also believe that Jesus promised us all eternal life.
Welcome — (insert name) — into your heavenly kingdom and give — (insert name)
— eternal peace.

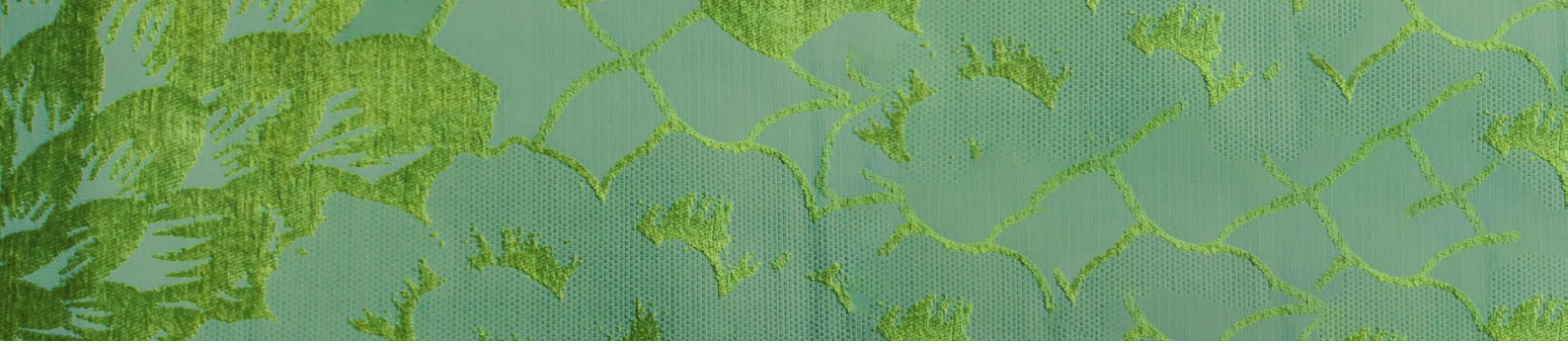
All: Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Choose an appropriate psalm and Scripture reading for the Liturgy of the Word. There are some suggestions below or you might choose one that was a favourite of the deceased.

PSALM Reader reads each verse and pauses for response by the participants.
Pause after Psalm, before the Reading

READING The group then shares what struck a chord/resonated with them in the reading.



STORY-TELLING or

WORDS OF REMEMBRANCE AND PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING

Leader: We now pray for — (insert name) — .

Spend some time sharing stories highlighting the qualities of the deceased. Go around the circle etc and share. For example: a sense of humour, love for music, works of service... Each short story finishes with:

We give thanks for — (insert name) —’s — (insert quality) —.

*When the stories and prayers have finished, conclude this time by praying the **Lord’s Prayer** together and any other prayers of significance, acknowledging **all** those who have died and those who are grieving.*

PRAYER/SONG OF FAREWELL

Leader: Saints of God come to — (insert name) — aid! Hasten to meet — (insert name) —, angel of the Lord.

All: Receive — (insert name) —’s soul and present — (insert name) — to God the Most High.

Leader: Eternal rest grant to — (insert name) —. O Lord and may perpetual light shine upon — (insert name) —. May — (insert name) — rest in peace.

All: Receive — (insert name) —’s soul and present — (insert name) — to God the Most High.



FINAL PRAYER

Leader: Into your hands, God of Mercy, we commend — (insert name) — to your care.
May our farewell express our affection for — (insert name) — ; may it ease our sadness and strengthen our hope.
One day we shall joyfully greet — (insert name) — again when the love of Christ, which conquers all things, destroys even death itself.

Whoever believes in me, even though that person die, shall live

All: I am the Resurrection and the Life.

Leader: Whoever believes in me shall never die.

All: I am the Resurrection and the Life.

Leader: Lord God, in your goodness, grant — (insert name) — everlasting peace.
We ask this through Christ our Lord

All: Amen

Blessing:

Leader: May the Lord bless us and keep us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life.

All: Amen

CONCLUDING HYMN/SONG

Choose an appropriate hymn or song to end the ritual. Below are some suggestions from YouTube for easy access. The YouTube video does not need to be visible, listening to the song is sufficient. You may also have a song from another source (CD, a playlist, etc).

Suggested Resources

The following are suggestions. There may be other readings, psalms or songs with special significance for your family or community. Feel free to use them.

SUGGESTED PSALMS

Psalm 23

Response: The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want.

¹ The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want.

² He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters;

³ he restores my soul.

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

Response: The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want.

⁴ 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.

Response: The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want.

⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Response: The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want.

⁶ 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.

Response: The Lord is my shepherd I shall not want.

Psalm 42

Response: Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,

¹ As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God.

² My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.

When shall I come and behold the face of God?

