

Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis
333 Dubois Road Annapolis, MD 21401

End of Life Planning Guide



*Revised February 2017
UUCA Care Team*

Foreword

The Care Team of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis has prepared this guide to assist members and friends of the Church to deal with the last stage of life. It is designed to be used by ministers of the Church to help those who have lost or are preparing for the loss of a loved one or for those who wish to assist friends dealing with a loss.

*Let us be honest with death,
Let us not pretend that it is less than it is.
It is separation, it is sorrow, it is grief.*

*But let us not pretend that death is more than it is.
It is not annihilation; as long as memory endures,
his influence will be felt.*

*It is not an end to love; the love we have known
remains a part of our lives.
It is not an end to joy and laughter.*

*Nothing would less honor a brave soul than to make
our lives drab in counterfeit respect.
Let us be honest with death.*

--A. Powell Davies

Acknowledgement

This guide revises and updates **The End of Life Planning Guide** written in March of 2007 by UUCA members Carol Friend and Ginny Klocko, Pastoral Care Team Coordinators. We are deeply grateful for the strong foundation laid by their careful work. Current Care Team members are: Becky Morris, Suzy Ochs (co-chairs) Jane Andrew, Nancy Eaton, Jackie Heimbuch, Claire Morgen, Max Ochs, Diane Ratcliff, and Edna Roop

Dealing with the Death of a Loved One

A Practical Guide

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A.

When Death Occurs

Hospital/Nursing Home

If death occurs in a hospital or nursing home, the primary care doctor and the next-of-kin will be notified. The facility chosen to handle the remains will be contacted.

Hospice

Contact Hospice for instructions

Home

An expected death - The family will contact the doctor on call or nurse. Calling 911 is not necessary unless advised to do so by the doctor or nurse.

An unexpected death - call 911 and the deceased will then be transported to the Emergency Room. The primary care or Emergency Room doctor will then determine if the coroner needs to be contacted.

An autopsy or post-mortem is rarely needed to determine the cause of death. If one is needed, the physician will suggest it. There may be a charge involved.

Donating Remains

If your loved one made arrangements prior to death for anatomical, organ or tissue donation, health officials will guide the family in the necessary steps for donation.

In order for **organs or tissue** to be donated, death must have occurred in a medical facility. The receiving agency will arrange to return the remains to the family for final disposition.

In the case of **anatomical donation**, call the Maryland Anatomy Board at 410-547-1222 day or night. The Board will pick up the body. When the research is completed (which may be several months), the body will be cremated and buried by the Anatomy Board or, upon request, the ashes will be returned to the family. In most cases, there is no cost involved.

Death Certificates

Certified copies of the death certificate will be needed when settling the deceased's estate. To determine how many copies of the death certificate to order, see *What Do I Need Certified Death Certificates For?* Appendix 1. The entity handling the remains will order death certificates.

Information needed includes:

- ___ Full Legal Name and Address, including County
- ___ Social Security Number
- ___ Date and Place of Birth
- ___ Father's Name and Place of Birth
- ___ Mother's Maiden Name and Place of Birth
- ___ Marital Status/Spouse or Partner
- ___ Citizenship
- ___ Race
- ___ Occupation

B.

Additional Contacts and Considerations after Death Occurs

- Unitarian Universalist Church at 410-266-8044 – staff will contact the Minister
- Family members, close friends, employer and colleagues.
- Crematorium/funeral home
- Secure the household and provide for care of pets
- Submit an **Obituary or Death Notice** to local and out-of-town newspapers as necessary.

There is a charge, usually based on the length of the notice. In Anne Arundel County, call *The Capital* at 410-280-5964 or email capobits@tribune.com.

Include the deceased's full name, places and dates of birth and death, education, military service, professional accomplishments and associations, volunteer activities, surviving spouse/partner and family members, location, date and time of services and, if contributions in lieu of flowers are desired, the name and address where contributions are to be sent.

C.

Burial/Cremation Options

1. **Burial** (Note: Embalming is required for a viewing or when a body is to be transported out of state).

