

FUNERAL AND RELATED SERVICES

from the Methodist Worship Book

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FUNERAL AND RELATED SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

Christians believe that the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ give them hope and cause for thanksgiving in the face of death. In this faith, we entrust those who have died to the infinite mercy and love of God. Rites used on these occasions need to reflect local traditions and culture. These services provide a broad range of material for use when a person has died.

A Vigil is an ancient Christian rite, which is an important part of the funeral customs in some places.

Two patterns of funeral service are provided. The first begins in a church, a crematorium, or a cemetery chapel, and ends with the Committal. The second service begins with a Service of Committal at a crematorium or cemetery, followed by a Service of Thanksgiving in church. While the second part of this service may follow on the same day, it is possible for it to follow at a later date.

A funeral service for a child and another for a stillborn child are provided. The latter may also be used, with adaptation, after a miscarriage or a neo-natal death.

The service for the burial of ashes provides for the final disposal of cremated remains.

PRAYERS IN THE HOME OR HOSPITAL AFTER A DEATH

NOTE

These prayers are suitable for use by the minister or a pastoral visitor on the first pastoral visit to the home or hospital after a death.

- 1 In this moment of sorrow the Lord is with us. He consoles us with these words: 'Blessèd are those who mourn; they shall be comforted.'

Let us be silent and make our own prayers.

Silence

- 2 This or some other passage of scripture may be read:

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

'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.'

John 14:1-6, 27

3 The Lord's Prayer

EITHER

We say together the prayer
that Jesus gave us:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily
bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who
sin against us.
Save us from the time of
trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom,
the power and the glory
are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

OR

As our Saviour taught his
disciples, we pray:

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

- 4 One or more of the following prayers may be said, and the sign of the cross may be made on the forehead of the person who has died.

A Father of mercies and God of all comfort,
you embrace us with the arms of love.
In the shadow of death your light shines on us.
We remember before you our *sister/brother N*.
May we, with *her/him*,
inherit your eternal kingdom,
and rest with you in light and peace.
This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

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B Give rest, O Christ,
to your servant with your saints,
where sorrow and pain are no more,
neither sighing, but life everlasting.

You only are immortal,
the creator and maker of all;
and we are mortal, formed of the earth,
and to earth we shall return.
For so did you ordain when you created us, saying,
'You are dust and to dust you shall return.'

All of us go down to the dust;
yet even at the grave we make our song:
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Give rest, O Christ,
to your servant with your saints,
where sorrow and pain are no more,
neither sighing, but life everlasting. **Amen.**

C God of all grace,
we pray for one another,
especially for . . .
In our loss and sorrow
be our refuge and strength,
and enfold us in your everlasting arms;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

5 The peace of God
which passes all understanding,
keep *your/our* hearts and minds
in the knowledge and love of God
and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord;
and the blessing of God,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
remain with *you/us* always. **Amen.**

AN OFFICE OF COMMENDATION

NOTE

This Office may be used on hearing of a death or on the day of the funeral by those not able to be present. It is particularly appropriate when a person dies abroad and the immediate family is not able to attend the funeral service.

-
- 1 Christ your light shall rise in the darkness,
and your healing shall spring up like the dawn.

The light and peace of Jesus Christ be with you.
And also with you.

The trumpet shall sound and the dead will rise immortal,
and the mortal will be clothed with immortality.

- 2 One of the following, or another prayer may be said:

A God of love,
who brought us to birth
and in whose arms we die:
in our grief and shock,
contain and comfort us,
give us hope in our confusion
and embrace us with your love;
through Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

B God of mercy,
from whom we come,
by whose grace we live,
in whose love we are held at the last:
surround us with your presence
that in our grief and loss
we may find assurance and hope
in the One who died for us and rose again,
even your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

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3 Hymn

4 One of the following, or some other Psalm may be read:
Psalms 23, 42, 43, 121, 130 or 139.

5 One of the following, or some other passage of scripture may be read:

John 11:21-27

John 14:1-3

Romans 6:3-9

Philippians 1:20-26

6 Memories of the person who has died may be shared.

7 Gracious God,
we praise you for creating us in your own image,
and calling each one of us
to love and serve you.
We thank you for *N*
and for all we treasure
and remember with gratitude about *her/him*.
As memories fill our minds,
assure us of your forgiveness
for things said or done which we regret;
for things we longed to do, but never did;
longed to say, but never said.
Give us the strength and courage
to leave *N* in your keeping,
trusting in your everlasting goodness;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

8 God of mercy,
as *N* has journeyed beyond our sight,
we commend *her/him* to you.

Silence

God of all consolation,
in your unending love and mercy
you turn the darkness of death
into the dawn of new life.
Your Son, by dying for us, conquered death
and, by rising again, restored to us eternal life.

May we go forward eagerly to meet our Redeemer
and, after our life on earth,
be reunited with all our sisters and brothers
in that place where every tear is wiped away
and all things are made new;
through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

9 The Lord's Prayer

EITHER

We say together the prayer
that Jesus gave us:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily
bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who
sin against us.
Save us from the time of
trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom,
the power and the glory
are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

OR

As our Saviour taught his
disciples, we pray:

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

10 EITHER

A Magnified and sanctified
be the great name of God
in the world created according to his will.
May God establish his kingdom
in your life and in your days,
and in the lifetime of all his people:
quickly and speedily may it come.
Let us say, Amen:

Amen. Blessèd be God for ever!

