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Funeral Resources

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Te Hahi Weteriana O Aotearoa

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Introduction

Conference 1993 asked the Faith and Order Committee to revise the kitset of funeral resources first put together in the late 1970s.

When the Committee reviewed the material it soon became clear that more than a revision was called for. Some language had become dated and it was felt that a broader range of material was required to cover not only church funerals but also funerals using little or no "traditional" religious language.

It was also felt that additional material was required to better cover the diversity of circumstances that funeral officiants meet in practice.

During 1994 and 1995 contributions for a new set of resources were invited. The Committee thanks all those who wrote with thoughts on the matter and who sent copies of material they had found helpful. We thank Rob Ferguson who did the initial collating and produced the first draft.

What follows is *not* a complete funeral service, nor are comprehensive resources provided under every heading. However, there is a coloured divider for each of the main sections, making space for funeral officiants to include their own existing, or future, resources.

In keeping with the Methodist Church's commitment, most of the material is in inclusive language. A few traditional pieces, included for completeness' sake, have been left in their familiar form.

The Committee has invited Maori, Samoan, Tongan, Fijian and Rotuman groups to supply resource material, to assist in understanding different ethnic traditions. These are included in Appendix A2.

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1. Gathering and Opening

1.1 Welcome

The officiant may welcome those present.

It may be appropriate to name, and pause to silently remember, those unable to attend the funeral.

There may be notices regarding the graveside ceremony, refreshments after the service, etc.

1.2 Gathering

1.2.1

We have gathered here today to remember
and give thanks for the life of who has died.

We are here to commit *his/her* body to be
cremated/buried,

to mourn *his/her* passing from us,

and to comfort those who grieve

with our sympathy and love.

1.2.2

We have come together to remember before God

the life of

to commend *him/her* to God's keeping,
to commit *his/her* body to be *buried/cremated*,
and to comfort those who mourn with our sympathy
and with our love;
in the hope we share
through the death and resurrection
of Jesus Christ.

(A New Zealand Prayer Book)

1.2.3

We have gathered here today to celebrate
and give thanks for the life of who has died.

We have come because in one way or another
his/her death affects us all.

Let us listen again to some of the great words
of the Christian faith,
and seek the comfort and strength
of an ever-present, loving God.

1.2.4

Friends, we gather today in this solemn moment
to give expression to our faith in God
and to our living hope that death is not the end,
to offer love and support to each other in our time of
grief,

and to commend into the sure keeping
of God who loves us.

In the presence of death
our Christian faith gives sure ground for hope,
confidence and even joy, because Jesus Christ,
who shared our human life and death,

was raised triumphant and lives for evermore.
Gathered into Christ, we too find eternal life.
In a spirit of humble trust we hear the words of
scripture:

1.2.5

We meet on holy ground,
for that place is holy where we meet one another.
Where lives touch,
Where love moves,
Where hope stirs,
There is holy ground.

How strong our need is for one another:
Our silent beckoning to our neighbours,
Our invitations to share life and death together,
Our welcome into the lives of those we meet,
And their welcome into our own.

We meet on holy ground,
Brought into being as life encounters life,
As personal histories merge into the communal story,
As we take on the pride and pain of our companions,
As separate selves become community.

(Meg Bowman, *Memorial Services for Women*)

1.2.6

Friends, we are here because has died.

We have gathered because in one way or another

.....'s death affects us all.

In our coming together we reaffirm

that each of us is linked to the lives of others.

We draw strength from each others' presence

in the face of the mystery and fact of death.

We come to stand alongside 's family in their
grief;

to reflect, to remember,

and to give thanks for 's life among us.

We bring our thoughts, our feelings, our memories,

for our lives have been touched by others.

We are not alone.

As we come, we reaffirm our trust in God

who does not desert or fail us.

(Rob Ferguson)

1.2.7

We have come together today
as part of the family of humanity
who share the burdens and griefs of each other.
We come to give expression to the knowledge
that family is larger than those who are kin to us,
that we have an effect on each other's lives,
often beyond our knowing.
Today we give expression to our links
with the life of who has died.
We meet in the conviction that death is an event
we can face without needless fear, bitterness or guilt.

Unexpected death

1.2.8

Family and friends of,
today we would rather be anywhere but here.
In the shock and numbness of 's sudden death

we gather to support each other,
to give voice to our pain,
and to honour 's life.

We are faced with deep questions,
and the anguish of if's and maybe's.

In darkness we search for light
and find strength from each other -
the true meaning of comfort.

There are no glib words to be said,
yet we put our grief into the hands of God,
trusting that great love to support us.

In our search for meaning
may we come to know peace.

(Rob Ferguson)

Death of a child

1.2.9

Friends, we gather here in the face of unexpected death

with the pain of loss uppermost.

Today we weep as the skies weep.

We draw strength from each other's presence
as the trees draw sustenance from the ground.

There are no glib words to be said.

For (*number*) weeks, grew
and was with(*parents names*).

It was a time of growth, of expectation,
preparation and wonder.

The hard fact of 's death seems to deny all that.

Yet today, in this place,

we honour the short life of,

and affirm to *him/her* and to each other

that *he/she* will always remain

an important part of this family.

We will not forget.

(Rob Ferguson)

1.3 Opening sentences

*On occasions like this
it is not easy to find the words
that say what we are feeling and thinking.
But if we turn to the words of scripture we read.....*

The eternal God is your refuge,
and underneath are the everlasting arms. *Deut*
33:27

To you, O Lord, I lift up my soul.
O my God, in you I trust. *Ps 25:1*

God is our refuge and our strength:
a very present help in time of trouble. *Ps 46:1*

Jesus said....

"Come to me, all you that are weary and
are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give
you rest." *Mt 11:28*

"How blessed are the sorrowful;

they shall find consolation."

Mt 5:4

"Set your troubled hearts at rest.

Trust in God always; trust also in me."

Jn 14:1

"I am the resurrection and the life.

Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die."

Jn 11:25

(cont)

1.3 (cont)

The apostle Paul said:

"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor anything in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love

of God in Jesus Christ our Lord."
8:38-39

Rom

"None of us lives,
and equally none of us dies for self alone.

For if we live, we live for the Lord;

and if we die, we die for the Lord."

Rom 14:7-8

In Revelation:

I heard behind me a loud voice like a
trumpet saying...."Do not be afraid; I am
the first and the last, and the living one.

I was dead, and see, I am alive

for ever and ever...."
17-18

Rev 1:10,

1.4 Hymn (see Appendix A1)

1.5 Prayers

1.5.1

Our God who is love,
we who loved as family and friends
pray for a sense of your presence as we gather here.
We bring a mixture of feelings
which well up within us as we remember *him/her*.
Because we have known and loved
his/her death is painful at first.
We acknowledge our pain and sense of loss.
But because we have known and loved *him/her*
we also own to feelings of gladness
that *he/she* is at peace and is in your keeping.
In our grief we celebrate *his/her* (long) life,
grateful for the many ways
our lives have been touched by *his/hers*.
In our separation and loss
may we find extra resources of strength and peace.
Help us to put our trust in your goodness and mercy
through Jesus our Christ. Amen.

(Rob Ferguson)

1.5.2

God of life and death,
your strength sustains us,
your love enables us to face death
knowing we are not alone.
As we walk in our dark valleys, give us your light;
in our dry times refresh us.
As we come to terms with 's death
may we have a sense of purpose to our ongoing lives.
Give us courage and hope.
May your deep peace support us,
here and everywhere, now and always.
As we recall 's life,
help us to live in the spirit of Jesus Christ
who calls us to walk with him,
promising us a future opened to us
by his own suffering love. Amen.

(Rob Ferguson)

1.5.3

Forgiving God,
in the face of death we discover
how many things are still undone,
how much might have been done otherwise.
Redeem our failure.
Bind up the wounds of past mistakes.
Transform our guilt to active love,
and by your forgiveness make us whole.
Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

(Scottish Episcopal funeral rite 1987)

1.5.4

Living God, we come joined by our memories of

There are memories, pictures in our minds,

feelings in our hearts

and we come to offer them to you.