Immediate Burial – The body is prepared by the funeral home for burial without embalming and internment is soon after death.

Burial after Viewing – The body is prepared for viewing by the funeral home with internment following the viewing.

In-Ground Burial – Most local cemeteries require an outer burial container made of concrete, fiberglass or steel. A concrete vault, which is air and water-tight, is a type of outer burial container.

Above-Ground Burial – An outer container is not required. The casket is placed in a mausoleum.

Green Burial – Green burial is a manner of caring for the dead with minimal environmental impact while preserving or restoring habitat. It does not inhibit decomposition and allows the body to recycle naturally. There is a cost for a shroud or coffin, dry ice and state filing fees.

Burial Out-of-State – Arrangements for burial out-of-state involve both local and out of state funeral directors.

UUCA Memorial Garden is not a burial option. Church members and friends of the church are eligible to have their names and dates of birth and death engraved on the Memorial Garden Wall with a contribution of \$1,000 per person.

2. **Cremation** (Note: If scattering of ashes in lieu of burial is planned, State regulations for scattering on land or on the water must be met.)

Immediate Cremation – The body is cremated as soon after death is practical and the ashes are returned to the family. A memorial service can be scheduled shortly after the death or later.

Cremation After Viewing - The body is prepared for viewing with cremation to follow.

Memorial Reef – Eternal Reefs, Inc. of Georgia will combine ashes of the deceased and cement to create a reef to be placed at sea as habitat for marine life.

Cremation services are available from crematoriums and through many funeral homes.

Crematoriums do not accommodate visitation. Funeral homes with on-site crematories may be several hundred dollars less expensive than those who use off-site services.

See:

For Crematoriums, Funeral Homes and Cemeteries, App.2

Assistance with Funeral/Burial Expense, App. 3

D.

Funeral or Memorial Service and Reception

Meet with the Minister to plan the service.

- ☐ Set the date, time and place for services.
- ☐ Discuss *Order of Service* options.
- ☐ Discuss readings, prayers and poems.
- ☐ Discuss musical selections and accompaniment.
- ☐ Discuss background information to help the Minister know the deceased beyond his/her church contacts.

Consult with the Church Administrator to plan details.

- ☐ Arrange for memorial *Order of Service* and program design, production and printing.
- ☐ Discuss Sound Booth (if at UUCA). Can CD of the service be provided to the family?
- ☐ Flowers for sanctuary and reception table(s).
- ☐ What to do with flowers following the service.
- ☐ Refreshments.
- ☐ Display of pictures, videos, slide shows, other memorabilia.
- ☐ Memory scrapbook contributions from attendees.
- ☐ Guest Book.

Other Considerations

- ☐ Arrange to have the house secured during the memorial service.

E.

Business Affairs

- ☐ Determine computer password(s).
- ☐ Notify the Personal Representative or lawyer of decedent's Will.
- ☐ Check with the lawyer for the estate to see if an estate bank account will need to be set up to deal with any outstanding bills. If bills need to be paid from your own account, keep meticulous records so that you can be reimbursed by the estate.
- ☐ Notify financial planner/stockbroker.
- ☐ Notify Postal Service to forward mail or cancel.
- ☐ Cancel all subscriptions, credit cards and other services.
- ☐ Check on bank accounts, car titles, utilities, landlords, taxes and regular housekeeping bills.
- ☐ Check on life and casualty insurance and death benefits. Check on income for survivors.
- ☐ Locate marriage certificate for survivor benefits.
- ☐ Check with the lawyer for the estate to see if an estate bank account will need to be set up to deal with any outstanding bills. If bills need to be paid from your own account, keep meticulous records so that you can be reimbursed by the estate.
- ☐ Recycle or donate medical devices or health aides (hearing aids, glasses, walkers, etc.) *See: Where to Recycle Medical Devices, App 4.*
- ☐ Dispose of medications at approved location.

F.