Blessèd, praised and glorified,
exalted, extolled and honoured,
magnified and lauded
be the name of the Holy One.
Let us say, Amen:

Amen. Blessèd be God for ever!

Though God be high above all the blessings
and hymns, praises and consolations,
which are uttered in the world,
let us say, Amen:

Amen. Blessèd be God for ever!

May there be abundant peace from heaven
and life for us and for all people.
Let us say, Amen:

Amen. Blessèd be God for ever!

OR

B Now to the one who is able to keep us from falling
and set us in the presence of the divine glory,
to the only God our Saviour
be glory and majesty, dominion and praise,
now and for ever. **Amen.**

11

The peace of God
which passes all understanding,
keep *your/our* hearts and minds
in the knowledge and love of God
and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord;
and the blessing of God,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
remain with *you/us* always. **Amen.**

A VIGIL

NOTE

This service may take place on the evening before the funeral service, in the home, in a church or in a chapel of rest, whether or not the body is present.

GREETING

- 1 The God of hope grant us peace,
 now and in all our days. **Amen.**
- Sisters and brothers in Christ,
 at this time of death and parting
 we are confident that God knows us and is with us.
 Let us pray in silence
 as we remember our *sister/brother N*.

Silence

- 2 Gracious God,
 your love holds in its embrace
 your children in this world and the next.
 Neither life nor death
 can separate those who trust in you.
 Unite us to yourself,
 together with our *sister/brother N*,
 that in our fellowship with you
 we may be one with those we love.
 Give us courage, constancy and hope,
 through Jesus Christ,
 who died and rose again for us. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

- 3 One or more of the following passages of scripture may be read, followed by a time of silence:

The Lord is my light and my salvation:
whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the stronghold of my life;
of whom shall I be afraid?

One thing I asked of the Lord,
that will I seek after:
to live in the house of the Lord
all the days of my life,
to behold the beauty of the Lord,
and to inquire in his temple.

For he will hide me in his shelter
in the day of trouble;
he will conceal me under the cover of his tent;
he will set me high on a rock.

Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud,
be gracious to me and answer me!
'Come,' my heart says, 'seek his face!'
Your face, Lord, do I seek.
Do not hide your face from me.

Do not turn your servant away in anger,
you who have been my help.
Do not cast me off, do not forsake me,
O God of my salvation!
If my father and mother forsake me,
the Lord will take me up.

I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord
in the land of the living.
Wait for the Lord;
be strong, and let your heart take courage;
wait for the Lord!

Psalm 27:1, 4-5, 7-10, 13-14

We know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord – for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. For all of us must appear before the judgement seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.

2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-10

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise again.' Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, '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.'

John 11:17-26a

PRAYERS

4

Let us pray.

Crucified Saviour,
save us from the fear of death:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Risen Lord,
raise us to glory:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Gentle Shepherd,
bring rest to our souls:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lamb of God,
grant us with *N* your peace for ever:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Son of Mary,
bless those who mourn:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

5 The Lord's Prayer

EITHER

We say together the prayer
that Jesus gave us:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily
bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who
sin against us.
Save us from the time of
trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom,
the power and the glory
are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

OR

As our Saviour taught his
disciples, we pray:

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

6 One of the following prayers, or another prayer:

A

**Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me.**

**Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger. Amen.**

B Lord Jesus Christ,
you willingly gave yourself up to death
so that we might be saved
and pass from death to life.
We ask that you will receive *N*
into the arms of your mercy
and comfort *her/his* family in their grief.
Grant to *N* a place of light and joy in your presence for ever.
In Christ's name we ask it. **Amen.**

7 EITHER

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

OR

B The peace of God
which passes all understanding,
keep *your/our* hearts and minds
in the knowledge and love of God
and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord;
and the blessing of God,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
remain with *you/us* always. **Amen.**

A FUNERAL SERVICE IN A CHURCH, A CREMATORIUM, OR A CEMETERY, LEADING TO COMMITTAL

GATHERING

- 1 Either at the entrance to the church, crematorium or cemetery chapel, or at the graveside, the minister says:

'I am the resurrection and the life,' says the Lord. 'Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.'

- 2 The minister, going before the body, may say one or more of the following sentences, the people standing:

Blessèd are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning.

In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

- 3 Hymn

- 4 Let us pray.

EITHER

- A God our comforter,
you are our refuge and strength,
a helper close at hand in times of trouble.
Help us so to hear your word
that our fear may be dispelled,

our loneliness eased,
and our hope reawakened.
May your Holy Spirit lift us above our sorrow,
to the peace and light of your constant love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

OR

B Loving God, who brought us to birth,
help us to live as those who are prepared for death.
Enable us to hear your message
of death overcome and life renewed,
that as we face the mystery of death
we may see the light of eternity;
through Christ our risen Saviour. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

5 The minister may say:

We meet in this solemn moment to worship God;
to give thanks for the life of our *sister/brother N*;
to commend *her/him* to God's loving and faithful care;
and to pray for all who mourn.

In the presence of death,
Christ offers us sure ground
for hope and confidence and even for joy,
because he shared our human life and death,
was raised again triumphant
and lives for evermore.
In him his people find eternal life.

Let us then hear the words of Holy Scripture,
that from them we may draw comfort and strength.