There are things we want to say thank you for.

There are things which we remember and want to say

"I wish it had been different."

There are things we do not understand

and which leave us disturbed.

God, accept all our thoughts and feelings.

Give us the strength and ability to grow as people

because of our memories of

Help us to know it is your love and guidance

that help us to grow into a greater life

which is stronger than death.

Amen.

(Rob Ferguson)

1.5.5

Our God, you are known by many names.

Today we call out to you as Love

for love has drawn us here to celebrate the life of
.....

In thankfulness we remember 's strong faith
and rejoice together in *his/her* gentle passing
from life with us to life with you.

His/her long life has blessed family and friends
and makes *his/her* death painful amid the celebration.

It seemed as if *he/she* would always be here;
our loss is great.

Yet as the totara falls in the forest
and seedlings flourish in its shelter
so we give thanks that 's life
has had significance for so many people.

O God, lover of the world and all its people,
may we feel your presence here as we mourn
and celebrate with our tears the love of
who has lived and died among us. Amen.

(Rob Ferguson)

1.5.6

Let us be silent and reflect on our shock,
pain and loss at the death of.....

In the mystery of love

Life springs out of death

Let us remember that

Tears are for the washing away of grief,
hope is for the building of dreams and
love is the tender life-force which
conquers death.

In the mystery of love

Life springs out of death

There are many things in life which we cannot
understand,

many things we must accept.

May the power of love

enable us not to succumb to bitterness

or pointless questioning,

but rather grow to live life

with more tenderness,
courage and purpose
than ever before.

May this be for us all,
for in the mystery of love
Life springs out of death

(Bill Wallace)

1.5.7

When our days are at their longest

When our life is at its strongest

Kyrie eleison. Lord have mercy.

At the first coming of the dawn

on the life that's newly born

Kyrie eleison. Lord have mercy.

At the turning of each tide

on life's ocean deep and wide

Kyrie eleison. Lord have mercy.

At the ending of the way

At the closing of the day

Kyrie eleison. Lord have mercy.

When our powers are nearly done

At the going down of the sun

Kyrie eleison. Lord have mercy.

When we come to breathe our last

When the gates of death are passed

Kyrie eleison. Lord have mercy.

(David Adam, *Tides and Seasons*)

1.5.8

Eternal Spirit,
Earth-maker, Pain-bearer, Life-giver,
Source of all that is and that shall be,
Father and Mother of us all,
Loving God in whom is heaven:

The hallowing of your name echo through the
universe!

The way of your justice be followed
by the peoples of the world!

Your heavenly will be done by all created beings!

Your commonwealth of peace and freedom
sustain our hope and come on earth.

In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.

With the bread that we need for today, feed us.

In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.

From trials too great to endure, spare us.

From the grip of all that is evil, free us.

For you reign in the glory of the power that is love
now and forever. Amen

(Jim Cotter, *Prayer at Night*)

Unexpected death

1.5.9

Jesus our Saviour,

comfort us with the great power of your love

as we mourn the sudden death of

Give us a patient faith in this time of darkness

and help us to understand and know your ways.

Strengthen us in our faith that *he/she* is with you for ever.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

(*A New Zealand Prayer Book*)

After a suicide

1.5.10

God, creator of life, light of our lives,
you have been with us in our darkest moments;
be known to us now as we face the shock of 's death.

You knew from *his/her* first days
as *he/she* was formed and knitted together in the womb.

You know the influences that shaped *his/her* thoughts
and feelings from early times.

You know the peace and resolution *he/she* was seeking.

Dear God, we may never understand.

We have known this person through the years;
we have shared close times, times of fun, times of danger
and we thought we knew *him/her* well.

How could we be so close
and not know what *he/she* was going through?

How was it that we did not know how *he/she* was really
feeling?

Why were we not able to share things that meant so much?

..... 's death leaves us with many questions and few answers.

Not knowing makes our pain all the deeper, O God.

Take our questions and the mysteries of 's life
that we will never understand.

Receive any feelings of blame we may harbour,
guilt or shame
that we failed in some way.

We wish had found wholeness in this life.

Though there is sorrow, help us to rebuild.

Let us honour our own lives,
cherish our friendships,
serve each other with gentleness
and treasure your gift of life.

Grant us your peace.

Amen.

(Alan Upson)

After a teenage suicide

1.5.11

Dear God of journeys,
our grief reflects a journey uncompleted.
In we saw such potential
and we looked forward to *his/her* future.

Today we grieve in more ways than one.
We feel the emptiness that 's death leaves in our lives.
We are left struggling with dreams of a future that can never
be.
We see in faces around us
the bewilderment and tragedy that has touched us all.

Sometimes we wish things could be
just the way they were a week ago.
But today, in our anguish,
we struggle to come to terms with 's death.
Help us to accept what cannot be changed;
to accept the gift of others' comforting presence;
and to work through the unresolved issues
of 's untimely death.

Be a light in our darkness,
dispel our unspoken fears

and give hope in our despair.
Stand with us in this time of pain
and if our hurt seems too deep to bear
carry us through the valley of the shadow of death.

Though it is difficult to imagine now,
we believe that you can bring us to another place:
a place where the agony of today finds rest,
a place where we might start again.

For now, all we ask
is the assurance that you will be at our side.
Amen.

(Alan Upson)

Victim of homicide

1.5.12

Dear God,

You know that we find it difficult to think or feel or pray when we are still reeling from the shock of 's death.

We have tried desperately to understand why this has happened.

We have imagined those last fateful moments.

We have found ourselves saying "if only".

We are, at times, overwhelmed by the feeling that it was all so pointless and need never have happened.

Yet it has, and we find it so hard to accept.

Be with us in the numbness of our grief.

Touch us in the stillness of our helplessness or the violence of our own anger at what has happened.

Though we may feel drawn towards hatred and revenge

guide us in the way of wisdom.

By your Spirit help us to shape the days to come in a way that brings peace to our lives.

Amen.

(Alan Upson)

Death of someone who has hurt others

1.5.13

God of love,

We believe you have an intimate knowledge of us all.

You understood in ways we could not;

You saw the things that shaped *his/her* response to others;

you know the thoughts and emotions

that lay behind *his/her* actions.

We find it difficult to see

apart from the way *his/her* life affected ours.

Forgive us if we have been hasty in our judgement;

did *he/she* have other qualities that we failed to appreciate

and, perhaps, had we known,

might have made for better relationships?

Death changes our perspective.

Anxiety no longer haunts us;

we feel both regret and relief.

Help us to accept the confusion we feel.

In life there seemed so little that we could do

to change things.

Now there is even less.

God of grace, be with us

as we come to terms with our memories of

Enable us to move on with dignity

and in freedom.

Amen.

(Alan Upson)

Death of a recluse/derelict/neglected relative

1.5.14

Eternal God,

our days are a small part of your time and universe.

At times, each of us feels insignificant

when we compare ourselves to your love and infinite nature.

And yet you give each of us a status

and the right to stand tall.

We remember who chose anonymity.

He/she lived alone, away from the public eye,

choosing few friends,

and sharing few of *his/her* thoughts and feelings.

We wonder at the events or circumstances

that shaped *his/her* character

and led to *his/her* particular lifestyle.

We have few clues and may never know,

but we believe your knowledge of *him/her* is complete.

We thank you for the life of,

for the things that were meaningful to *him/her*,

for the things that brought a smile to *his/her* face.

(We thank you for those who helped *him/her*)

(Even when *he/she* kept most people at a distance.)

As we acknowledge *his/her* death

we reaffirm your gift of life,

give thanks for the opportunities

and possibilities given to us all,

and trust you for all that lies ahead.

Amen.