Hymns Appropriate for a Memorial Service From the Unitarian Universalist Association Hymnal

Singing the Living Tradition

Abide with Me.....	page 101
Amazing Grace.....	205
Blessed Spirit of My Life.....	86
Dona Nobis Pacem (round).....	388
For All the Saints.....	103
I Cannot Think of Them as Dead.....	96
Just as Long as I Have Breath.....	6
Let Hope and Sorrow Now Unite.....	412
The Lone Wild Bird.....	15
Nearer My God to Thee.....	87
Part in Peace.....	411
Precious Lord, Take My Hand.....	199
Spirit of Life.....	123
Voice Still and Small.....	391
Winds Be Still.....	83

G.

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Appendix 1

What do I need certified death certificates for?

- The transfer of an individual, or joint CHECKING ACCOUNT, if it is in the name of more than one person without the words "or" "and/or" appearing on the account's ownership.
- Transfer of an individual or joint SAVINGS ACCOUNT if it is in the name of more than one person without the words "or" "and/or" appearing on the account's ownership.
- Transfer of an individual SAFE DEPOSIT BOX or a safe deposit box in the name of other parties unless the ownership is stated as "or" "and/or."
- Transfer of each TITLE OF REAL ESTATE OWNERSHIP. This applies to property with the title stated as "Joint Tenancy with the Right of Survivorship."
- Transfer of each TITLE OF OWNERSHIP for all registered motor vehicles. Multiple names on the title DOES NOT apply unless the words "or" "and/or" appear on the title between the names of the registered owners.
- One for each LIFE INSURANCE POLICY claim. If there are multiple policies with one single company, a separate certified copy of the death certificate may be required for each policy number.
- One for each claim of a BURIAL or FUNERAL INSURANCE plan.
- One for each death benefit claim from a UNION.
- Transfer of ownership of STOCK. One for each transaction if the stock is sold or transferred separately.
- Transfer or redemption of BONDS (savings or otherwise).
- Transfer or redemption of TREASURY BILLS (T-Bills).
- Transfer or redemption of CERTIFICATES OF DEPOSIT (CD'S).
- Transfer or redemption of MONEY MARKET ACCOUNTS.
- To "roll-over" an IRA account.
- Federal and State Tax Returns

Appendix 2

Local Crematoriums, Funeral Homes and Cemeteries

Hartley Miller Funeral Home	7527 Harford Road	Baltimore, MD 21234	410-444-4433
Hines-Rinaldi Funeral Home	11800 New Hampshire Ave	Silver Spring, MD 20904	301-622-2290
Hodges & Edwards Funeral Home	3910 Silver Hill Rd.	Suitland, MD 20746	301-899-0687
Horton's Funeral Home	600 Kennedy St.	Washington, DC 20011	202-829-9000
Howell Funeral Home	10220 Guilford Rd 4600 Liberty Hgts. Rd.	Jessup, MD 20794 Baltimore, MD 21207	301-604-0101 410-485-3500
Hubbard Funeral Home	4107 Wilkens Ave.	Baltimore, MD 21229	410-242-3300
Jenkins Funeral Home	7474 Landover Rd.	Landover, MD 20785	301-322-2300
Kalas Funeral Home	6160 Oxon Hill Rd. 2973 Solomons Island Rd	Oxon Hill, MD 20745 Edgewater, MD 21037	301-567-9424 410-956-4488
Kaufman Funeral Home	7520 Washington Blvd. 119 Stricker St.	Elkridge, MD 21075 Baltimore, MD 21223	410-233-8980 410-233-8980
Lasting Tribute	814 Bestgate Road	Annapolis, MD 21401	410-897-4852
Latney's Funeral Home	3831 Georgial Aven., NW	Washington, DC 20011	202-882-2455
Lee Funeral Home	6633 Old Alexandria Ferry Rd. 8125 Southern Md. Blvd.	Clinton, MD 20735 Owings, MD 20736	301-868-0900 301-855-0888
Lohrmann Crem.Funeral Alternative	8717 Green Pastures Dr.	Towson, MD 21286	410-321-1005
Loudon Park Funeral Home	3620 Wilkens Ave.	Baltimore, MD 21229	410-644-1900
March Funeral Home	4300 Wabash Ave.	Baltimore, MD 21215	410-542-2400
Marshall Funeral Home	4308 Suitland Rd.	Suitland, MD 2746	301-736-1616
Maryland Cremation Services	408 Headquarters Dr	Millersville, MD 21108	410-960-7525 888-960-7525
McCully-Polyniak Funeral Home	3204 Mountain Rd. 2327 E. Patapsco Ave. & 3 rd St. 130 E. Fort Ave.	Pasadena, MD 21122 Baltimore, MD 21225 Baltimore, MD 21230	410-255-2381 410-355-1185 410-752-6456
McGuire Funeral Services	7400 Georgia Ave., NW	Washington, DC 20012	202-882-6600
MEDICAL EXAMINER	Dr. David Fowler	Fax: 410-333-6501	410-333-3225
Nutter Funeral Home	2501 Gwynn Falls Pkwy	Baltimore, MD 21216	410-728-6655
Peaceful Alternative Funeral & Crem	2325 York Rd.	Timonium, MD	410-252-8720
Pope Funeral Home	5538 Marlboro Pike 2617 Pennsylvania Ave.	Forestville, MD 20747 Washington, DC 20020	301-568-4100 202-882-6600
Rausch Funeral Home	8325 Mount Harmony Lane	Owings, MD 20736	410-257-6181

