

Funeral

This rite is from Church Rites (1994), prepared by the Commission on Worship, Lutheran Church of Australia.

NOTES

- 1 This rite is for use at funerals of Christians. Pastors should exercise their pastoral responsibility in making the appropriate adjustments for exceptional cases, and according to culture and local customs.
- 2 When the meeting of the coffin at the entrance to the church and the entrance procession are omitted, or the service is held at a funeral parlour, the service begins with the opening greeting or invocation.
- 3 Where a paschal candle is in use, in the sanctuary or in the funeral parlour, it may be placed at the head of the coffin.
- 4 When holy communion is celebrated, the service continues with the preface. Alternatively, where it is the custom for the bread and wine to be brought to the altar, the service may continue with the offertory. However, gifts of money are not gathered. The proper preface is the one for the season. The holy communion concludes with the Song of Simeon and one of the post-communion prayers.

OUTLINE OF THE RITE

A At the church or funeral parlour

INTRODUCTION

| Entrance procession
Opening
Reminder of baptism
| Hymn
Obituary

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Greeting
Prayer
Psalm
Readings
Hymn
Address
Apostles' Creed
|Hymn

PRAYERS

Lord, have mercy
Prayer
|Holy communion
|Lord's Prayer

CONCLUSION

Transitional blessing
Recession
|Song of Simeon

B At the grave or crematorium

Procession
Peace
|Introduction
Word of comfort
Lowering/removal of coffin
Committal
|Glory to God
Prayer
Lord's Prayer
|Hymn
Blessing
Dismissal

Funeral

A At the church or funeral parlour

INTRODUCTION

ENTRANCE PROCESSION

The minister, accompanied by the cross-bearer, may meet the coffin, the pallbearers, and the bereaved at the entrance to the church. He says:

The peace of the Lord be with you.

A pall may be placed on the coffin. The procession forms and enters the church, led by the minister.

The congregation stands and sings an appropriate hymn as the procession moves to the front of the church.

OPENING

God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

Amen.

OR

In the name of the Father and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

REMINDER OF BAPTISM

As we come here in our grief to farewell N, St Paul comforts us with these words: Don't you know that all of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.

HYMN

OBITUARY

Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, has destroyed death and brings immortal life through the gospel. Let us remember with thanksgiving what God has done through N.

The obituary is read.

The obituary may close with:

We give thanks to God our Father through Jesus Christ our Lord for our brother/sister N.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

GREETING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

PRAYER

EITHER

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, comfort us in our time of mourning, for you are the only source of true comfort, and in your love you long to comfort us. Care for us in all our grief and remind us that you are always near; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

OR

Let us pray.

Eternal God, the Father of our Lord Jesus, as you raised your dear Son from the grave, keep us always faithful to him, so that not even death itself will snatch us out of your hand or separate us from your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

OR

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, as you sent your Son to bear our grief and carry our sorrow, be with us in this dark time and assure us that you have not abandoned us even in the face of death, so that we may not despair but put our hope in you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

OR

Let us pray.

Eternal God, our heavenly Father: Be with us as we gather here in your presence to take leave of N, and assure us that you are close to us as we mourn. As we hear your promises, help us to trust in them and accept the comfort they offer. As we grieve for N, deepen our faith in your goodness and mercy, so that we may not be trapped in bitterness but be sustained by your peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

PSALM

Psalms 130

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

O Lord, hear my voice.

Let your ears be attentive

to my cry for mercy.

If you, O Lord, kept a record of sins,

O Lord, who could stand?

But with you there is forgiveness;

therefore you are feared.

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,

and in his word I put my hope.

My soul waits for the Lord

more than watchmen wait for the morning,

more than watchmen wait for the morning.

O Israel, put your hope in the Lord,

for with the Lord is unfailing love

and with him is full redemption.

He himself will redeem Israel

from all their sins.

Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Other suitable psalms are: 13; 16:1,2,5,6,9-11; 23; 25:1-5,15-20; 27:1,7-11,13,14; 31:1-5,7,8,14-16; 39:4-13; 42:1-6; 71:1,2,5,9,12,20,21,23; 73:1,2,23-28; 77:1,2,7-13; 84:1-4,10-12; 90:1-

12; 102:1,2,4,11,12,23–28; 103:1–13; 103:13–18; 116:1–5,9,10,15–19;
118:14–23; 121; 126; 139:1–3,7–18,23,24; 143:1,2,5–7,10,11; 146.

READINGS

Hear the word of the Lord as it is written in —.

Suitable readings are listed at the end of this rite.

After each reading, the response is said:

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

HYMN

ADDRESS

APOSTLES' CREED

EITHER

Let us confess our faith in the Triune God, in whose name N was baptised, and say the Apostles' Creed.

OR

In the face of death, let us confess our faith in the living God, and say the Apostles' Creed.

The minister may remain facing the coffin as the Apostles' Creed is said.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried.**

He descended into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven,

**and sits at the right hand of God, the Father almighty,
from thence he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic* church,**

**the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

** or: Christian; 'catholic' here means 'universal'*

HYMN

PRAYERS

LORD, HAVE MERCY

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

PRAYER

The minister says the following or another suitable prayer. Further prayers are provided at the end of this rite.

Let us pray. (As we pray, respond to each prayer with the words 'Hear our prayer'.)

Almighty God, our Father, in whom we live and move and have our being: We thank you for N and what we have received from him/her. Sustain us in life and death, and let perpetual light shine on us and all your faithful people.

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Be with those who mourn, comfort them in their grief, and wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Remember — (*N's family*). Lighten their sense of loss with your presence, and support them in their loneliness.

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Help those who grieve to support each other, and draw them together in their sorrow.

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Give those who are bereaved courage to face the future with confidence in your goodness and with hope in the victory of Christ over death.

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Help us, when we are perplexed and troubled, to believe in the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, and the resurrection to eternal life.

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

Be with us in our journey through life and teach us to live wisely, making the most of our time on earth.

Lord, in your mercy,

hear our prayer.

As we are strangers and pilgrims on earth, prepare us all for the world to come.

And when our last hour comes, support us by your power, and take us home to your heavenly kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

When holy communion is celebrated, the service continues with the preface.

LORD'S PRAYER

When there is no holy communion, the Lord's Prayer, spoken by the minister and the congregation, may conclude the prayers.

**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.**

**Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

CONCLUSION

TRANSITIONAL BLESSING

The Lord watch over you, as you go out and as you come in †, now and forever.

Amen.

RECESSION

The minister and the pallbearers take their places at the coffin.

In the sure hope of the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come, we take the body of our brother/sister in Christ to its last resting place.

Let us go in peace.

In the name of the Lord.

SONG OF SIMEON

As the procession leaves the chancel and the church, the Song of Simeon may be sung or said, if it has not been sung in the holy communion liturgy; or a suitable hymn may be sung or music played.

B At the grave or crematorium

PROCESSION

The minister precedes the coffin to the grave or crematorium.

EITHER

During the procession the minister may speak one or more of the following verses:

Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there; the Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. (JOB 1:21 NRSV)

I know that my Redeemer lives, and that at the last he will stand upon the earth; and after my skin has been thus destroyed, then in my flesh I shall see God. (JOB 19:25,26 NRSV)

Our Lord says: 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 11:25,26 NRSV)

If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living. (ROM 14:8,9 NIV)

Praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! The Father is a merciful God, who always gives us comfort. He comforts us when we are in trouble, so that we can share that same comfort with others in trouble. (2 COR 1:3,4 CEV)

Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. (1 PET 1:3 NJB)

Advent

God's love and kindness will shine upon us like the sun that rises in the sky. On us who live in the dark shadow of death this light will shine to guide us into a life of peace. (LUKE 1:78,79 CEV)

Christmas

God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life. (JOHN 3:16 TEV)