Response: Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,

³ My tears have been my food day and night, while people say to me continually, “Where is your God?”

Response: Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,

⁴ These things I remember, as I pour out my soul:

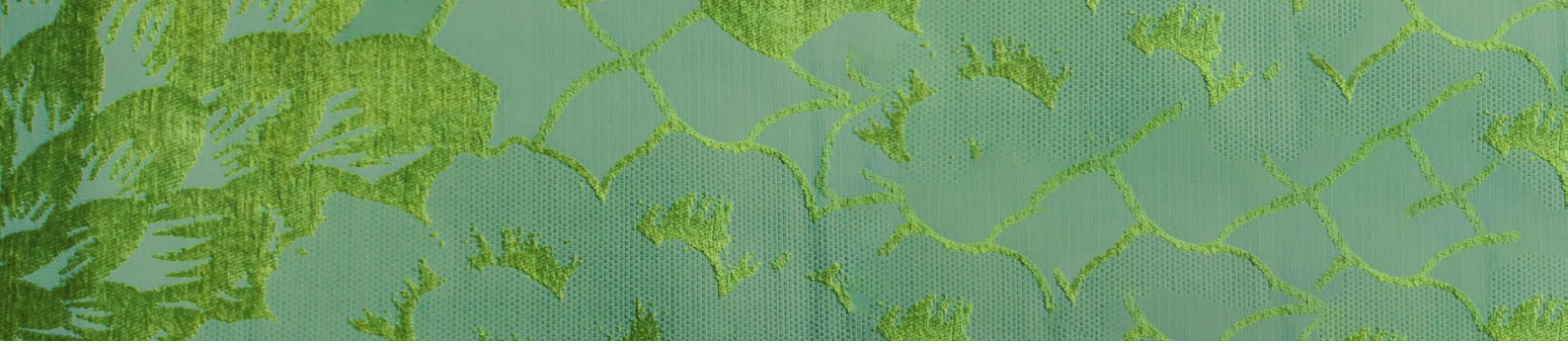
how I went with the throng,

and led them in procession to the house of God,

with glad shouts and songs of thanksgiving, a multitude keeping festival.

Response: Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,





⁵ Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,
my help ⁶ and my God.

*Response: Hope in God; for I shall again
praise him,*

⁸ By day the LORD commands his steadfast
love,
and at night his song is with me,
a prayer to the God of my life.

*Response: Hope in God; for I shall again
praise him,*

⁹ I say to God, my rock,
“Why have you forgotten me?
Why must I walk about mournfully
because the enemy oppresses me?”

¹⁰ As with a deadly wound in my body,
my adversaries taunt me,
while they say to me continually,
“Where is your God?”

*Response: Hope in God; for I shall again
praise him,*

¹¹ Why are you cast down, O my soul,
and why are you disquieted within me?
Hope in God; for I shall again praise him,
my help and my God.

*Response: Hope in God; for I shall again
praise him,*

Psalm 103

Response: Bless the Lord, my soul.

¹ Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all that is within me,
bless his holy name.

² Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and do not forget all his benefits—

³ who forgives all your iniquity,
who heals all your diseases,

⁴ who redeems your life from the Pit,
who crowns you with steadfast love and
mercy,

⁵ who satisfies you with good as long as you
live
so that your youth is renewed like the
eagle’s.

Response: Bless the Lord, my soul.

⁶ The LORD works vindication
and justice for all who are oppressed.

⁷ He made known his ways to Moses,
his acts to the people of Israel.

⁸ The LORD is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast
love.

⁹ He will not always accuse,
nor will he keep his anger forever.

¹⁰ He does not deal with us according to our
sins,
nor repay us according to our iniquities.

Response: Bless the Lord, my soul.

¹¹ For as the heavens are high above the
earth,
so great is his steadfast love toward those
who fear him;





¹² as far as the east is from the west,
so far he removes our transgressions from
us.

¹³ As a father has compassion for his
children,
so the LORD has compassion for those who
fear him.

¹⁴ For he knows how we were made;
he remembers that we are dust.

Response: Bless the Lord, my soul.

¹⁵ As for mortals, their days are like grass;
they flourish like a flower of the field;

¹⁶ for the wind passes over it, and it is gone,
and its place knows it no more.

¹⁷ But the steadfast love of the LORD is from
everlasting to everlasting
on those who fear him,
and his righteousness to children's children,

¹⁸ to those who keep his covenant
and remember to do his commandments.

Response: Bless the Lord, my soul.

¹⁹ The LORD has established his throne in
the heavens,
and his kingdom rules over all.

²⁰ Bless the LORD, O you his angels,
you mighty ones who do his bidding,
obedient to his spoken word.

²¹ Bless the LORD, all his hosts,
his ministers that do his will.