6 One of the following Psalms, or another Psalm:

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.
Lord, hear my voice!
Let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my supplications!

If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,
Lord, who could stand?
But there is forgiveness with you,
so that you may be revered.

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,
and in his word I hope;
my soul waits for the Lord
more than those who watch for the morning,
more than those who watch for the morning.

O Israel, hope in the Lord!
For with the Lord there is steadfast love,
and with him is great power to redeem.
It is he who will redeem Israel from all its iniquities.

Psalm 130

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff —
they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long.

Psalm 23

The Lord is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
He will not always accuse,
nor will he keep his anger for ever.
He does not deal with us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our iniquities.
For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love towards those who fear him;
as far as the east is from the west,
so far he removes our transgressions from us.
As a father has compassion for his children,
so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him.
For he knows how we were made;
he remembers that we are dust.

As for mortals, their days are like grass;
they flourish like a flower of the field;
for the wind passes over it, and it is gone,
and its place knows it no more.
But the steadfast love of the Lord
is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him,
and his righteousness to children's children,
to those who keep his covenant
and remember to do his commandments.

Psalm 103:8-18

7 One of the following, or some other passage from the Gospels, is read:

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

'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.'

John 14:1-6, 27

Jesus said: 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away; for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day.'

John 6:35-40

8 One or more of the following passages of scripture, or of the passages listed on pages 501-502, may also be read:

I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

1 Corinthians 15:3-5

Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.

Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power.

1 Corinthians 15:20-24

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer trials, so that the genuineness of your faith – being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire – may be found to result in praise and glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed. Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

1 Peter 1:3-9

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

If God is for us, who is against us? 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? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 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. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 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 8:28, 31b-35, 37-39

9 Sermon

RESPONSE

10 Let us pray.

Glory and thanks be given to you,
almighty God, our Father,
because in your great love for the world
you gave your Son to be our Saviour.
He lived our life, bore our griefs,
and died our death upon the Cross.

We thank you that you have brought him back from death
with power and great glory,
that he has conquered sin and death,
and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.

We praise you for the great company of the faithful,
whom Christ has brought through death to behold your
face in glory,
who join with us in worship, prayer and service.

For your full, perfect and sufficient gift of life in Christ,
all praise and thanks be given to you
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Eternal God, in your wisdom and grace
you have given us joy
through the lives of your departed servants.
We thank you for *N*
and for our memories of *her/him*.

We praise you for your goodness and mercy
that followed *her/him* all the days of *her/his* life,
and for *her/his* faithfulness
in the tasks to which you called *her/him*.

We thank you that for *N*
the tribulations of this world are over and death is past,
and we pray that you will bring us with *her/him*
to the joy of your perfect kingdom;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Almighty God,
Father of all mercies and giver of all comfort,
deal graciously with those who mourn,
that they may cast every care on you
and know the consolation of your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

COMMENDATION

12 All stand.

Let us commend *N* to God.

EITHER

A Into your keeping, O merciful God,
we commend your servant *N*.
Receive *her/him* into the arms of your mercy,
into the joy of everlasting peace,
and into the glorious company of the saints in light;
through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

OR

B Loving God,
we commend *N* to your perfect mercy and wisdom,
for in you alone we put our trust. **Amen.**

13 The Lord's Prayer

EITHER

We say together the prayer
that Jesus gave us:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily
bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who
sin against us.
Save us from the time of
trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom,
the power and the glory
are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

OR

As our Saviour taught his
disciples, we pray:

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

14 When the whole service takes place in a crematorium chapel or at the graveside, the service continues from no. 17.

15 Otherwise the minister says:

The peace of God
which passes all understanding,
keep *your/our* hearts and minds
in the knowledge and love of God
and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord;
and the blessing of God,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
remain with *you/us* always. **Amen.**

16 The minister, going before the body into the crematorium, or to the grave, may say one or more of these sentences:

As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear him. For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust.

Blessèd be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction.

To this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

COMMITTAL

17 All stand. The minister says:

EITHER

A Since the earthly life of *N* has come to an end,
we commit *her/his* body
to be cremated/to the elements/to be buried,
earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
in sure and certain hope
of the resurrection to eternal life
through our Lord Jesus Christ;
to whom be glory for ever and ever. **Amen.**

OR

B God alone is holy and just and good.
In this certainty we have commended *N* to God.
We therefore commit *her/his* body
to be cremated/to the elements/to be buried,
earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
trusting in the infinite mercy of God,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

18 The minister may say:

Blessèd are the dead who die in the Lord;
for they rest from their labours.

PRAYERS

One or more of the following prayers may be said:

A Father of all,
we pray for those whom we love, but see no longer. Grant
them your peace;
let light perpetual shine upon them;
and in your loving wisdom and almighty power
work in them the good purpose of your perfect will;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

B Father of mercies and God of all comfort,
you have made nothing in vain
and you love all that you have made.
Look in tender mercy on your bereaved servants,
and help them by your grace
to find in you their refuge and their strength. **Amen.**

C Grant us, O God,
in all our duties your help,
in all our perplexities your guidance,
in all our dangers your protection,
and in all our sorrows your peace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

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

E Bring us, Lord our God,
at our last awakening,
into the house and gate of heaven,
to enter into that gate,
and dwell in that house,
where there shall be
no darkness nor dazzling,
but one equal light;
no noise nor silence,
but one equal music;
no fears nor hopes,
but one equal possession;
no ends nor beginnings,
but one equal eternity;
in the habitation of your glory and dominion,
world without end. **Amen.**