Epiphany

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. They lived in a land of shadows, but now light is shining on them. (ISA 9:2 TEV)

Lent

Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, on whom our faith depends from beginning to end. He did not give up because of the cross! On the contrary, because of the joy that was waiting for him, he thought nothing of the disgrace of dying on the cross, and he is now seated at the right-hand side of God's throne. (HEB 12:2 TEV)

Easter

Jesus says: Don't be afraid! I am the first, the last, and the living one. I died, but now I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys to death and the world of the dead. (REV 1:17,18 CEV)

Pentecost

Because God was merciful, he saved us through the water of rebirth and the renewing power of the Holy Spirit, which he lavished upon us through Jesus Christ our Saviour. (TITUS 3:5,6 REB)

OR

An Easter hymn or another suitable hymn may be sung by the congregation, a choir, or a cantor.

PEACE

When all have arrived at the place of burial/cremation, the minister says:

The peace of the Lord be with you.

Amen.

INTRODUCTION

We are all born weak and helpless. All lead the same short, troubled life. We grow and wither as quickly as flowers; we disappear like shadows.

In the midst of life we are in death. To whom can we go for help, but to you, Lord God, though you are rightly displeased because of our sins? And yet, Lord God Almighty, most holy and most merciful Saviour, deliver us from the bitterness of eternal death. You know the secrets of our hearts; mercifully hear us, most worthy judge eternal; keep us, at our last hour, in the consolation of your love. Amen.

WORD OF COMFORT

EITHER

Our Lord says: 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.

OR

St Paul says: I will explain a mystery to you. Not every one of us will die, but we will all be changed. It will happen suddenly, quicker than the blink of an eye. At the sound of the last trumpet the dead will be raised. We will all be changed, so that we will never die again. Our dead and decaying bodies will be changed into bodies that won't die or decay. The bodies we now have are weak and can die. But they will be changed into bodies that are eternal. Then the Scriptures will come true, 'Death has lost the battle! Where is its victory? Where is its sting?' Sin is what gives death its sting, and the Law is the power behind sin. But thank God for letting our Lord Jesus Christ give us the victory!

OR

St Paul says: These bodies will die, but the bodies that are raised will live forever. These ugly and weak bodies will become beautiful and strong. As surely as there are physical bodies, there are spiritual bodies.

The bodies we now have are weak and can die. But they will be changed into bodies that are eternal. Then the Scriptures will come true, 'Death has lost the battle! Where is its victory? Where is its sting?' But thank God for letting our Lord Jesus Christ give us the victory!

OR

St Paul says: We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

LOWERING/REMOVAL OF COFFIN

The coffin is lowered into the grave or removed for cremation.

A hymn may be said or sung.

COMMITTAL

The minister says one of the following, either while the coffin is being lowered or removed, or after it has been lowered or removed.

EITHER

Since almighty God, our heavenly Father, in his gracious wisdom has taken out of this life *the soul of our departed brother/sister , N,/ our brother/sister, N, now fallen asleep*, we commit his/her body *to the ground/to the elements/to be cremated/to the deep/to its resting place*: earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; in the name † of our Lord Jesus Christ. We commend him/her to our heavenly Father. He assures us of the resurrection to eternal life; all those who have died believing in Christ are kept safe by him. (He was the first to rise from the dead, and he will raise up our mortal bodies to be like his in glory.)

Amen.

OR

Since almighty God, our heavenly Father, in his gracious wisdom has called N from this life, we commit his/her body *to the ground/to the elements/to be cremated/to the deep/to its resting place*: earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. Dust we are and to dust we shall return. (But we know that as Christ was the first to rise from the dead, he will raise up our mortal bodies to be like his in glory.) We commend N to the Lord †, trusting in his infinite mercy. Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!

Amen.

GLORY TO GOD

Glory to God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who has created, redeemed, and sanctified N, body and soul.

PRAYER

The minister says one or more of the prayers provided at the end of this rite.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord Jesus, remember us, and help us to pray the prayer you have taught 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.
Lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.**

HYMN

BLESSING

EITHER

The Lord give you comfort and peace; and the blessing of almighty God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit †, be with you always.