Reese and Sons Mortuary	821 West St.	Annapolis, MD 21401	410-268-6015
Rendon-Hale Funeral Home	9013 Annapolis Rd.	Lanham, MD 20706	301-577-7787
Rhines Funeral Home	3015 12 th St.	Washington, DC 20017	202-529-4300
Ruck Funeral Home	1050 York Rd.	Towson, MD 21204	410-823-1700
Simple Tribute Funeral Crematorium	1040 Rockville Pike	Rockville, MD 20852	301-545-0960
Simplicity Cremation and Funeral	(mail only) 7090 Ridge Rd.	Hanover, MD 21076	410-777-5295
Singleton Funeral Home	1 Second Ave.	Glen Burnie, MD 21061	410-766-7070
Slack Funeral Home	3871 Old Columbia Pike	Ellicott City, MD	410-465-4400
Stallings Funeral Home	3111 Mountain Road	Pasadena, MD 21122	410-360-1770
Sterling Ashton Funeral Home	736 Edmonson Ave.	Catonsville, MD 21228	410-747-5324
Sterling Funeral Services	1601 Kenilworth Ave., NE	Washington, DC 20019	202-396-8159
Stevens Funeral Home	1501 E. Port Ave.	Baltimore, MD 21230	410-752-7739
Taylor Funeral Home	147 Duke of Gloucester St.	Annapolis, MD 21401	410-263-4422
Taylor's Funeral Home Uniform Services Hospital - Body Donation	1722 N. Capitol St., NW	Washington, DC 20002 Bethesda, MD	202-882-2732 301-295-3334
Witzke Funeral Home	1630 Edmondson Ave. 4112 Old Columbia Pike	Catonsville, MD 21228 Ellicott City, MD 21043	410-744-8600 410-465-2848

Appendix 3

Assistance with Funeral/Burial Expense

- The Anne Arundel County Department of Social Services can help with expenses if the deceased was receiving assistance through DDS prior to death.
<http://dhr.maryland.gov/weathering-tough-times/burial-assistance/>

80 West Street, Annapolis, MD 21401
Phone: 410-269-4500

7500 Ritchie Highway, Glen Burnie, MD 21061
Phone: 410-421-8500

- Maryland Department of Veterans Affairs

16 Francis Street, Annapolis, MD 21401
Phone: 410-260-3838

For location and contact information of veteran's cemeteries, call 410-923-6981. There are five veteran cemeteries in Maryland.

