



# A home memorial service

## RELIGIOUS VERSION

### WELCOME

Hello, my name is Alicen Dines, from Beautiful Day Celebrant. I am an independent funeral celebrant based in West Dorset.

### THINKING DIFFERENTLY ABOUT FUNERALS

The COVID 19 / Corona virus pandemic has brought a sudden change to everything we do, including funerals. We are facing the sad fact that we can't organise or attend a funeral in the normal way. In some cases, we might not be able to see or say goodbye to a relative or friend. This can be really difficult to cope with, on top of the usual feelings of grief.

In this situation, we need to find new ways to say goodbye to our loved ones. All we can do is adopt a different way of thinking - that *our best is good enough*.

There are still many ways we can pay our last respects. It's more helpful perhaps to focus on these things, rather than the restrictions.

### A HOME MEMORIAL SERVICE

This is a very simple memorial service, designed for people to use at home. It gives you a way to say goodbye and to express some of your thoughts and emotions about your relative or friend who has died. I hope it will help you to grieve and feel peaceful about their passing.

It will be a new experience and you might find it a bit strange at first, but I hope you will be able to make it comforting and comfortable for yourself.

The words I have used are typical of my funeral services, which I try to make as personal as possible to the one who has died. For this memorial, I have offered some religious words from the Christian faith. If you are more comfortable with no religious content, I have also produced a secular version.

Please feel free to share this with friends, family and anyone you think might need it.

## PERSONALISING YOUR MEMORIAL

It's really worth taking time to plan your memorial. This makes it more personal to your loved one and more meaningful for you. I've made suggestions about things you could add, where you see spaces with dotted lines. There are also alternatives offered that you can add to, or delete.

### WHEN?

If you know the date of the cremation/burial, you can hold your memorial at that time. You might connect with family and friends to hold the service 'together' wherever you are. It might help with feelings of isolation. Alternatively, if you prefer, just make it private, just for you.

If you don't know the exact day, it doesn't matter. I truly believe we can honour and pray for those who have died at any time - days, months or even years after their passing. What matters is your sincere, loving intention, rather than the exact timing.

### WHERE?

Find a favourite, quiet spot in your house or garden. Make it somewhere warm, comfortable and peaceful. Turn off your phone, so you don't get disturbed.

### HOW?

You might set up a little shrine or memorial table, with flowers, a candle, a cross, and a photo of the person who has died. You could hold an item of clothing, a soft toy, or another favourite possession of theirs. You might create a slideshow of images from your pc or phone, or simply hold a favourite image of them in your mind.

Children often have ideas about how they want to remember their relative, especially a beloved grandparent. They may want to draw a picture, write a letter, bake a cake or create a memory book. Encouraging them to be involved will help them to make sense of their sad feelings, and understand that death is difficult to cope with, but also that it's natural.

You could put on some of their favourite music - or music that helps you, or reminds you of them. All songs, hymns, soundtracks, including relaxing nature ones are available on YouTube. For the end of the service, I suggest you choose a final song that brings back a happy memory. This will help you return to your day in a relaxed frame of mind.

Remember: this memorial service is all about your relationship with your loved one. The only thing that matters is what feels right for you.

# THE SERVICE (for one person)

*You can either read these words silently to yourself, or say them out loud - whatever feels right.*

Remembering ..... [name]

I am so sad that I can't be with you to say goodbye.  
I wish I could be with the others who loved you - your family and friends.

But I know you would understand why we can't.  
You would think it's for the best; you would want us to stay well and be safe.  
You wouldn't want us to feel upset.

You would probably say:

" .....  
..... "

This is my goodbye to you now, right here.  
This is the perfect place.  
It's a special time, just for you and me.

## Thank You

I want to thank you for being such a great .....  
[relationship]

Thank you for the special person you were and always will be to me.  
Thank you for everything you've given and shared with me.  
Thank you for the fun, the happy times, the adventures we had together and all the  
jokes.

I will never forget these moments:

.....  
.....

Thank you for being there when I needed you, especially when

.....  
For giving me help and advice about  
.....

For your practical support, and for the things you taught me.

When I think about the hard times, any suffering you went through, I feel so sad  
- although I know nothing more could be done & everyone did their best.

I want to let go of those dark thoughts  
Because you need to travel lightly, with no burdens.  
I let them go, so you can be free

All you need for your journey is my love and my blessing.  
So I give you those.

I'm saying goodbye as we always did ..... with a kiss/ a hug / a handshake.

I'll say ..... "eg see you soon / take care / I love you"

I'll wave you off with a smile, just like we used to.

I ask God to bless you and protect you on your journey home.  
I bless you, and I feel like you are giving me your blessing too.

I think of those who loved you too -  
Your family and friends  
I wish for their peace.  
I imagine my blessing, joining theirs  
Making a beautiful golden circle of light  
An unbreakable protection around you

As I think about this golden circle, it becomes brighter and stronger in my mind  
Its power is unlimited.  
It will unite us forever.

## Farewell

"Jesus said: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Therefore, do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

John 14:27

"In my Father's house there are many rooms. I will come back and take you to be with me, so that where I am, you will be also"

John 14:2

I place you now into the safe, loving hands of God, into the peace of heaven.  
I imagine you now in a place of pure peace and light

Where there is no suffering and no stress.

Thank you  
I love you  
Rest in peace  
Today and forever.

I will miss you  
I will never forget you  
Your spirit will always be with me.  
One day, I hope we'll meet again.

## 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  
Forever and ever  
Amen.

## Blessing

May the road rise up to meet you.  
May the wind be always at your back.  
May the sun shine warm upon your face;  
the rains fall soft upon your fields  
and until we meet again  
May Love be your guide on your journey home

## A Prayer For Myself

May I always see the light ahead when the road I walk is dark.  
May I always hear, even in times of sorrow, the gentle singing of the lark.  
When Life is hard, may disappointment never turn my heart to stone,  
May I always remember when the shadows fall, I do not walk alone.

## Closing Music

Play your final song and reflect on the special, good memories that it brings.

# THE SERVICE (for a small group)

Remembering ..... [name]

We are so sad that we can't be with you to say goodbye.  
We wish we could be with the others who loved you - your family and friends.

But we know you would understand why we can't.  
You would think it's for the best; you would want us to stay well and be safe.  
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You would probably say:

"....."  
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## Closing Music

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Take care and stay well.  
Alicen x

This Home Memorial Service is absolutely free. If you'd like to help someone else, please share it and if you can, please make a donation to the NHS at <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/home-memorial-service>