20 The minister says:

EITHER

A God grant to the living, grace;
to the departed, rest;
to the world, peace;
and to us and all the faithful, life everlasting;
and the blessing of God,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be with *you/us* now and for ever. **Amen.**

OR

B May God in his infinite love and mercy
bring the whole Church,
living and departed in the Lord Jesus,
to a joyful resurrection
and the fulfilment of his eternal kingdom;
and the blessing of God,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
remain with *you/us* always. **Amen.**

A FUNERAL AT A CREMATORIUM OR CEMETERY, FOLLOWED BY A SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING IN CHURCH

AT THE CREMATORIUM OR CEMETERY

GATHERING

- 1 Either at the entrance to the crematorium or cemetery chapel or at the graveside the minister may say:

‘I am the resurrection and the life,’ says the Lord. ‘Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.’

- 2 The minister, going before the body, may say one or more of the following sentences, the people standing:

Blessèd are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning.

Jesus says: ‘I am the Good Shepherd. . . . My sheep hear my voice and I know them . . . and no one shall snatch them out of my hand.’

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Our Saviour Christ Jesus abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

- 3 Hymn

4 Let us pray.

EITHER

A Heavenly Father,
whose love is everlasting,
you can turn the shadow of death
into the light of morning.
Speak to us your gracious promise,
that we may be lifted above our distress
into the light and peace of your presence;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

OR

B Loving God, who brought us to birth,
help us to live as those who are prepared for death.
Enable us to hear your message
of death overcome and life renewed,
that as we face the mystery of death
we may see the light of eternity;
through Christ our risen Saviour. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

5 The minister says:

We meet in this solemn moment to worship God;
to give thanks for the life of our *sister/brother N*;
to commend *her/him* to God's loving and faithful care;
and to pray for those who mourn.

In the presence of death
Christ offers us sure ground
for hope and confidence and even for joy,
because he shared our human life and death,
was raised again triumphant
and lives for evermore.
In him his people find eternal life.

Let us then hear the words of Holy Scripture,
that from them we may draw comfort and strength.

6 **One of the following Psalms, or another Psalm:**

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.

Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive

to the voice of my supplications!

If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,

Lord, who could stand?

But there is forgiveness with you,

so that you may be revered.

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,

and in his word I hope;

my soul waits for the Lord

more than those who watch for the morning,

more than those who watch for the morning.

O Israel, hope in the Lord!

For with the Lord there is steadfast love,

and with him is great power to redeem.

It is he who will redeem Israel

from all its iniquities.

Psalm 130

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures;

he leads me beside still waters;

he restores my soul.

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

Even though I walk through the darkest valley,

I fear no evil;

for you are with me;

your rod and your staff –

they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long.

Psalm 23

The Lord is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
He will not always accuse,
nor will he keep his anger for ever.
He does not deal with us according to our sins,
nor repay us according to our iniquities.
For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love towards those who fear him;
as far as the east is from the west,
so far he removes our transgressions from us.
As a father has compassion for his children,
so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him.
For he knows how we were made;
he remembers that we are dust.
As for mortals, their days are like grass;
they flourish like a flower of the field;
for the wind passes over it, and it is gone,
and its place knows it no more.
But the steadfast love of the Lord
is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him,
and his righteousness to children's children,
to those who keep his covenant
and remember to do his commandments.

Psalm 103:8-18

7 One of the following, or some other passage from the Gospels, is read:

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

'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.'

John 14:1-6, 27

Jesus said: 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away; for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day.'

John 6:35-40

- 8 One or more of the following passages of scripture, or of the passages listed on pages 501-502, may also be read:

I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

1 Corinthians 15:3-5

Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ.

Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power.

1 Corinthians 15:20-24

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer trials, so that the genuineness of your faith – being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire – may be found to result in praise and glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed. Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

1 Peter 1:3-9

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

If God is for us, who is against us? 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? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 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. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 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 8:28, 31b-35, 37-39

9 A short address or reflection

COMMENDATION

10 The people stand.

Merciful God,
we praise you that we are made in your image and likeness.
We thank you
for the life of your *daughter/son N*,
and for the love and mercy
she/he received from you and showed among us.
We rejoice in your gracious promise
to all your servants, living and departed,
that we shall rise again to be with Christ.
We ask that at the last we may come with *N*
to share in your glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

FUNERAL AND RELATED SERVICES

- 11 Let us commend *N* to God.

EITHER

- A** Into your keeping, O merciful God,
we commend your servant *N*.
Receive *her/him* into the arms of your mercy,
into the joy of everlasting peace,
and into the glorious company of the saints in light;
through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

OR

- B** Loving God,
we commend *N* to your perfect mercy and wisdom,
for in you alone we put our trust. **Amen.**

-
- 12 If the service has been held in a cemetery chapel, the coffin is taken to the graveside. The minister goes before the body to the grave and may read appropriate scripture sentences not used previously in the service.
-

COMMITTAL

- 13 All stand. The minister says:

EITHER

- A** Since the earthly life of *N* has come to an end,
we commit *her/his* body
to be cremated/to the elements/to be buried,
earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
in sure and certain hope
of the resurrection to eternal life
through our Lord Jesus Christ;
to whom be glory for ever and ever. **Amen.**

OR

B God alone is holy and just and good.
In this certainty we have commended *N* to God.
We therefore commit *her/his* body
to be cremated/to the elements/to be buried,
earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
trusting in the infinite mercy of God,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

14 The minister may say:

Blessèd are the dead who die in the Lord;
for they rest from their labours.