(Alan Upson)

Death where the body is missing (for use at a memorial service)

1.5.15

Dear God,

today we understand the anguish Mary felt

when looking for Jesus on Easter morning

and her question: where have they taken his body?

We know what it feels like to be caught
in that grey area between despair and hope.
We find ourselves wishing again and again
to know 's final resting place.
We strive to imagine what happened.
We have neither body to mourn
nor facts to face.
We sense a deep emptiness.
We find ourselves waiting and hoping
unable to grieve as fully as we would wish.

Help us, O God, to find focus again for our lives.
Centre us in the care of our family and friends.
Bring us from the unknown into the reality of the
present.
Help us to trust and ourselves to your care.
Amen.

(Alan Upson)

After a miscarriage

1.5.16

Friends, we come together in love for.....
and.....

to be with them as they grieve over a life that has
ended

even before it was born.

We come, too, to celebrate God's never-ending love
for us;

for the tiny life that has now been given over

to the tenderness and infinite love of God.

Let us pray:

For..... (*mother*), loved in her sadness

as Mary was when she stood at the Cross
and watched her child die.

For..... (*father*), who has also stood by in helplessness
and is loved as John the disciple was loved
when he stood by Mary
under the Cross.

For all of us here
that we may know God's certain love for us
now, in this place and forever.

Finally, we come to ask this God-who-loves
for gifts of healing and strengthening,
for understanding and peace.

Amen.

(Our Baby Has Died)

Stillborn child

1.5.17

God our Creator,
from whom all life comes,
comfort this family,
grieving for the loss of their hoped-for child.
Help them to find assurance
that with you nothing is wasted or incomplete,
and uphold them with your love,
through Jesus Christ our Saviour.
Amen.

(A New Zealand Prayer Book)

1.5.18

Loving and merciful God,
We, too, come as children,
sorrowful, with a deep sense of loss.
This child whom we already loved has gone so soon.

Yet we are glad to be here together.
For your own son, Jesus Christ, promised
that all your little ones

shall know your face for all time.

We pray for.....'s *parents/mother*
whose hopes have not been realised.
Assure us in our natural questioning
that..... is cradled in your loving arms.

We thank you for the love
which surrounded *him/her* as *he/she* grew,
and for your love for all of us
which strengthens us.
Amen.

(Our Baby Has Died)

1.5.19

Holy and compassionate God,

we come with heavy hearts.

..... and (*names of parents*)

were expecting a child to come into their lives.

They had already begun to prepare and plan

for this new life in their home.

But the young life that had begun to grow and develop

has quietly and mysteriously ended.

Now there is an emptiness within them.

Be with us in our grieving

and in our loss.

Strengthen us that we may offer each other

understanding and hope.

Surround us with your love

that we may know the healing power of your
compassion.

Give us courage and confidence to face the future

trusting in the way of Christ,

in whose name we pray.

Amen.

(Lynne Wall)

Death of a child

1.5.20

God, we thank you for the gift of our..... (name).

You know what a treasure *he/she* has been for us.

It is not easy to part with *him/her*.

The days are hard ones for us.

The memories are there.

Bless the hurt in our hearts

as we trudge along through each day.

Give us the energy we need to live our lives well.

Do not allow us to move into bitterness and alienation
with you or with one another.

We can get through this painful time in our lives
and we can go on with your strength to sustain us.

Grant us your peace.

Amen.

(Joyce Rupp, *Praying Our Goodbyes*)

1.5.21

PARENTS' LAMENT

God of all our days,
we are taught that we find completeness in you.
But in the death of we find it difficult
to see fulfilment.

For a time *he/she* brought
laughter and happiness to our lives;
we were drawn closer in meeting *his/her* needs,
and we are thankful for all *he/she* has been to us
and that *he/she* became a part of us.

So why did it have to stop here, O God
when we have been promised life in all its fullness?
Why was 's life so short?
We have been left with so many questions
and so much emotion.

Take us as we are, we pray;
take our anger, grief, pain, sorrow and emptiness.
Hold us closely;
in our tearfulness enfold us
as a loving parent does their child.

Through this time of grief that seems to have no end
bring us to the beginning of our healing.
Be with us, O God, in this longest moment of our lives.
Amen.

(Alan Upson)

At a house

1.5.22

Be present, living Christ,
within us, your dwelling place and home,
that this house may be one where
all darkness is penetrated by your light,
all troubles calmed by your peace,
all evil redeemed by your love,
all pain transformed in your suffering,
and all dying glorified in your risen life. Amen.

(Jim Cotter, *Prayer at Night*)

1.5.23

Christ stands before you, and peace is in his mind.
Sleep in the calm of all calm,
Sleep in the guidance of all guidance,
Sleep in the love of all loves:
Sleep, beloved, in the God of life.

(*The Iona Community Worship Book*)

2. Ministry of the Word

2.1 Bible readings

Readings need to be chosen with care. The following are suggestions only.

Cry for help

Ps 13

Ps 142

Ps 61: 1-5

Job 14: 1-12

Ps 130

Despair and anger in grief

Ps 6

Ps 88

Ps 22

Ps 102

Ps 31

Ps 123

Ps 69

Words of comfort

Isa 40: 1-11, 28-31

Lk 12: 22-34

Mt 11: 25-30

Despair to hope

Ps 42

Ps 130

Ps 73: 21-28

Ps 139: 1-18, 23-24

Ps 90: 1-12

Eccl 3: 1-8, 14-15, 19-20

Ps 103

Mt 5: 1-12

Ps 116

Hope

Ps 39
39

Rom 8: 28, 31b-35 (36), 37-

Jn 14: 1-6, 27

1 Pet 1: 3-9, 13, 21-25

(cont)

2.1 (cont)

Trust in God/ Christ

Ps 15

Jn 5: 19-28

Ps 16

Jn 10: 1-17

Ps 23
44

Jn 11: 1-5, 20-27, 32-35, 38-

Ps 27

Jn 12: 20-36

Ps 46

Acts 10: 34-43

Ps 121

Eph 1: 15-2: 1, 4-10

Ps 146

Heb 12: 1-22

Lam 3: 22-26

Wisdom of Solomon 3: 1-3, 9

Ecclesiasticus 41: 1-4

Promise of new life

Ps 84

Jn 14: 1-10, 15-21, 25-27

Ps 90

Rom 6: 1-11

Ps 126

1 Cor 15 (selections)

Isa 25: 6-9

2 Cor 4: 5 - 5:10

Mk 16: 1-7

Rev 14: 1-3, 6-7, 12-13

Jn 6: 30-40, 47-51

Rev 21: 1-7

2.2 Readings and poems

2.2.1

REFLECTION ON ISAIAH CHAPTER 40

So might we mourn for flowers
faded, dead,
and summer's fragrant hours
fleeting, sped,
and grass so briefly green,
and life's short scene.

So might we say:
'Twas only yesterday;
ere we could look
closed was the book;
our breath was gone
before the dawn.

Yes, the grass withers and the flowers fade,
perished almost as soon as made.
Therefore are mortals left afraid.

Except for this: One Word, embracing all,

the Word of God that stands though planets fall,
gives another meaning to our death
because it breathes God's breath
into a soul which, unlike grass and flower,
goes on to life beyond death's transient hour.

(Thomas John Carlisle)

2.2.2

They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun, and in the morning,
We will remember them.

(Lawrence Binyon, *Poems for the Fallen*)

2.2.3

THE LIFE OF ETERNITY

The light of life is a finite flame. Like the Sabbath candles, life is kindled, it burns, it glows, it is radiant with warmth and beauty. But soon it fades; its substance is consumed, and it is no more.

In light we see; in light we are seen. The flames dance and our lives are full. But as night follows day, the candle of our life burns down and gutters. There is an end to the flames. We see no more and are no more seen. Yet we do not despair; for we are more than a memory slowly fading into the darkness. With our lives we give life. Something of us can never die: we move in the eternal cycle of darkness and death, of light and life.