Amen.

OR

The God of peace, who brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, equip you by the blood of the eternal covenant with everything good, so that you may do his will, working in you what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ †; to whom be glory now and forever.

Amen.

OR

The God of love and peace † be with you.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Christ has risen.

He has risen indeed.

Go in the peace of the Lord.

Amen.

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SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR USE AT A FUNERAL

1 Mortality

Now listen, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money'. Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, 'If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that'. (JAS 4:13–15 NIV)

Also: Numbers 21:6–9 and John 3:14,15; Job 14:1–14; Isaiah 40:6–11.

2 Exhortation

[Jesus said:] 'No-one knows, however, when that day or hour will come — neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son; only the Father knows. Be on the lookout, be alert, for you do not know when the time will come. It will be like a man who goes away from home on a journey and leaves his servants in charge, after giving to each one his own work to do and after telling the doorkeeper to keep watch. Watch, then, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming — it might be in the evening or at midnight or before dawn or at sunrise. If he comes suddenly, he must not find you asleep. What I say to you, then, I say to all: Watch!' (MARK 13:32–37 TEV)

Also: Matthew 25:1–13; Matthew 25:31–46; Luke 12:35–48; Ephesians 5:15–20; Ephesians 6:10–18a; 1 Thessalonians 5:1–11; 2 Peter 3:8–14.

3 Comfort and hope

You have received the spirit of adoption. When we cry, 'Abba! Father!' it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ — if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for

adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

What then are we to say about these things? 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? As it is written,

'For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered'.

No, in all 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. (ROM 8:15–25,31–39 NRSV)

Also: Lamentations 3:19–33; John 10:7–16; 1 Peter 1:3–9.

4 Resurrection and heaven

a When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had been buried four days before. Bethany was less than three kilometres from Jerusalem, and many Judeans had come to see Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother's death.

When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went out to meet him, but Mary stayed in the house. Martha said to Jesus, 'If you had been here, Lord, my brother would not have died! But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask him for.'

'Your brother will rise to life', Jesus told her.

'I know', she replied, 'that he will rise to life on the last day'.

Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me will live, even though they die; and those who live and believe in me will never die. Do you believe this?'

'Yes, Lord!' she answered. 'I do believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.' (JOHN 11:17–27 TEV)

b 'Do not be worried and upset', Jesus told them. 'Believe in God and believe also in me. There are many rooms in my Father's house, and I am going to prepare a place for you. I would not tell you this if it were not so. And after I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to myself, so that you

will be where I am. You know the way that leads to the place where I am going.'

Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we do not know where you are going; so how can we know the way to get there?'

Jesus answered him, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life; no-one goes to the Father except by me'. (JOHN 14:1-6 TEV)

- c We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words. (1 THESS 4:13-18 NRSV)
- d I heard a voice from heaven saying, 'Write this: Blessed are the dead who from now on die in the Lord'. 'Yes', says the Spirit, 'they will enjoy rest from their labours, because the results of their service go with them'. (REV 14:13 COMPOSITE)
- e Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The first heaven and the first earth disappeared, and the sea vanished. And I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared and ready, like a bride dressed to meet her husband. I heard a loud voice speaking from the throne: 'Now God's home is with human beings! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them, and he will be their God. He will wipe away all tears from their eyes. There will be no more death, no more grief or crying or pain. The old things have disappeared.'

Then the one who sits on the throne said, 'And now I make all things new!' He also said to me, 'Write this, because these words are true and can be trusted'. (REV 21:1-5 TEV)

Also: Matthew 28:1-10; John 5:19-29; 1 Corinthians 15:12-22; 2 Corinthians 4:7-18; 2 Corinthians 5:1-10; Philippians 3:8-11; Colossians 3:1-4; Revelation 7:9-17.

