

Ways to Say Goodbye

~ Susan Fraser of Independent Ceremonies ~

The process of organising and planning a funeral is an important part of the grieving process. It gives you the space to focus on your loved one by thinking of the life they had, everything that you shared and what they really meant to you.

Thinking about the words that you would use to talk about them, about the music they loved and the stories you want to share, all help you remember them clearly.

Bringing together family and friends to have that chance to say goodbye gives comfort to you all.

In these unusual times, traditional funeral arrangements may not be an option and so I have created this guide share alternative ways to honour your loved one and pay tribute to their life.

Saying Goodbye

Webcasting

The current guidelines allow for small services with only immediate family present. To allow wider family and friends feel part of the service, this service can be shared online live via social media or conferencing apps.

Online Memorial

In circumstances where there is no actual service taking place, a celebrant led memorial can either be conducted remotely or recorded to be shared with family and friends to join together online.



Remembering Individually

You may prefer to take special time out by yourself to remember your loved one. Having that notable moment of saying goodbye, talking to your loved one out loud, or even writing them a letter, can be a helpful part of the grieving process.



Whichever form of remembrance you choose, the following elements can be included to compliment and add to your commemoration.

Memory Table

You can set up a space, as a focal point for your service or remembrance. It could be a table, sideboard or mantelpiece, even a spot in the garden, and put together significant items, things that remind you that person. You could include whatever reminds you of your loved one such as:

- Photographs, or even an album to look through.
- A favourite scarf or bunnet.
- Their usual newspaper.
- Jewellery that you remember them wearing, wedding rings too.
- A postcard from their favourite holiday destination.
- Something you know they loved such as a book, knitting needles, the daily paper, a bookies slip or a bingo card.
- You could pick some flowers from your garden or gather them while walking.
- Fragrance brings back strong memories so have a spray of their perfume or aftershave.



Orders of Service

Whether you have a service or not, Orders of Service can still be produced and then shared either online or by mail to those that can't attend, providing a keepsake for everyone.

Candles

The lighting of candles has long been symbolic of remembering those who have passed, and can be a beautiful poignant moment. They can be lit by one person or by each set of people attending in their own locations and this can happen at the start of service or during a moment of reflection.

Poems, Words and Prayers

Including a poem can often say something in ways that a simple tribute cannot. Choosing or reading a poem can also be a good way for people to contribute to the service. If you or your loved one was of a faith, you may wish to include prayers or a bible reading.

Music

Music can be the most evocative part of any service, bringing back precious memories that are hard to put into words. Even simply thinking about and choosing what music they loved, can be a special part of bringing back those times you spent together.

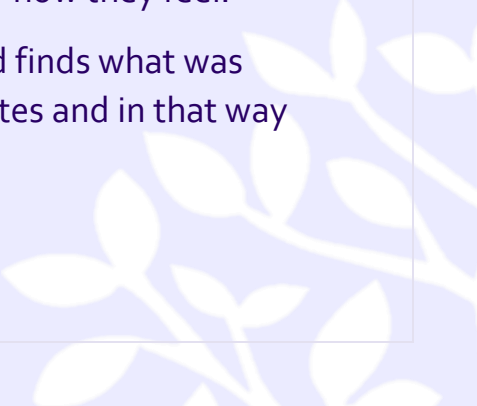
Tribute

The heart of every service is the tribute or eulogy to your loved one. This is where everyone remembers the person they knew and the life they have led.

This can be quite structured with a full life story, talking about everything that they did in life; from childhood, through work and family. Alternatively, each person can prepare a favourite memory or story to share.

Younger children, might find it easier to draw a picture to show how they feel.

A good eulogy remembers the true character of the person and finds what was special in each person. This is just as important as facts and dates and in that way remembers the real person you knew.



Memorial Services

Once the current restrictions have been lifted, you may wish to have an event so that family and friends can come together to fully celebrate your loved one's life. There are a number of ways to do this:

Family Gathering

Your celebration could be as simple as a family get together for a party, a picnic or a barbeque where you share stories and memories, play some favourite music, maybe pass round photographs, perhaps have it on their birthday or other significant date.

Scattering of Ashes

At a later date you could have a small service when ashes are scattered or interred. As before, this can be informal, or celebrant led, depending on your preference.

Full Memorial Service

A memorial is a real celebration of your loved one's life, and as it is more flexible than a funeral service there are many options ways to do that.

Even while it isn't possible to have the service you would want just now, you can still participate in the process of preparing one for later.

Just going through the usual process of choosing music and words, sharing memories, and taking time out to really think about your loved one, to bring back to those special memories, can be so helpful as part of dealing with grief, especially in these uncertain times.

The memorial can be put together as a document which can be kept ready for a later memorial, or shared with family and friends now.



Celebrant Services

Memorial Services

£100 - £190

This starts with a telephone or online interview session with you and your family. We will take time to remember your loved one together, gathering their story and your memories of them. At that meeting, I can advise on the choice of ceremony elements and suggest readings and music too.

From there, I will prepare a beautiful, individually written service to honour your loved one.

Those words can either be delivered in person if you are having a small service at a crematorium or graveside now, or delivered on online at a pre-arranged time.

Alternatively, the draft can be kept for use at a later memorial event once gathering restrictions are lifted, or if you prefer, it can simply be distributed to family and friends for them to have now.

You will also receive a ribbon bound presentation copy as a keepsake and record of the service. I will send an electronic copy that you can share too.

Please don't hesitate to call to talk over how I can help
and what would work for you:

Susan Fraser ~ 07967 138 068
info@independentceremonies.co.uk
www.independentceremonies.co.uk