(Gates of Prayer)

2.2.4

REMEMBRANCE

I come to this holy place

and stand alone

and wonder -

a place anointed,

set apart

because you were here.

Wistful memories

and friendly ghosts

hover on the edges of my mind,

and I remember

what this place

was like

when you were here.

You have gone,

and I am alone.

Your life has taken on a dimension I can only imagine.

But what we shared is no less

just because you are not here.

Shadows replace sunlight,

echoes replace laughter,

reflected images replace sights of happy days.
Indelibly stamped,
permanently etched,
forever preserved,
are the memories of you
and this special place,
in a hidden corner of my heart.

For blessed memories,
O Lord,
I thank you.

(Kay Haggart Mills, *Alive Now* Sept/Oct 1990)

2.2.5

THE BLESSING OF MEMORY

It is hard to sing of oneness when our world is not complete, when those who once brought wholeness to our life have gone, and naught but memory can fill the emptiness their passing leaves behind.

But memory can tell us only what we were, in company with those we loved; it cannot help us find what each of us, alone, must now become. Yet no one is really alone; those who live no more echo still within our thoughts and words, and what they did is part of what we have become.

We do best homage to our dead when we live our lives most fully, even in the shadow of our loss. For each of our lives is worth the life of the whole world; in each one is the breath of the Ultimate One. In affirming the One, we affirm the worth of each one whose life, now ended, brought us closer to the Source of life, in whose unity no one is alone and every life finds purpose.

(Gates of Prayer)

2.2.6

THE GRAVE

The ground
lies fallow
on my father's grave
but soon
grass will grow
as nature rehabilitates
the bare soil- and so it shall be
with my grieving heart.

(Bill Wallace)

2.2.7

MEDITATION

O God of life, amid the ceaseless tides of change which sweep away the generations, Your living spirit remains to comfort us and give us hope. Around us is life and death, decay and renewal; the flowing rhythm that all things obey.

Our life is a dance to a song we cannot hear. Its melody courses through us for a little while, then seems to cease. Whence the melody and whither does it go? In darkness as in light we turn to You, Lord, the Source of life, the Answer to all its mysteries.

Can it be that we, Your children, are given over to destruction, when our few days on earth are done? Or do we live in ways we cannot know?

Only this have we been taught, and in this we put our trust: from You comes the spirit, and to You it must return. You are our dwelling place in life and in death.

More we cannot say, for all else is hidden from our sight by an impenetrable veil. We thank You, then, for the life we have, and for the gifts that daily are our portion:

for health and healing, for labour and repose, for the ever-renewed beauty of earth and sky, for thoughts of truth and justice that move us to acts of goodness, and for the contemplation of Your eternal Presence, which fills us with the hope that what is good and lovely will not perish.

Lord, what are we? A breath, a passing shadow. Yet You have made us a little less than divine.

(Gates of Prayer)

2.2.8

GRIEF

For most of us,
death appears as a fixed horizon
and those who pass over it
leave an emptiness we must fill
with a season of grieving.
And yet, with our sorrow
there is also a knowledge of light,
a certainty that the sense of loss
belongs not to any ending
but to the limitation of our vision.
Death is an experience for those left behind,

not for those who are moving
from one stage of living to another.

It is the Christ who dwells within us
who is free to step back and forth
over the horizon of death,
containing our grief in his Passion
and our knowledge of light
in his transcendence,
showing us that death and resurrection
are the two sides of the one coin.

So while grief goes on, the tears, the hurting,
I know in the truth of Jesus Christ
that the hollowness I feel
at the departure of loved ones,
is in reality, the hollowness
of the empty tomb.

(Joy Cowley, *Aotearoa Psalms*)

2.2.9

When we have reasoned as best we can how tragedies happen, how precarious life may be, how the innocent suffer, we are still not satisfied. Reason alone cannot answer our cries when those we love have been torn from us.

(Dr Robert Runcie, Archbishop of Canterbury- *from his address at the Marchioness Memorial Society 1989*)

2.2.10

Having the courage to confront death with honesty inevitably means that we examine our lives, our values, our ideas, and our sense of meaning, so that eventually we can create an existence that has satisfaction and purpose. By accepting death as a natural life process, we can live our lives with more zest and depth, and we can achieve the greatest richness possible. In other words, the courage to accept death will enhance our lives.

(Judy Tatelbaum)

2.2.11

Nothing can fill the gap
when we are away from those we love,
and it would be wrong to try and find anything.

We must simply hold out and win through.
That sounds very hard at first,
but at the same time it is a great consolation,
since leaving the gap unfilled
preserves the bonds between us.
It is nonsense to say that God fills the gap;
God does not fill it, but keeps it empty
so that our communion with another
may be kept alive, even at the cost of pain.

(Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

2.2.12

No matter how brave we think we are, or think we can be, we must call sorrow by its right name and see it for what it is. Only then can we avail ourselves of the treasure that is hidden in the folds of its dark cloak. I think that we should not, by any twist of the words we use, minimise what we are going through, what anyone goes through, when death enters upon life and removes a member of our circle, family-close or friendship-wide. There will be time enough to ponder the event, to philosophise about it, to discover its significance. Now, the bleak fact stands: a light has gone out; wherever it may be shining, it is here no longer.

(Elizabeth Yates, *Up the Golden Stair*)

2.2.13

I had thought that your death
Was a waste and a destruction,
A pain of grief hardly to be endured.
I am only beginning to learn
That your life was a gift and a growing
And a loving left with me.
The desperation of death
Destroyed the existence of love,
But the fact of death
Cannot destroy what has been given.
I am learning to look at your life again
Instead of your death and your departing.

(Marjorie Pizer)

2.2.14

INSTRUCTIONS...

When I have moved beyond you in the adventure of life,
gather in some pleasant place
and there remember me
with spoken words, old and new.

Let a tear fall if you will,
but let a smile come quickly
for I have loved the laughter of life.

Do not linger too long with your solemnities,
go eat and drink and talk
and when you can -
follow a woodland trail
climb a high mountain
sleep beneath the stars
swim in a cold river
chew the thoughts of some book which challenges your
soul
use your hands some bright day
to make a thing of beauty
or to lift someone's heavy load.

Though you mention not my name,

though no thought of me crosses your mind -
I shall be with you
for these have been realities of life to me.

And when you face some crisis with anguish -
when you walk alone with courage
when you choose your paths of right
when you give yourself in love
I shall be very close to you.

I have followed the valleys,
I have climbed the heights of life.

(Arnold Crompton, *Memorial Services for Women*)

2.2.15

I SHALL SAIL AWAY

Some time at even when the tide is low,
I shall slip my moorings and sail away:
With no response to the friendly hail
Of kindred craft in the busy bay.
In the quiet hush of the twilight pale,
When night stoops down to embrace the day,
And voices call in the water's flow
Sometime at even when the tide is low,
I shall slip my moorings and sail away.

A few who have watched me sail away
Will miss my craft from the busy bay:
Some friendly barques that have anchored near
Some loving souls that my heart holds dear:
In silent sorrow will drop a tear,
But I shall have peacefully furled my sail
In moorings sheltered from storm and gale
And greeted my friends who have sailed before
On the unknown sea to the unseen shore.

(Mary Penno)

2.2.16

With beauty before me may I walk,

With beauty behind me may I walk,

With beauty above me may I walk,

With beauty all around me may I walk.

In old age wandering on a trail of beauty,

Lively may I walk;

In old age wandering on a trail of beauty,

living again may I walk.

It is finished in beauty.

(Navajo prayer)

2.2.17

At birth we are sown into the world, at harvest time we die.

So quickly the spiral of seasons comes round:

seedtime and harvest,

seedtime and harvest.

But life is between the seedtime and the harvest;

and death is between the harvest and the seedtime.

So nature, mysteriously, goes on.

We are born of the seed of others.

Our lives are nourished by their labours and their love,

their teaching and their doing,

their failures and their dreams.

Their deaths both diminish and enrich us.