5 *The death of a child*

- a He tends his flock like a shepherd: he gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young. (ISA 40:11 NIV)

b Some people brought children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples scolded the people. When Jesus noticed this, he was angry and said to his disciples, 'Let the children come to me, and do not stop them, because the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I assure you that whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will never enter it.' Then he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on each of them, and blessed them. (MARK 10:13–16 TEV)

Also: 1 Kings 17:17–24; 2 Kings 4:18–37; Jeremiah 31:15–17.

6 The death of a young person

a Why do you say, O Jacob, and speak, O Israel, 'My way is hidden from the Lord, and my right is disregarded by my God'?

Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless.

Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint. (ISA 40:27–31 NRSV)

b Soon afterwards Jesus went to a town called Nain, accompanied by his disciples and a large crowd. Just as he arrived at the gate of the town, a funeral procession was coming out. The dead man was the only son of a woman who was a widow, and a large crowd from the town was with her. When the Lord saw her, his heart was filled with pity for her, and he said to her, 'Don't cry'. Then he walked over and touched the coffin, and the men carrying it stopped. Jesus said, 'Young man! Get up, I tell you!' The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother.

They all were filled with fear and praised God. 'A great prophet has appeared among us!' they said; 'God has come to save his people!'

This news about Jesus went out through all the country and the surrounding region. (LUKE 7:11–17 TEV)

Also: Ecclesiastes 12:1–8; Mark 5:35–43.

7 The death of an aged person

a [The Lord says:] 'Listen to me, O house of Jacob, all the remnant of the house of Israel, who have been borne by me from your birth, carried from the womb; even to your old age I am he, even when you turn grey I will carry you. I have made, and I will bear; I will carry and will save.' (ISA 46:3,4 NRSV)

b I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day — and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing. (2 TIM 4:6-8 NIV)

Also: Job 5:17-26; Psalm 71:1-19; Luke 2:25-32; Philippians 3:20,21.

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ADDITIONAL PRAYERS FOR USE AT A FUNERAL

1 *General*

a Eternal God and heavenly Father, you have summoned N to yourself. We thank you for his/her life and the blessings that flowed from it. Be near N and N who mourn his/her death. Comfort them in their pain and grief, and soothe them in their sorrow. Grant us grace to keep the faith, and to pass from death to life eternal with all who have gone before us; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

b Lord God, our creator and redeemer, before whom the generations come and go on earth: We thank you for all your people who have lived on earth before us, have served you faithfully, and now live eternally with you. We thank you too for N, for the gift of life and your grace to him/her, for his/her faithfulness to you and service to others. (*Thanks for N's characteristics and contribution to family, church, and society may be added.*) Above all, we thank you that you have brought N through the valley of the shadow of death and have taken him/her from us to yourself. Bring us all to the joy prepared for those who love you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

c (Let us pray. As we pray, respond to each prayer with the words 'Lord, hear our prayer'.)

Lord Jesus Christ, you have said: 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. We thank you for N and this promise of comfort.

As you comforted Mary and Martha at the death of their brother, be with — (*the family and friends of N*), and comfort them in their sorrow.

Lord Jesus, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

As you wept at the grave of Lazarus, your friend, relieve the pain of those who are broken-hearted and wipe away their tears.

Lord Jesus, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

As you appointed the apostle John to take care of your mother Mary, before you died on the cross, provide human support and companionship for those who have lost the one they love.

Lord Jesus, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

As you have borne our grief and carried our sorrows, let us weep with those who weep and sympathise with them in their bereavement.

Lord Jesus, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

As you have washed us clean in baptism and anointed us with your Holy Spirit, keep us holy and free from every fault, and bring us into glory with all your saints.

Lord Jesus, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

As you have nourished our bodies with your holy body and blood, raise our bodies from the grave/dead and seat us with you at your table in heaven.

Lord Jesus, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

As you restored the dead to life and gave them back to their loved ones, bring us to eternal life with you and unite us with those who have gone before us.

Lord Jesus, hear us.

Lord, hear our prayer.