15 Hymn

PRAYERS

16 One or more of the following prayers may be said:

A Father of all,
we pray for those whom we love, but see no longer.
Grant them your peace;
let light perpetual shine upon them;
and in your loving wisdom and almighty power
work in them the good purpose of your perfect will;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

B Almighty God,
Father of all mercies and giver of all comfort,
deal graciously with those who mourn,
that they may cast every care on you
and know the consolation of your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

C Father of mercies and God of all comfort,
you have made nothing in vain
and you love all that you have made.
Look in tender mercy on your bereaved servants,
and help them by your grace
to find in you their refuge and their strength. **Amen.**

FUNERAL AND RELATED SERVICES

- D** Grant us, O God,
in all our duties your help,
in all our perplexities your guidance,
in all our dangers your protection,
and in all our sorrows your peace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**
- E** Support us, O Lord, all the day long,
until the shadows lengthen, the evening comes,
the busy world is hushed,
the fever of life is over and our work done.
Then, in your mercy, grant us a safe lodging,
a holy rest, and peace at the last;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**
- F** Bring us, Lord our God,
at our last awakening,
into the house and gate of heaven,
to enter into that gate,
and dwell in that house,
where there shall be
no darkness nor dazzling,
but one equal light;
no noise nor silence,
but one equal music;
no fears nor hopes,
but one equal possession;
no ends nor beginnings,
but one equal eternity;
in the habitation of your glory and dominion,
world without end. **Amen.**

17 The Lord's Prayer

EITHER

We say together the prayer
that Jesus gave us:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily
bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who
sin against us.
Save us from the time of
trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom,
the power and the glory
are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

OR

As our Saviour taught his
disciples, we pray:

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

EITHER

A The peace of God,
which passes all understanding,
keep *your/our* hearts and minds
in the knowledge and love of God
and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord;
and the blessing of God,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
remain with *you/us* always. **Amen.**

OR

B May God in his infinite love and mercy
bring the whole Church,
living and departed in the Lord Jesus,
to a joyful resurrection
and the fulfilment of his eternal kingdom;
and the blessing of God,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
remain with *you/us* always. **Amen.**

19 The service continues in church either on the same day or at a later date.

AT THE CHURCH

- 20 If the urn or casket containing the ashes is brought into church, it should be placed on a table which has been covered with a white cloth, in front of the communion table.

GATHERING

- 21 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, he gave us new birth into a living hope, the hope of an inheritance, reserved in heaven for you, which nothing can destroy or spoil or wither.

- 22 Hymn

- 23 The minister says:

EITHER

- A ` Blessed are you, Sovereign God,
ruler and judge of all;
to you be praise and glory for ever.
In the darkness of this age that is passing away
may the glory of your kingdom,
which the saints enjoy,
surround our steps as we journey on.
May we reflect the light of your glory this day
and so be made ready to come into your presence,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Blessèd be God for ever.

OR

- B Lord of all life and power,
who through the mighty resurrection of your Son
overcame the old order of sin and death
to make all things new in him:
grant that we, being dead to sin
and alive to you in Jesus Christ,
may reign with him in glory;
to whom with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit
be praise and honour, glory and might,
now and in all eternity. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

24 Sisters and brothers in Christ,
we meet as the community of faith to worship God
as we proclaim our resurrection faith;
to give thanks for our *sister/brother N*;
to remember *her/his* life among us;
and to uphold and support those who mourn.

25 A Psalm may be read or sung.

Other passages of scripture are read. If the service in church occurs on the same day as the Committal these should be different from those used at that service.

26 Sermon

27 Hymn

RESPONSE

28 Let us praise God in Christ our Lord.

**You, Christ, are the king of glory,
the eternal Son of the Father.
When you took our flesh to set us free
you humbly chose the Virgin's womb.
You overcame the sting of death
and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers.
You are seated at God's right hand in glory.
We believe that you will come to be our judge.
Come then, Lord, and help your people,
bought with the price of your own blood,
and bring us with your saints to glory everlasting. A
men.**

Let us pray.

Holy God, we thank you
for the life and witness of the Church on earth . . .

Grant to us, who are still on our pilgrimage,
that your Holy Spirit may lead us,
as we walk by faith,
in holiness and righteousness all our days.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Holy God, we thank you
for the love and care we receive in times of sorrow.
Grant to all who mourn
a sure confidence in your loving care . . .
May they have strength to meet the days ahead
in the comfort of a holy and certain hope,
and in the joyful expectation of eternal life with those they
love.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Holy God, we thank you
for the love and fellowship that we shared with N.