²² Bless the LORD, all his works,
in all places of his dominion.
Bless the LORD, O my soul.

Response: Bless the Lord, my soul.

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE READINGS

Paul to the Romans 8:31b - 35, 37-39

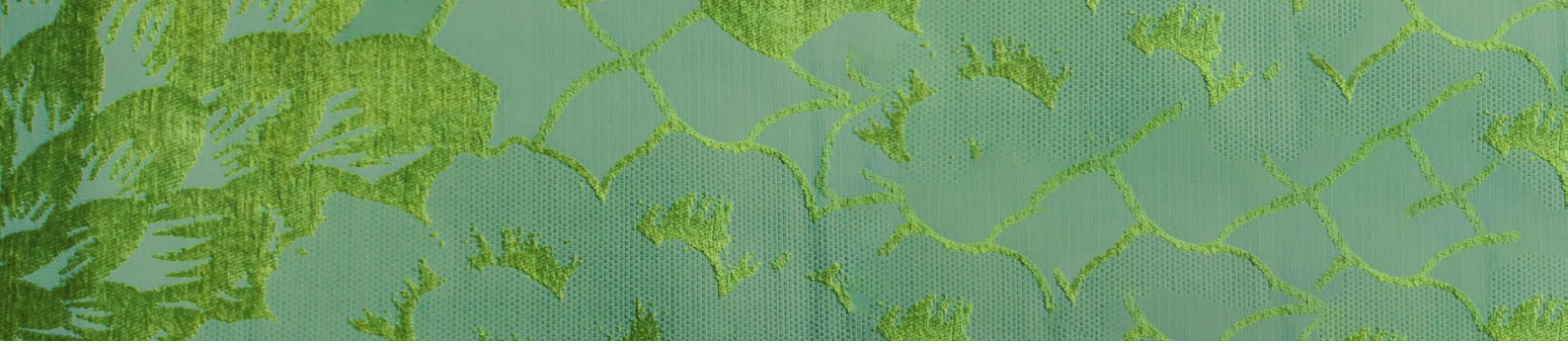
If God is for us, who is against us? ³² He
who did not withhold his own Son, but gave
him up for all of us, will he not with him also
give us everything else? ³³ Who will bring
any charge against God's elect? It is God
who justifies. ³⁴ Who is to condemn? It is
Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised,
who is at the right hand of God, who indeed
intercedes for us. ³⁵ Who will separate us
from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or
distress, or persecution, or famine, or
nakedness, or peril, or sword?

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than
conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For
I am convinced that neither death, nor life,
nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present,
nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor
height, nor depth, nor anything else in all
creation, will be able to separate us from the
love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:3-4, 8-9

³ Do you not know that all of us who have
been baptized into Christ Jesus were
baptized into his death? ⁴ Therefore we have
been buried with him by baptism into death,
so that, just as Christ was raised from the
dead by the glory of the Father, so we too
might walk in newness of life. ... ⁸ But if we
have died with Christ, we believe that we will





also live with him. ⁹ We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him.

Paul to the Corinthians 15:51-57

⁵¹ Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed,

⁵² in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

⁵³ For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. ⁵⁴ When this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled:

“Death has been swallowed up in victory.”

⁵⁵ “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?”

⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Matt 11: 25-30

²⁵ At that time Jesus said, “I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; ²⁶ yes, Father, for such was your

gracious will. ²⁷ All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

²⁸ “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

John 11: 32-45

³² When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” ³³ When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. ³⁴ He said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to him, “Lord, come and see.” ³⁵ Jesus began to weep.

³⁶ So the Jews said, “See how he loved him!”

³⁷ But some of them said, “Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?”

³⁸ Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. ³⁹ Jesus said, “Take away the stone.” Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, “Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead four days.”

⁴⁰ Jesus said to her, “Did I not tell you that





if you believed, you would see the glory of God?”⁴¹ So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, “Father, I thank you for having heard me.”⁴² I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.”⁴³ When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come out!”⁴⁴ The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”⁴⁵ Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

John 12: 23-28

²³ Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴ Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. ²⁵ Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honour.

John 14:1-3

¹⁴ “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. ² 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? ³ 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.

SUGGESTED HYMNS AND SONGS

- 🎵 Amazing Grace, sung by Il Divo. (2009)
- 🎵 Instrument of Peace, sung by the Canadian Tenors. (2012)
- 🎵 Be Not Afraid, sung by John Michael Talbot. (2010)
- 🎵 I Have Loved You (by Michael Joncas), sung by Chris Brunelle. (2016)
- 🎵 We Remember, by Marty Haugen. (2018)
- 🎵 Christ Be Our Light. (2018)
- 🎵 12 Tenors – You Raise Me Up. (2011)
- 🎵 Abide With Me. (2008)