Our own tasks, our own hopes and purposes

are the present growing of the grain in this enduring

rhythm of seedtime and harvest, harvest and

seedtime.

And this we celebrate in the midst of death.

(Paul Irion)

2.2.18

BURIAL

As the mourners' tears
mingled
with watery sky
freshly blossomed trees
guarding mounded earth
whispered
"Though she is dead
her life-space
inhabits
your heart."

(Bill Wallace)

After a Miscarriage

2.2.19

LAMENT FOR A CHILD

Some thought the pain was less
Because I never saw you
But oh, I did!
My heart and mind wove textured skin,
Caressed your cheeks, touched finespun hair,
And smelled sweet breath

Although you dwelt within my womb
In darkness, secret and unseen,
I knew your presence there
A living part of my own flesh
Whose heart was linked to mine

And then you left
Too soon to bear the earth's weighted air
And so I silent mourn
My tears as inward as your life
And yet you truly lived
As real as if my arms had felt your weight

And sensed your body's warmth

Close pressed to mine

So now I raise a stone within my soul

To mark your place

Your name engraved by acid tears,

Still carry you in memory's womb

And feel grief's weight in empty arms

(cont)

So tender were the days you lived with me
Reluctant do I set you free
Yet can I sense a tempered joy
To think you whole, complete,
Newborn to breathe a fresher air
In worlds more real than those I know

We wait together, oh my child,
For one day I will reach and find
Your hand within my own
And feeling that embrace
Your kiss upon my cheek
So move from dream into reality
And know a different motherhood at last.

(Gennet M. Emery)

2.3 Address

The address is distinct from the tribute(s) and may be an opportunity for a sensitively prepared, relevant, gospel proclamation.

3. Celebration of Life

3.1 Tribute(s)

3.2 Reflections and contributions from family and friends

Symbols of the person's life may be a focus.

3.3 Special music

4. Response

4.1 Prayers of thanksgiving

4.1.1

Let us give thanks for God's love for the world
and especially that the bitterness and fear of death
is taken away by faith (in God).

We lift up our hearts in gratitude for the life of
who has gone from among us.

Thank you, God of love, for your goodness to *him/her*
through many days.

In silence, we make our own thanksgiving to God
for all that meant to us.

(pause)

Thank you, gracious God, for all that was and is
to those who loved *him/her*,
and for everything in *his/her* life that reflected your
goodness and love.

God of compassion,
draw near to all who mourn today.
Make your love known to them

that they may discover in you
strength, comfort and peace.

In their separation help them to put their trust in you.

Use us, as bearers of your love, to support them in their
grief.

O God, may we discover the seeds of hope,
that peace may grow for us and through us.

Be with us, here and everywhere;

be present for us now and always,

fulfiller of our past, strength of our present,

and promise of our future,

through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

4.1.2

Our God, we thank you for the life
we have shared with

In our memories and our living we carry *his/her* stories
which are now our stories.

We thank you for the laughter shared over the years,
the nurture received,
and the many things we have learned from

We pray that we will remember

with love and forgiveness,
and that you will give us the strength and vision
to continue to build our lives without *him/her*.

We pray for all who mourn today,
especially (*family, by name*)

for a sense of consolation, and being supported in
grief.

May we not be overwhelmed by grief,
and may they be continually assured of our supporting
care.

We pray for peace,
knowing that is at peace.

Lord of our days,
give us all we need for rejoicing,
all we need for hope and peace.

Be with us, today and all days, we pray. Amen.

(Rob Ferguson)

4.1.3

We give thanks for the life of

We remember the person *he/she* was
even though each of us has known
only part of *his/her* life.

In all our shared experiences,
in all the things *he/she* cherished,
in *his/her* words and ways,
he/she lives on for us.

We bring to mind those who miss *him/her* most
(*name family and/or close friends*)

We recognise their feelings of loss and grief.

We wish for them thankfulness, courage,
acceptance and peace.

As we say farewell to

let us find support in each other.

Through that support, let us discover purpose
and a sense of well-being,
even in the face of death,

for we believe life is to be treasured.

From the beginning of life,

through its transitions to its end,

we experience a flow

that is both profound and sacred.

(Alan Upson)

4.1.4

God, we thank you for the life of,
for all we have learnt from *him/her*
and all that has been given to us through *him/her*.
We thank you that is now free of frailties and
pain
and secure in being loved.
Knowing that nothing can separate us
from your love in Jesus Christ,
we are freed to commit to you,
sure that *he/she* is safe with you.

We pray for ourselves.
At this time we recognise that 's death
reawakens other griefs
and we ask that you will help us
deal with these strong feelings.
Give us the unshakeable knowledge
that there is nothing that can separate us from your
love.

We thank you for the bonds
that hold us together and support us
even while we feel the pain of separation.

Help us to keep on supporting each other.

Give us your wisdom to grieve well.

Give us the hope that death is not the end.

Give us the courage to face the changes
that 's death brings.

In the name of Jesus Christ, who overcame death
and opened our future with you, we pray. Amen.

(Rob Ferguson)

4.1.5

Let us reflect on the pilgrimage of life; on how we all
come

from the earth and all return to its womb.

In death as in life

We are all one family

Let us acknowledge that we share this experience

with all living creatures through the unity of nature.

In death as in life

We are all one family

Let us give thanks for the life of

and for all the memories that *his/her* death
brings to mind.

In death as in life

We are all one family

In the strength of (*God's*) love

let us determine to keep alive in us
those qualities which we admired in

for

In death and in life

We are all one family

(Bill Wallace)

Premature/unexpected death

4.1.6

Lord, we thank you for,
for our memories, for glimpses of the real person
that we have seen in this service.
For words, recollections, reflections
that have resonated with our experience of,
and have brought *his/her* image freshly before us.
Right now they give us pain; but already we realise
how we will cherish them in the years ahead.
We acknowledge that you are Lord of the living and
the dead,
and that while *his/her* life has ended,
we are bound together still, not just by the past,
but by your continuing Lordship.

We pray for 's family.

For ... (*partner/close friend*), we ask for grace
to grieve with courage and hope
so that *he/she* may continue to discover and fulfil your
calling for *his/her* life.

For (*children*), we thank you that their *father's/mother's* love

has already laid a foundation for their young lives.

We pray that even though memories may fade

his/her love will continue to grow with them,

leading them into mature adulthood,

recognisably *his/her* children.

For 's parents; with so many hopes

and dreams cut off in *his/her* death.

May they find support in their pain.

(cont)

For ourselves, confronted again with the shock
of our mortality in the painful recognition
that a young life can end so abruptly and so unfairly.
We ask for courage to face this pain,
to live in the light of our own finitude,
to remember, and to claim the gifts *he/she*
gives.
We say our goodbyes in hope, committing *him/her*,
and all of us into your gracious keeping. Amen.

(Terry C Falla, *Be Our Freedom Lord*)

4.2 Time of silent remembering

Or may be included in prayers of thanksgiving (eg 4.1.1)

..... has been significant in the life of each of us.
In silence we reflect upon our relationship with *him/her*.
If has hurt you in any way,
will you now forgive *him/her*?

If you know you have hurt in any way,
will you now receive God's forgiveness?

4.3 Hymn *(see Appendix A1)*

5. Commendation and Committal

5.1 *The officiant may invite family and close friends to gather around the casket.*

5.2 *The officiant may invite words of farewell, either spoken or silent.*

5.3 Commendation/Committal

5.3.1 Commendation

5.3.1.1

Eternal God, you have shared with us the life of
.....

For all that has given us to make us what we
are,

for that of which lives and grows in each of us,
and for 's life that in your love will never end,
we give you thanks.

As now we offer back into your arms,
we pray for comfort in our loneliness,
strength in our weakness,
and courage to face the future unafraid.