Members of the congregation may pray in silence or offer
their prayers, ending with the words:

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Almighty God, we thank you
that you have joined together your faithful people
in one communion and fellowship
in the mystical body of your Son.
Give us grace so to follow your blessed saints
in all virtuous and godly living,
that we may come to those inexpressible joys
which you have prepared for those who love you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

29 The Lord's Prayer

EITHER

We say together the prayer
that Jesus gave us:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily
bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who
sin against us.
Save us from the time of
trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom,
the power and the glory
are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

OR

As our Saviour taught his
disciples, we pray:

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

30 Hymn

31 EITHER

A God grant to the living, grace;
to the departed, rest;
to the world, peace;
and to us and all the faithful, life everlasting;
and the blessing of God,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be with *you/us* now and for ever. **Amen.**

OR

B The peace of God,
which passes all understanding,
keep *your/our* hearts and minds
in the knowledge and love of God
and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord;
and the blessing of God,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
remain with *you/us* always. **Amen.**

A FUNERAL SERVICE FOR A CHILD

GATHERING

1 One or more of the following sentences may be said:

'I am the resurrection and the life,' says the Lord. 'Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.'

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him.

'As a mother comforts her child, so shall I myself comfort you,' says the Lord.

Blessèd are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Jesus said: 'Let the children come to me; do not try to stop them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.'

Jesus said: 'Set your troubled hearts at rest. Trust in God always; trust also in me.'

Nothing in all creation can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2 Hymn

3 The minister says:

We meet in God's loving presence
to give thanks for the life of *N*,
the *daughter/son* of *A and B (A)*;
to commend *her/him* to God;
and to uphold and support those who mourn.

- 4 Let us pray.
As we seek the strength and comfort of God,
let us in silence bring our confusion and sorrow,
our anger and pain,
and lay them before God.

Silence

EITHER

- A Eternal God, the Lord of life,
you are our help in every time of trouble;
comfort us who mourn.
Give us grace, in the presence of death,
to worship you,
that we may have sure hope of eternal life.
Enable us to put our whole trust
in your goodness and mercy;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

OR

- B Father in heaven,
you gave your Son Jesus Christ
to suffer and to die on the cross,
and raised him to life in glory.
Grant us faith and patience in time of darkness,
and strengthen our hearts with the knowledge of your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

- 5 Let us hear the words of Holy Scripture,
that from them we may draw comfort and strength.

One or more of the following, or one or more other passages
of scripture:

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff –
they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long.

Psalm 23

People were bringing little children to Jesus in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, 'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.' And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

Mark 10:13-16

Jesus said: 'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling-places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.'

Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?' Jesus said to him, 'I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'

'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.'

John 14:1-6, 27

I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

'See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them;

and they will be his peoples,

and God himself will be with them;

he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more;

mourning and crying and pain will be no more,

for the first things have passed away'.

And the one who was seated on the throne said,

'See, I am making all things new'.

Revelation 21:1-5a

COMMENDATION

- 7 The minister may say such parts of the following prayer as are appropriate, or some other prayer.

Loving heavenly Father,
you have made us in your own image and likeness.

We thank you for *N*,
for the richness of *her/his* personality,
for the pleasure and love,
laughter and tears
that we shared together.

We thank you that *she/he*
is free from pain and suffering,
and is at peace with you.

God of all comfort,
we give you thanks
that Jesus took children in his arms and blessed them.
Help us to know that Jesus has welcomed *N*
into the kingdom of heaven.
We make our prayers through Jesus Christ our Saviour.
Amen.

- 8 All stand.

Let us commend *N* to God.

EITHER

- A** Into your keeping, O merciful God,
we commend your servant *N*.
Receive *her/him* into the arms of your mercy,
into the joy of everlasting peace,
and into the glorious company of the saints in light;
through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

OR

B Loving God,
we commend *N* to your perfect mercy and wisdom,
for in you alone we put our trust. **Amen.**

9 When the whole service takes place in a crematorium or at the graveside, the service continues from no. 12.

10 Otherwise the minister says:

The peace of God,
which passes all understanding,
keep *your/our* hearts and minds
in the knowledge and love of God
and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord;
and the blessing of God,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
remain with *you/us* always. **Amen.**

11 The minister, going before the body into the crematorium, or to the grave, may say one or more of these sentences:

Blessèd be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction.

'As a mother comforts her child, so shall I myself comfort you,' says the Lord.

Like a shepherd he will tend his flock and with his arms keep them together.

COMMITTAL

- 12 All stand. The minister says:

Gracious God,
you have made nothing in vain
and love all that you have made.
We therefore commit *N's* body
to be cremated/to the elements/to be buried,
earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
in sure and certain hope
of the resurrection to eternal life,
through our Lord Jesus Christ;
to whom be glory for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Christ, the Good Shepherd,
will lead *N* to springs of living water;
and God will wipe away every tear from *her/his* eyes.

- 13 Silence

- 14 Hymn

PRAYERS

- 15 The minister may say such parts of the following prayer as are appropriate, or some other prayer.

Let us pray.

God of all compassion,
we remember that Jesus wept
at the grave of Lazarus.
Look with tender love
upon those who grieve and sorrow,
especially . . . (*parents, family and close friends*).

Silence

Be our support and strength;
shield us with your arms,
enfold us in the shadow of your wings,
and hold us close to you.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of all forgiveness,
we remember how Jesus laid his hands
on those who were distressed in mind and spirit.
Take from us any burden of guilt,
and heal within us those memories which now bring pain.

Silence

Pardon our sins,
and reveal to us, as forgiven people,
the new life offered to us in Christ.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

God of all comfort,
we remember how Mary stood at the cross
and watched her own Son die.
Help all who grieve at the death of a child
to know the strength of your presence.