As you promised paradise to the repentant thief on the cross, remember us with your mercy, when you come as king, and receive us into your glory, where you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit in eternal light.

Amen.

2 *Husband/wife*

Merciful Father, you have gathered N to yourself. Be near N, N, and N, and comfort them with your presence. Soothe their pain and grief with the consolation of your word. Draw them close together in their sorrow, and help them to support

each other in their loss. Give us grace to live by faith in you, so that, when Christ appears, we too may share in his glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

3 *Married couple (with children)*

Lord God, our heavenly Father, in marriage you gave us a sign of your covenant. We thank you that you joined N and N together in love and companionship. Comfort their children N, N, and N in their pain and sorrow. Be with them, sustain them, and lead them through this life to your heavenly home, so that they may sit at table with you and all your faithful children; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

4 *Aged person*

Eternal God, heavenly Father: You have promised to take care of us until we are old and our hair is grey; you have made us and have promised to save us. We thank you that you have taken care of N throughout his/her life: You have brought him/her to an old age and have let him/her enjoy the fruit of his/her work; you have helped him/her in his/her need and sustained him/her in all his/her troubles.

Help us all to remember how short our life is and how soon we are gone. Give us time to reflect on your kindness and to drink deeply from the spring of eternal life in Christ Jesus. Grant that we may die in peace and receive the crown of eternal glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

5 *Child*

Heavenly Father, whose Son Jesus Christ took children into his arms and blessed them: We thank you for receiving N as your own in baptism and making him/her an heir of your heavenly kingdom. Soothe the grief and heal the pain of his/her parents N and N, his/her brothers and sisters N, N, and N, and all who mourn his/her loss. Comfort them with your presence, and set them free from despair by the hope of their reunion with N at the resurrection to eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

6 *Tragic death*

Merciful God and Father, we pray for the members of the family of N, and remember N, N, and N, whose sense of loss is keen because their love was deep. Uphold us, when we are unable to understand the things that happen to us;

comfort us, when we are weighed down by grief and loneliness. Assure us of your constant presence, so that through your help we may have courage to face the days ahead; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

7 *Sudden death*

Lord God, whose days are without end and whose mercies are beyond counting: Remind us that life is short and the hour of death unknown. Let your Holy Spirit guide our days on earth, so that by your grace we may serve you in the communion of your church. Keep us sure in faith, strong in hope, active in love, and ready for Christ's return; when our earthly journey is ended, lead us rejoicing into your kingdom; through our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Amen.

8 *Suicide*

Merciful Father, your judgments are mysterious, your ways are beyond our understanding. We are troubled, but not crushed; sometimes in doubt, but never in despair; dejected, but not destroyed. Have mercy on us and all who are confused and in trouble. Forgive our sins, ease our distress, and grant us peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

9 *At the grave or crematorium*

a Merciful God, by the death of your Son Jesus Christ you destroyed death; by his rest in the tomb you have made holy the graves of your saints; by his glorious resurrection you have brought life and immortality to light. All who die in him rest in joy and hope. Keep us with Christ in the company of all who wait for you on earth and all who surround you in heaven; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

b God of peace and joy: We thank you for your grace to N and to all your people who have finished the course of their lives in faith and now rest from all their work. Bring us, and all who have fallen asleep in faith, to perfect joy and fulfilment in your eternal glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

c Eternal Father: Do not let the fear of death terrify us; graciously keep us united with your Son. Strengthen our faith, give us a good conscience, and prepare us for a blessed departure, when you summon us to eternal life with you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

d Lord Jesus, our good shepherd: As you have remembered N, who has passed through the valley of the shadow of death, be with N and N and all who mourn for him/her in their loneliness. Comfort them in their sorrow. Heal their hurt. Restore their happiness and guide them on your way. Refresh us with your goodness and bring us at last into your eternal home, where we will feast together at your table; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

e O Lord, support us all the day long of this 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, Lord, in your mercy, grant us a safe lodging, a holy rest, and peace at last; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.