Draw those of us who remain in this life
closer to one another,

help us to be faithful to serve one another,
and give us to know that peace and joy
which is eternal life;

through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

(A Service of Death and Resurrection)

Death of a child

5.3.1.2

Gentle God, born an infant in Jesus Christ
in the family of Joseph and Mary,
we give you thanks for
born among us full of hope and promise.
We remember that Jesus Christ lifted children
into loving arms to embrace and bless them.
We ask you to embrace and bless
as part of your heavenly family where,
by your grace, our lives are brought to fullness
in the peace of your eternal home.
God of all mercies,
whose heart aches with our human hurting,
we commend to your love the parent(s) of this child
.....
and all their family who mourn with them.
Sustain them in this loss and in their loneliness.
Kindle anew the flame of joy.
Grant the peace of knowing this child is with
you,
the Mother and Father of us all,
both in this life and in the life to come.

(United Church of Christ USA)

5.3.2 Committal

5.3.2.1

Since the earthly life of.....has come to an end,

we commit *his/her* body *to the ground/ to be cremated.*

Earth to earth,

ashes to ashes,
dust to dust,
trusting in the infinite love of God
(in Jesus Christ our Lord).
Amen.

5.3.2.2

....., your love has enriched the lives
of those gathered here.

We are grateful beyond words for the ways
you have touched our lives.

For the love you have shared, the nurture you have
given,
we will not forget.

In love and with dignity
we commit your body to be *cremated/buried*
(earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust)
Go from this world in peace,
make the journey to be with your forebears;
your stories will be told,
you will be remembered.

Go in peace.

(Rob Ferguson)

5.3.2.3

Let us pray:

Our days, O Lord, are like those of grass.

Like a flower of the field we bloom.

The wind sweeps over us and we are gone
and our place knows us no more.

But your kindness is from eternity
and to eternity,

your justice is new in every generation.

Receive our *brother/sister*

Do not deal with *him/her* according to *his/her* sins
but crown *him/her* with your kindness.

Like a father and a mother, shelter and embrace
him/her.

For 's life among us we give you thanks
and we ask to praise you with *him/her*

for ever and ever.

(Gabe Huck)

5.3.2.4

O gaping earth!

Receive the body formed of you by the hand of God
and again returning to you as its mother;

for what has been in his image,

the Creator has already reclaimed.

Receive then this as your own.

(Orthodox Liturgy)

5.3.2.5

In committing the *body/remains/ashes* of

to the hallowed ground of Earth
and to the keeping of Eternity,
we do so with deep reverence for the body
as a creation of the Divine
- a unique expression of an Eternal and Abiding,
though Mysterious, Love.

Under the round dome of Eternity
the earthly remains of
shall rest in peace.

This grave is consecrated by our memories of
and our love for *him/her*,
but even more by the person *he/she* was
and the life *he/she* lived.

Spirit of life and love, eternal God, the spirit of
that filled our world with love and delight
has become one with your Eternity.

Grant to us who grieve this death,
forgiveness, a sense of comprehending compassion,
and a meaning

in which all things are understood and made whole.

May the love in our hearts join us together
in richer ways than before

and, in time, lead us to the peace that passes understanding.

We know that 's spirit will always be with us

- *his/her* love for us and our love for *him/her* will never die.

(Edward Searl, *In Memoriam*.)

5.3.3 Commendation/ committal

5.3.3.1

....., we commend you to God's keeping and mercy,

to God's forgiveness and love.

We thank God for the ways in which your life and love have touched ours.

Your life we honour, your memory we cherish.

We commit your body to be *cremated/ buried*:
earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.
Go forth from this world
in the love of God who created you,
in the mercy of Jesus Christ who redeemed you,
in the power of the Holy Spirit who strengthens you.
May you dwell this day in peace.

(Book of Common Prayer)

5.3.3.2

In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal
life
through our Lord Jesus Christ,
we commend to Almighty God our *brother/sister*,
and we commit *his/her* body to *the ground*
(or *the deep* or *the elements* or *its resting place*):
earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

The Lord bless *him/her* and keep *him/her*,
the Lord make his face to shine upon *him/her*
and be gracious to *him/her*,

the Lord lift up his countenance upon *him/her*
and give *him/her* peace.

(Book of Common Prayer)

Committal of ashes at a later time

5.3.3.3

Dear friends, at the very beginning of the scriptures
we read that God looked each day at creation
and saw how good it was.

The very dust is good in God's eyes.

From it we come and to it we return.

What is to come is in the hands of our God
who rejoiced to create us.

We leave (*to the earth, to the waters, to the wind*)

these ashes,

but we carry within us the memory of

and the praise of our God

who is manifest and blessed in every life.

5.4 *The casket is lowered/curtained*

6. Leavetaking

6.1

"The Lord gives; the Lord takes away;
blessed be the name of the Lord."

Early or late, all must answer the summons to return to the Reservoir of Being. For we loose our hold on life when our time has come, as the leaf falls from the bough when its day is done. The deeds of the righteous enrich the world, as the fallen leaf enriches the soil beneath. The dust returns to the earth, the spirit lives on with God.

Like the stars by day, our beloved dead are not seen by mortal eyes. Yet they shine on for ever; theirs is eternal peace.

Let us be thankful for the companionship that continues in a love stronger than death. Sanctifying the name of God, we do honour to their memory.

(Gates of Prayer)

6.2

As in the world around us, so too in human life:
darkness is followed by light and sorrow by comfort.
Life and death are twins;
grief and hope walk hand in hand.
Although we cannot know
what lies beyond the body's death,
let us put our trust in the undying Spirit
who calls us into life
and who abides to all eternity.

(Gates of Prayer)

6.3

Our God, support us all the day long of our troubled
life,
until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes,
the busy world is hushed,
the fever of life is over and our work is done.
Then in your mercy grant us a safe lodging,
a holy rest, and peace at the last;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(A Service of Death and Resurrection)

6.4

O God full of compassion,
Eternal Spirit of the universe,
grant perfect rest under the wings of your Presence
to our loved ones who have entered eternity.
Master of Mercy,
let them find refuge for ever in the shadow of your
wings,
and let their souls be bound up in the bond of eternal
life.
The Eternal God is their inheritance.

May they rest in peace,
and let us say: Amen.

6.5

Peace be with those who have left us and have gone to God.

May they be at peace. May they be with God.

May they be with the living God.

May they be with the immortal God.

May they be in God's hands.

May they sleep in peace.

May they live in peace.

May they be where the name of God is great.

May they be with the living God
now and on the day of judgement.

May they live with God.

May they live in eternal light.

May they live in the peace of the Lord.

May they live forever in peace.

With God in peace.

(Catholic Funeral Liturgy, 1969 rite)

6.6

We are glad lived.

We cherish *his/her* memory.

We leave our dead to the keeping
of this peaceful and consecrated plot of earth.

With respect we say farewell to

In love we will remember *him/her*.

Thinking of in this manner,
let us all go in quietness of spirit
and live in love with one another.

(Edward Searl, *In Memoriam*)

6.7

Now for us, the living, it is time to leave.

May the love of friends, the radiance of memory,
the hope for an abundant life, the power of love,
fill us all with strength and peace,
that we may greet the breaking of tomorrow's dawn
with praise and love for one another.

Blessed be. Go in peace.

6.8

....., we leave your body here, going on our way
accompanied by your memory, sustained by God's
love
and the comfort of each other,
in continuing concern and love for one another
and for our world.

May we be at peace as you are at peace.

6.9

We take our leave of our *sister/brother*

We acknowledge the great gap which *his/her* death
leaves in the lives of those who mourn.

We commit ourselves to helping each other
work through the process of grieving,
to new life beyond our shock,
anger, guilt and tears.

May healing flow from sorrow,
hope emerge from darkness
and memories become even more precious
so that past and present be as one
in the mystery of (*God's*) love.

(Bill Wallace)

7. Blessing

7.1

To God's gracious mercy and protection we commit
you;

the Lord bless you and keep you;

the Lord make his face to shine upon you

and be gracious to you;

the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you

and give you peace:

and the blessing of God almighty,

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,

be with you and remain with you for ever.