Silence

Comfort and uphold us
in this dark and lonely hour,
that we may find new confidence
through our faith in the risen Christ.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

FUNERAL AND RELATED SERVICES

God of love,
you hold all things together.
Bind . . . *(parents, family and close friends)*
as one in mutual love and care,
that in the face of *N's* death
they may find unity and strength.

Silence

Support us, as we commit ourselves to your providence and
care,
that, in your good time,
we may be united with all your children
in the brightness of your glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

16 One or more of these prayers may be said:

A God of infinite compassion,
look in love and pity on those who mourn.
Be their support and strength
that they may trust in you
and be delivered out of their distress;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

B Lord, listen to our prayers for this family who put their trust
in you.
In their sorrow
may they find hope in your infinite love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

C Grant us, O God,
in all our duties your help,
in all our perplexities your guidance,
in all our dangers your protection,
and in all our sorrows your peace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

17 **The Lord's Prayer**

EITHER

We say together the prayer
that Jesus gave us:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily
bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who
sin against us.
Save us from the time of
trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom,
the power and the glory
are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

OR

As our Saviour taught his
disciples, we pray:

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

18

**Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me.**

**Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger. Amen.**

19 EITHER

A The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine on you
and be gracious to you;
the Lord look on you with kindness
and give you peace. **Amen.**

OR

B Christ the Good Shepherd
enfold *you/us* with love,
fill *you/us* with peace, and
lead *you/us* in hope,
this day and all *your/our* days;
and the blessing of God,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be with *you/us* evermore. **Amen.**

A FUNERAL SERVICE FOR A STILLBORN CHILD

NOTES

- 1 This service can be adapted for use after a miscarriage or neo-natal death.
 - 2 If the child has been given a name this should be used; otherwise it is appropriate to say 'this child'.
 - 3 If there is a coffin it may be brought into the building before the service.
-

GATHERING

- 1 The minister says:

We meet in God's loving presence
to acknowledge our loss of one so young.
God knows and loves this child
(whose *parents, A and B (A),*
have given her/him the name N.)
We ask for God's grace
that in our pain we may find comfort;
in our sorrow, hope;
in our questioning, understanding;
and in the experience of death, resurrection.

- 2 Let us be silent and make our own prayers.

Silence

Lord, you love us and watch over us;
you have known us from the very beginning;
and nothing is hidden from you.

Help us now as we entrust *N* to you,
knowing that *she/he* is safe in your care;
in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

- 3 Let us hear the words of Holy Scripture,
that from them we may draw comfort and strength.

One or both of the following Psalms may be read.

The Lord is my shepherd,
I shall not want.
He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul.
He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff –
they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow
me all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long.

Psalm 23

O Lord, you have searched me and known me.

For it was you who formed my inward parts;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Wonderful are your works;
that I know very well.
My frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.
Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.
In your book were written all the days that were formed for
me,
when none of them as yet existed.
How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God!
How vast is the sum of them.
I try to count them – they are more than the sand;
I come to the end – I am still with you.

Psalm 139:1, 13-18

4 One or more of the following, or one or more other passages of scripture:

The disciples came to Jesus and asked, 'Who is the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven?' He called a child, whom he put among them, and said, 'Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.'

Matthew 18:1-5

Jesus said: '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.

'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. 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. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.'

Matthew 11:27-30

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God. For just as the sufferings of Christ are abundant for us, so also our consolation is abundant through Christ. If we are being afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation; if we are being consoled, it is for your consolation, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we are also suffering. Our hope for you is unshaken; for we know that as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our consolation.

2 Corinthians 1:3-7

5 A short address or reflection

COMMENDATION

6 Let us pray.

Silence

Loving God,
we praise and thank you that *N* is, like us,
an heir to all your promises;
sharing with us in the humanity
that you have redeemed in Christ,
and in the eternal life revealed to us through him. **Amen.**

7 All stand.

Let us commend *N* to God.

Heavenly Father,
we thank you for *N*,
and commend *her/him* to your perfect mercy and wisdom,
for in you alone we put our trust. **Amen.**

8 When the whole service takes place in a crematorium or at the graveside, the service continues from no. 11. When there is to be no Committal the service continues from no. 12.

9 Otherwise the minister says:

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

10 The minister, going before the body into the crematorium or to the grave, may say one or more of these sentences:

Blessèd be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction.

'As a mother comforts her child, so shall I myself comfort you,' says the Lord.

Like a shepherd he will tend his flock and with his arm keep them together.

COMMITTAL

11 All stand. The minister says:

Gracious God,
you have made nothing in vain
and love all that you have made.
We therefore commit *N's* body
to be cremated/to the elements/to be buried,
earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
in sure and certain hope
of the resurrection to eternal life,
through our Lord Jesus Christ;
to whom be glory for ever and ever. **Amen.**

PRAYERS

- 12 The minister may say such parts of the following prayers as are appropriate, or some other prayers.