A veteran is entitled to be buried in a veteran cemetery without charge for the plot, grave liner, headstone and interment. Other costs are not covered. Space may be reserved at the site for dependents upon payment of \$600.

- Social Security Administration www.ssa.gov
Phone: 800-772-1213

Note: Social Security Administration provides a "survivor" death benefit of \$255

Appendix 4

Recycling Medical Devices

Eyeglasses

- Lions Club drop boxes, contact directory@lionclubs.org for locations
- New Eyes www.new-eyes.org/recycle
- Eye doctor offices

Hearing Aids

- Starkey Hearing Foundation
6701 Washington Avenue South
Eden Prairie, MN 55344
Phone: 800-328-8602
www.starkeyhearingfoundation.org
- Hearing Charities of America
Phone: 816-333-8300
www.hearingaiddonations.org
 - Hearing Loss Association of America
www.hearingloss.org for local chapter

Medical Equipment

- ALS Association www.alsa.org
- Goodwill
- Muscular Dystrophy Association www.mda.org
- Salvation Army
- Severn River Lions Club
714 B & A Boulevard
Severna Park, MD 21146
Phone: 410-439-5770
- Free listings for the sale of used medical equipment:
www.craigslist.com; www.recycledmedical.com; www.usedhme.com

Donations to nonprofit organizations are tax-deductible with a receipt.

**Addendum to the
End of Life Planning Guide**

A Collection of Favorite Benedictions, Poems, Prayers, & Readings
Suitable for a Memorial Service

(compiled March 2007)

Opening Words

Amid all the noise in our lives,
we take this moment to sit in silence ==
to give thanks for another day;
to give thanks for all those in our lives
who have brought us warmth and love;
to give thanks for the gift of life.

- We know we are on our pilgrimage here but a brief moment in time.

Let us open ourselves, here, now,
to the process of becoming more whole ==
of living more fully;
of giving and forgiving more freely;
of understanding more completely
the meaning of our lives here on this earth.

by Tim Haley

We gather together in this space to honor and understand our lives.
We bring our pasts and would share them, our dreams and would express them.
We use words, song, silence, and gesture. Words cannot define our lives,
but they enable us to reach out to each other, to tell and to listen,
that we may be renewed, connected, unburdened.

Apprehend with wonder the lives of those around you,
for "from wonder into wonder existence opens." *

by Judith G. Mannheim

*Quoting Lao Tzu

Closing Words

In the end it won't matter how much we have,
but how generously we have given,
It won't matter how much we know,
but rather how well we live.
And it won't matter how much we believe,
but how deeply we love.

by John Morgan

May the quality of our lives be our benediction,
and a blessing to all whom we touch,

by Philip Randall Giles

May this ending be our beginning.
Let us begin -- again and again --
to wonder and to cherish and to act,
so that at day's end we will be content
knowing that we have given our all to life.

by Marianne Hachten-Cotter

We walk this earth but a brief moment in time.
Amid our suffering and pain, however great or small,
let us continue to learn how to celebrate life.
Let us continue to grow in our capacity to love ourselves and each other.
And let us continue to move toward the goal of a just world community.
Go this day in a renewed spirit of peace and hope
and with the wisdom to greet the new week.

by Tim Haley

The Quakers speak not of a "worship service" but of their Meeting —
hence this benediction:

With faith in the creative powers of life,
With hope for the future of life in this world,
With love for all others who share this life with us,
Let us go forward together in peace,
Our meeting has ended; let our service begin.

By Lindsay Bates

Benedictions

And now may the blessings of life be upon us and upon this congregation.
May the memories we gather here give us hope for the future,
May the love that we share bring strength and joy to our hearts,
and the peace of this community be with us until we meet again.

by Gary Kowalski

Go in peace.
Hold in your heart the certainty
That the spirit of life is with you always.

When your heart is torn asunder
Or when you soar with sweet joy,
You are never alone, never apart,
From the spirit that resides within us,
That guides our lives and cherishes us always.

Take comfort.
Blessed be.

by Enid A. Virago

With what benediction shall I leave you?