7.2

God grant to the living, grace;

God grant to the departed, rest;

to all the world, peace and harmony;

and to us and to every faithful servant, life everlasting:

and the blessing of God almighty,

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,

be with you and remain with you for ever.

7.3

The blessing of the God of Sarah, of Hagar, of
Abraham,
the blessing of the Son born of the woman Mary,
the blessing of the Holy Spirit who broods over us
as a mother over her children,
be with you now and for ever.

7.4

May God the creator grant you grace and strength,
Christ the friend, take your hand,
May the Spirit encourage and empower you
in the roads ahead,
and may you too know peace.

7.5

May God the creator bless you and keep you;
may the beloved companion look into your eyes
and have mercy upon you;
may the eternal Spirit's countenance
be turned to you and give you peace;
may the Three in One bless you.

7.6

May the road rise to meet you,
May the wind be always at your back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face,
the rain fall soft upon your field.
Until we meet again,
may you be held in the palm of God's hand.

7.7

Deep peace of the running wave to you,
deep peace of the flowing air,
deep peace of the quiet earth
deep peace of the shining stars,

deep peace of the gentle night,
moon and stars pour their healing light on you,
deep peace of Christ the light of the world to you.
The deep peace of the Christ of God to you.

7.8

Hear the words of Jesus Christ:
Peace is my parting gift to you;
my own peace, such as the world cannot give.
Set your troubled hearts at rest
and no longer be afraid.

7.9

Let us go on our way in the strength of God
who goes with us and before us,
our confidence, our courage and our hope
now and for ever.

7.10

In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.
We are not alone.
Thanks be to God.

7.11

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with us all.
Amen.

7.12

AROHANUI BLESSING

May the mystery of God enfold us,
may the wisdom of God uphold us,
may the fragrance of God be around us,
may the brightness of God surround us,
may the wonder of God renew us,
may the loving of God flow through us,
may the peace of God deeply move us,
may the moving of God bring us peace.

(Joy Cowley)

7.13

May the blue sky and green grass
of God's creation greet you.

May friend and stranger
welcome you with a smile.

And may those close to you
bless you with their love.

Amen.

7.14

May the vitality of the fern shoot
be in your words and ways.

May the purity of the mountain stream
renew your spirit from within.

And may the rich quiet of the bush
carry you through the busy day.

Amen.

7.15

May an open sky greet your uplifted face.

May the pool's stillness
fill your mind and soul.

And may you know the presence of Christ
throughout the journey of your life.

Amen.

APPENDICES

Appendix A1

Hymns

Note: hymns, like readings, need to be chosen with sensitivity and care. The following list includes hymns old and recent, from a wide variety of sources and has not been screened for theological or inclusive language.

Alleluia Aotearoa

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 45 | Give thanks for life |
| 57 | Great ring of light |
| 91 | Lord of all love |
| 113 | Our life has its seasons |
| 151 | When human voices cannot sing |
| 156 | Where the road runs out and the signposts end |

Every Day in Your Spirit (*Shirley Murray*)

- | | |
|----|-----------------------------|
| 18 | Let my spirit always sing |
| 27 | Whatever this life has been |

Sing Alleluia

- | | |
|----|--|
| 33 | Father of mercy, God of consolation |
| 64 | Lord of the living, in your name assembled |

Singing the Circle Book 1 (*Bill Wallace*)

p40 There shall be life and laughter

Singing the Circle Book 2 (*Bill Wallace*)

(For a child)

p42 Through the rivers of our tears

Something to Sing About (*Bill Wallace*)

p29 May our friend

With One Methodist

Voice Hymn Book

502 948 Abide with me

3 28 All creatures of our God and King

376 950 Blest are the pure in heart

282 207 Christ the Lord is risen again **(cont)**

A1 (cont)

With One Methodist

Voice Hymn Book

384	832	For all the saints
77	35	For the beauty of the earth
662	-	God of ages, by whose hand
478	615	Guide me, O thou great Jehovah
158	99	How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
44	428	I'll praise my maker
80	34	Immortal, invisible
504	528	In heavenly love abiding
139	110	Jesu, lover of my soul
126	108	Jesus, the very thought of thee
294	216	Jesus lives! Your terrors now
497	353	Just as I am
492	611	Lead us, heavenly Father
370	-	Let saints on earth in concert sing
466	647	Lord, it belongs not to my care
657	-	Lord of the living, in your name assembled
148	431	Love divine, all loves excelling
679	-	Ma te marie
14	10	Now thank we all our God
46	878	O God, our help in ages past
628	-	O Lord my God (<i>How great thou art</i>)

655	-	Piko nei te matenga
68	12	Praise, my soul, the King of heaven
157	498	Rock of ages
385	701	The church's one foundation
388	667	The day <i>thou gavest/ you gave us</i>
81	76	The king of love my shepherd is
16	50	The Lord's my shepherd
667	-	The love of God is broad like beach and mt
287	215	The strife is o'er, the battle done
303	213	Thine be the glory
30	427	Through all the changing scenes of life
648	-	Whakarongo ki te kupu
39	413	When all your mercies
672	-	Where the road runs out
467	620	Who would true valour see

Appendix A2:

Information regarding funerals in different cultural contexts

A2.1 Maori

Tangihanga (Grieving for the dead)

(Tribal variations to most of these practices will apply)

- Whanau gather at bedside of dying
- Prayers (*karakia*)
- Announcement of death
 - weeping (*tangi*)
 - farewell speeches
- Committal (*tuku*)
- Whanau decision about where body is to lie
- Iwi gather to prepare marae
 - food
 - bedding
 - photos

- Arrival of body at marae
 - welcome call (*karanga*)
 - placing of coffin at centre of rear wall
 - mourners (*puna roimata*- springs of tears) on either side of coffin
 - prayers (*karakia*)
 - speeches (farewell)
 - shedding tears (*tangi*)

- Arrival of visitors
 - call as they enter house wearing bands of leaves around the head (*parekawakawa*)
 - stand in front of coffin weeping
 - move forward, place leaves at foot of coffin
 - press noses (*hongiri*) with dead
 - move to greet and embrace local people

A2.1 (cont)

- sit to be welcomed
 - speeches of welcome
 - speeches of reply
 - call to dining room to eat, thus making way for new visitors
-
- First night (people's night)
 - karakia

-speeches (*whawhai tupapaku*) claiming the body to be returned to another marae or buried in a particular place

-activities often continue throughout the night

- Second night (whanau night)

-karakia

-speeches (family, personal reminiscences)

- Next day

-final service

-burial

-blessing house (*takahi whare*)

-feast (*hakari*)

- Costs

-people leave contributions (*koha*) which help towards the costs of the tangihanga

(Muru Walters)

A2.2 Samoan

Samoan Cultural Tradition

At the moment of death

When a person dies, the minister is informed immediately. The family expects the minister to be with them as soon as possible either in hospital or at the deceased's home depending on where the family members are gathered at the time.

The minister's presence brings warmth and comfort to the grieving family. The minister is always expected to say a word of comfort and prayer before he or she leaves the family.

The minister is expected by the deceased's family to console them by leading evening devotions every night, i.e. from the night the person died until the night before the family service. The evening devotions are normally done at the deceased's home or wherever the family is gathered. The minister is also expected to have tea together with the family afterwards.

The date of the service is for the family to decide, but that depends on the availability of the minister and the church building.

The minister needs to be informed of the arrangements of all services such as family and funeral services.

Family service

The family service is usually on the night before the funeral service. This service is particularly for family to pay tribute to the qualities of their deceased person.

Included in the service are choirs from various congregations and their ministers. The leading of the service is usually done by the minister of the deceased person, while other parts of the service such as prayer,

A2.2(cont)

Bible readings and sermon are given to other ministers present on that night.

The planning of this service is the task of the deceased person's minister.