A Holy God,
you are like a loving parent to all your children.
Although the burdens of life overwhelm us,
we still put our trust in you,
knowing that you are with us always;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

B God and Father of all,
comfort *A and B (A)*,
together with *their families*,
in *their* grief,
and uphold *them* with your love;
through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

C Gracious God,
may your loving arms enfold us in our grief.
Support *N's* mother *B*,
who with love has carried *her/him* to birth.
Uphold *N's* father *A*,
who has watched and waited.
Be with them now
in their emptiness and pain;
through him who bears our griefs
and carries our sorrows,
Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

D Grant us, O God,
in all our duties your help,
in all our perplexities your guidance,
in all our dangers your protection,
and in all our sorrows your peace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

13 The Lord's Prayer

EITHER

We say together the prayer
that Jesus gave us:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily
bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who
sin against us.
Save us from the time of
trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom,
the power and the glory
are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

OR

As our Saviour taught his
disciples, we pray:

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

14 **EITHER**

A

The peace of God
which passes all understanding,
keep *your/our* hearts and minds
in the knowledge and love of God
and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord;
and the blessing of God,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
remain with *you/us* always. **Amen.**

FUNERAL AND RELATED SERVICES

OR

B Christ the Good Shepherd
enfold *you/us* with love,
fill *you/us* with peace,
and lead *you/us* in hope,
this day and all *your/our* days;
and the blessing of God,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be with *you/us* evermore. **Amen.**

A SERVICE FOR THE BURIAL OF ASHES

NOTE

If the ashes are to be scattered, this service should be adapted appropriately.

GATHERING

1 The people gather at the place of burial.

2 The minister says:

We meet together to bury the ashes of our *sister/brother N*.

As we gather in faith we remember that, although our bodies return to dust, we shall be raised with Christ in glory. Let us rejoice in this promise as we hear the words of Holy Scripture.

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD

3 One or more of the following, or one or more other passages of scripture:

If we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again.

Romans 6:8-9a

We know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 Corinthians 5:1

The Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

Revelation 7:17

FUNERAL AND RELATED SERVICES

- 4 Let us pray.
- God of all consolation,
in your unending love and mercy
you turn the darkness of death into the dawn of new life.
Show us your compassion
and be our refuge and our strength.
Lift us from the darkness of grief
into the light of your presence.
This we ask in the name of the risen Christ. **Amen.**

BURIAL

- 5 As the ashes are lowered into the ground the minister says:

We have commended our *sister/brother N*
to God's everlasting love and care.
We now return to the earth
the ashes of *her/his* mortal body.
May *she/he* rest in peace and rise in glory. **Amen.**

- 6 One or more of the following prayers may be said:

A Father of all,
we pray for those whom we love, but see no longer.
Grant them your peace;
let light perpetual shine upon them;
and in your loving wisdom and almighty power
work in them the good purpose of your perfect will;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

B Almighty God,
grant that we, with all who have trusted in you,
may be united in the full knowledge of your love
and the unclouded vision of your glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

C God of all consolation,
our refuge and strength in sorrow;
we rejoice that by dying,
our Lord Jesus Christ conquered death;
and that by rising from the grave,
he restored us to life.
When our life on earth is ended,
unite us in your heavenly kingdom with all who love him.
We ask this in his name and for his sake. **Amen.**

7 **The Lord's Prayer**

EITHER

We say together the prayer
that Jesus gave us:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily
bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who
sin against us.
Save us from the time of
trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom,
the power and the glory
are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.**

OR

As our Saviour taught his
disciples, we pray:

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

DISMISSAL AND BLESSING

8 EITHER

A We go in the name of Christ.
Let us turn from this place as we journey on,
to seek new life on earth
as we rejoice over new life in heaven.
May the Spirit of the living Christ be with *you/us*.

The blessing of God,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be with *you/us* evermore. **Amen.**

OR

B Go out into the world
in the power of the Holy Spirit;
in all things and at all times
remember Christ is with you;
and the blessing of God,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be with *you/us* evermore. **Amen.**

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE READINGS

Job 19:1, 21-27a	Job answered, 'Pity me, have pity on me.'
Psalms 8; 16; 27; 30; 42:1-8; 43:3-5; 46; 90; 103; 116; 118:14-21, 28-29; 121; 138; 139:1-14, 17-18, 23	
Isaiah 25:6-9	God will wipe away tears
Isaiah 40:1-6, 8-11, 28-31	Comfort my people
Isaiah 43:1-3a, 5-7, 13, 15, 18-19, 25	Behold, I am doing a new thing
Isaiah 44:6, 8a	I am the first and I am the last
Isaiah 55:1-3, 6-13	Hear that your soul may live
Isaiah 61:1-3	Bind up the broken hearted
Lamentations 3:17-26, 31-33	The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases
Ecclesiastes 3:1-15	For everything its season
Luke 24:13-35	The Lord has risen indeed
John 5:19-25	The Father raises the dead and gives them life
John 6:35-40	I am the bread of life
John 11:1-6, 17-27, 32-35, 38-44	There was a man named Lazarus
2 Corinthians 4:16 - 5:10	In the body we are exiles from the Lord

FUNERAL AND RELATED SERVICES

Ephesians 1:15-23	Now that I have heard of your faith
Ephesians 2:1, 4-10	You once were dead because of your sins
Philippians 3:10-21	My one desire is to know Christ
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18	We believe that Jesus died and rose again
2 Timothy 2:8-12a	If we die with him we shall live with him
1 John 3:1-2	We are now God's children
1 John 4:7-18a	My dear friends, let us love one another
Revelation 7:9-17	Victory to our God who sits on the throne
Revelation 21:1-7	I saw a new heaven and a new earth
Revelation 21:22-27	The Lamb's book of life
Revelation 22:1-5	The Lord God will give them light