This: In your life, may you know the holy meaning, the mystery that breaks into it every moment. May you live at peace with your world and at peace with yourself. And may the love of truth guide you in your every day. Amen.

by Mark Mosher DeWolfe

Let us bless and keep one another.
Let kindness rule in our hearts
and compassion in our lives,
until we meet again. Amen.

by John Morgan

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord keep all those whom you love,
whether here or in some other place. May God be your companion and
you be God's friend, as you walk together through all the days of your life;
and at the journey's end, may you find the welcome of God's love.

by Charles C. Forman

Meditations

I am the wind, breathing in you and for you, blowing gently over you, caressing you.
I am the earth, holding you. Give me the weight of your body and relax into my arms.
I am the sun, warming you, melting away the cares of this world.
I am the mountain, always here for you, always here for you, always here for you.
I am a river, flowing through you – through your head, your neck, your shoulders,
your arms, your body, your legs, your feet. I give you peace.
I am the ocean, rising and falling, giving you deep beauty and rest.
I am the sky, open space never-ending, open space, vast and edgeless space,
where you may float forever and ever.
I am the Light, the Light of eternal spirit. I am all around you. I am in this world
and in all worlds, for I am the Light of all being.
(all together): I am peace, I am spirit, I am love, I am life growing into new life.

From Remembering Well by Sarah York, pgs. 46-47

The Cost

Death is not too high a price to pay
for having lived. Mountains never die,
nor do the seas or rocks or endless sky.
Through countless centuries of time,
they stay eternal, deathless.
Yet they never live!
If choice there were,
I would not hesitate to choose mortality.
Whatever Fate demanded in return for life I'd give,
for never to have seen the fertile plains nor heard the winds
nor felt the warm sun on sands beside the salty sea,
nor touched the hands of those I love –
without these, all the gains of timelessness
would not be worth one day
of living and of loving;
come what may.

By Dorothy N. Monroe

**Poem: Do not Stand
at my Grave**

Do not stand at my grave and weep
I am not here; I do not sleep,
I am a thousand winds that blow,
I am the diamond's gill on snow.
I am the sunlight on ripened grain.
I am the gentle autumn's rain .
When you awake in the morning's hush,
I am the swift uplifting rush
of quiet birds in circled flight.
I am the soft stars that shine in the night.
Do not stand at my grave and cry,
I am not here, I did not die

Author Unknown

Poem: God Will Carry You

When it seems as though
the Lord's no longer with us,
It's important to remember
what He said:
"If you fail to see Me
walking right beside you,
It's because I have you
in My arms instead-
And together we will cross
The highest mountain,
Together we will face
The stormy sea,
You never are alone,
You're never helpless!
I'll carry you-
Let go and lean on Me."

By Emily Matthews

Poems

from "Another country"
by Mary Pipher

I wished for death often
but now that I am at its door
I have changed my mind
about the world,
It should go on; it is beautiful,
even as a dream filled with
water and seed,
plants and animals, others like myself,
ships and buildings and messages
filling the air-a beauty,
if I have ever seen one.
In the next world,
should I remember this one,
I will praise it
above everything.

By David Ignatow,
"Above Everything"

From too much love of living,
From hope and fear set free,
We thank with brief thanksgiving
Whatever gods may be
That no life lives forever;
That dead men rise up never;
That even the weariest river
Winds somewhere save to sea.

By Algernon Swinburne,
"The Garden of Proserpine"

from "Remembering Well"
by Sarah York

A long time I have lived with you
And now we must be going
Separately to be together.
Perhaps I shall be the wind
To blur your smooth waters
So that you do not see your face too much.
Perhaps I shall be the star
To guide your uncertain wings
So that you have direction in the night.
Perhaps I shall be the fire
To separate your thoughts
So that you do not give up.
Perhaps I shall be the rain
To open up the earth
So that your seed may fall.
Perhaps I shall be the snow
To let your blossoms sleep
So that you may bloom in spring.
Perhaps I shall be the stream
To play a song on the rock
So that you are not alone.
Perhaps I shall be a new mountain
So that you always have a home.