After the service, everyone is invited to the cup of tea prepared by either the deceased's family or the local church's women's fellowship.

After the cup of tea, the gifts (*meaalofa*) from various choirs are then presented to the family, and in response the family presents their gifts for the choirs.

Usually on the same night the minister of the deceased also presents her/his gift to the family. The gift consists of fine mats and money.

Funeral service ceremony

It is usually between 10 and 11 o'clock in the morning of the day after the family service that the funeral service takes place.

There would be more than the grieving family's minister/priest to take part in the service. All ministers/priests present that day would also be asked to take part. The grieving family's minister/priest is expected to preach this day. There would not be many choirs like the night before, but the family church choir would lead the singing. On this day the minister/priest would give a short testimony on the deceased's life in the church when they were alive, whether they were active members etc.

While the service is in progress, the grieving family members (except the matais who would be in the service) would be preparing the feast for all those attending the service.

A2.2 (cont)

After the service, those in church would leave for the cemetery (it is most unusual for Samoans to be cremated).

Following the burial service, everyone would be invited back to the church hall or wherever for lunch.

Returning to the hall, all ministers and their wives would be seated at the front tables. After lunch, the grieving family would present gifts of fine mats, money, pigs, kegs of meat, cattle to ministers, especially their own minister/priest who would be given the biggest and best mats of all. Also to everyone and congregations who prior to the family service brought to the grieving family fine mats and money for presents.

After this presentation then a preliminary debate by orators takes place as to who would say thank you to the grieving family on everyone's behalf. After this speech the family respond, then the minister/priest would finish the day off by saying a prayer.

This ceremony is expected to last for the whole day, or perhaps from 10am- 4pm.

(Suiva'aia Te'o & Iakopo Fa'afuata)

A2.3 Tongan

Tongan customs relating to death and dying

Introduction

Most Tongans have adopted Western customs. But it is important that ministers or priests should understand the general background of Tongan beliefs.

A Tongan may look on family as an important part of himself or herself. Ministers or priests should appreciate this.

Before death

Professional care-givers like ministers, priests, doctors and nurses need to realise that it is most important that the family comes to visit a Tongan who is dying. Ministers, priests and hospital staff can show they appreciate this by asking the patient whether relatives have been to visit.

It is important that close relatives know when a Tongan is dying. Usually, these relatives will tell other family members.

When asked, a minister or priest would come and pray for a dying Tongan person regardless of whether they are a church member or not.

Most Tongans in New Zealand would be people who have been exposed to Western customs. But occasionally there might be an older person still influenced by Tongan customs who, for example, might try to leave hospital for one reason or another. It is important that professional care-givers gain the confidence of their Tongan clients.

Just after death

Most Tongans regard death as God's will and feel that people should be left in peace. A post-mortem, for example, is generally regarded as an indignity and would be very rare for a Tongan except in a case of murder or where suspicion surrounded the death. But as many become more

A2.3 (cont)

Westernised, they would be able to discuss with doctors post-mortem procedures for, for example, essential research.

Both the traditional methods of preparing the body for burial and the climate in Tonga dictate health regulations requiring that a burial take place very soon after death. But in New Zealand, relatives might want to keep the body in the house as long as possible. It would be usual to have continual prayers around the body before burial.

For church-goers, the church would provide a service in the home of the deceased's family every night until the funeral (sometimes up to a week).

Tongans would want enough time for friends and relatives to come and see the dead person, to pay their last respects. It is important for relatives to come - even distant relatives and friends of relatives.

If some relatives live a long way away, the family might want the body kept at the undertakers for embalming. They would want to allow time for distant relatives to travel.

Funeral

The head of the family would arrange the funeral. This might be the eldest son, or the father or an "elder" of the deceased's family.

It would be rare for a Tongan to have a cremation rather than a burial, even in New Zealand. For church-goers, the funeral would include prayers at home, at church and at the burial place.

As a way of paying respect, the immediate family is expected to do nothing for up to five days at the time of the funeral. For nobles this period is up to one month and for royalty, up to one year.

(Fr Okusi Falemaka, adapted by Kepu Moa)

A2.4 Fijian/Rotuman

Cultural Tradition and Customs Relating to Death

Introduction

Generally speaking, death is something revered and treated with a lot of dignity and respect by our people no matter what the status of the deceased - in the village or community. Of course, with a chief or a person who has a title, more is done but death always holds a significant place in the cultural and traditional life of our people. Some of our customs and traditions relating to death and funeral arrangements are similar in our Pacific Island groups. It is important for those who are involved in these ceremonies to know the correct protocol in carrying out these responsibilities.

At the moment of death

The minister or the lay-pastor is immediately informed of the death. If the death occurred at the hospital, the minister (or lay-pastor) should go if at all possible to see whoever is there and to deliver words of comfort and reassurance and offer prayers.

However, if this was not possible at that time, efforts should be made to go to the home where the condolence gathering is happening. This is a very important time so the minister and the lay-pastor should endeavour to do this because the family will normally wait for this to happen before any other arrangements are made. The role the minister plays as the spiritual leader of the people is taken very seriously by the people. The minister's immediate presence among the family brings comfort and consolation to the bereaved.

The family will prepare the home for the condolence gathering and other family members, relatives and friends will be informed about the death.

The family and the minister will discuss the funeral date and arrangements with the undertaker and this will be relayed to

A2.3 (cont)

the people as they come to pay their last respects to the deceased.

Family service

The family service is conducted on the first night the body is brought from the hospital to the family home or the undertaker's chapel. This is conducted by the minister helped by a lay-pastor. On the final night before the funeral, the last family service is conducted, preceded by the singing of special hymns and prayers. Final words of condolence are spoken by some of the elders of the community and usually one from the family or a close relative. The minister shares a word of comfort and concludes the services.

The funeral service

This is conducted in the church or the funeral parlour chapel. Usually the minister and the family will work on the order of service and the choir will be asked to sing during the service. The family expects the minister to preach the sermon. Giving a eulogy is a western style. As for us, a sermon - related to death and promises for life beyond the

grave is actually what the grieving family and relatives and friends expect to hear.

Funeral feast

This is a very important part of our custom because it is the way the family expresses their appreciation and gratitude to all friends and relatives who come to share in their grief and loss. Gifts of food and mats are shared and all ministers, lay-pastors and the chiefs have a specially prepared feast for them. Also a table is prepared for all the other people so that everyone who comes to the funeral will eat before they return to their homes. The one last responsibility of the minister is to offer the thanksgiving and comforting prayer for the occasion and to bless the feast that is prepared before everybody enjoys the meal.

A2.4 (cont)

It is also our custom to present mats and food to the minister. It is very important for the minister to accept this gift. Whatever the minister does with the food and mats afterwards is entirely up to him/her, but it is impolite to refuse these gifts.

The Fourth Night ceremony

In the Fijian custom, there is another feast prepared and all close relatives and friends come back to the home of the deceased for the final ceremony. With the Rotumans this feast is prepared after the fifth night. If possible, the minister should make an effort to be there to bring words of comfort and say the final prayers with the family. These are

ways of reassurance and support to the bereaved family. This carries significant importance to the family when the minister is able to do this.

The end of the mourning period

The final task that the minister will be asked to participate in is the unveiling of the head-stone. The family will get a proper and good head-stone made. The unveiling of this signifies the end of the mourning period. A feast will be prepared and a short service will be conducted by the minister to bless the occasion and conclude the mourning period so that the family and loved ones of the deceased will now go back to their normal life again.

(Jione Langi)

Appendix A3

Acknowledgements

The Faith and Order Committee wishes to thank those who have contributed original material to *Funeral Resources*.

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Given the vast quantity of liturgical resources now available, it is almost inevitable that the Committee has used some material without realising its source. The Committee asks for understanding if any recognise some part of this work as springing from their own and it is not formally acknowledged.

In future editions we would like to correct omissions in our acknowledgements if we are informed of the same.

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Appendix A4

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