By Nancy Wood

Hold on to what is good
even if it is
a handful of earth.
Hold on to what you believe
even if it is
a tree which stands by itself.
hold on to what you must do
even if it is
a long way from here.
Hold on to life even when
it is easier letting go.
Hold on to my hand even when
I have gone away from you.

By Nancy Wood

Poems

To Joe at His Burial
by Olivia Woodward
from "Remembering Well"
by Sarah York

The life contained
In your body,
Answering to gravity
And exhaustion,
Hunger and lust,
Is free;

The life you dared
To express, pursuing
Your physical edge;
The life harnessed,
As you caught and rode
On the wave of humanity,
Is free;

The life that sought
The meaning of itself,
Can now be itself;
The skin that fit you,
Weighted and held you,
Has fallen away
-Without limit, without form -;
Your spirit is now free.

We celebrate your new freedom.
We bury the shell
That held your life;
We bury the dream of you;
We bury dreams we had of you;
We bury dreams of ourselves.

We offer back to the Earth
What is hers, replacing
The remains in the depths
Of her womb,
We offer back to God
All we thought was ours,
Releasing our claims to you.

I mourn you: My life,
My spirit. My soul.
My brother. I bury
Part of myself here,
A part I imagined was me
And is not.
What separated me from you,
Has fallen away.

All that I lose
Was never mine.

What moves my legs
My heart, my breath
Will not die, or change.
This eternal me
Will remain bound to you
Forever in love,
Your sister.

Poems

Untitled

by S. Hall Young
from "Remembering Well"
by Sarah York

Let me die, working,
Still tackling plans unfinished,
tasks undone!
Clean to its end, swift may my race be run,
No laggard steps, no faltering, no shirking;
Let me die working!

Let me die thinking.
Let me fare forth still with an open mind,
Fresh secrets to unfold, new truths to find,
My soul undimmed, alert,
no question blinking;
Let me die thinking.

Let me die, giving,
The substance of life for life's enriching;
Time, things, and self
on heaven converging,
No selfish thought, loving,
redeeming, living;
Let me die giving.

Untitled

by Anonymous
from "Remembering Well"
by Sarah York

When I am gone, I shall go before you.
Think of me not as a disconsolate lover.
Think of the joy it gave me to adore you,
Of sun and stars you helped me to
discover.
And his still living part of me
Will come to sit beside you in the empty
room.
Then all on earth that death has left behind
Will be the merry part of me within your
mind.

Untitled

Inscription on a sundial
at the University of Virginia;
from *Great Occasions*, Carl Seaburg, Ed.

Time is too slow for those who wait;
too swift for those who fear;
too long for those who grieve;
too short for those who rejoice.
But for those who live, Time is Eternity.
Hours fly, flowers die,
new days new ways pass by.
Love stays.

Prayers

May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind always be at you back,
May the sun shine warm upon your face
And the rains fall soft upon your fields,
And, until we meet again,
May God hold you in the hollow of his hand,

Old Irish Blessing

Prayer - Kirk Loadman-Copeland (For a Memorial Service)

God of tears and the mysterious silence, God of suffering and God of hope, you have made for everything a season. This is the season of our sorrow, of our grief, and we pray for grace to deal with what seems impossible to deal with. We remember the promise made to those who mourn, yet too often it seems that comfort is beyond our grasp. We know that we cannot bear this burden alone. Should we pray for our grief to be transformed or, is the purpose of our grief to transform us? Will our sorrow lead somewhere unexpected? Might it lead us back to life if we follow it? Is it a reminder of the precious reality of life and love? The death of our loved one has created a vast, empty space within our lives, a great longing within our hearts. Can it ever be filled? Can it be healed by the sacred memory that makes our loved one forever a part of us?

So many questions, O God, and so much silence. May we be patient toward all that is unanswered in our hearts. And may others be patient with us, with our sorrow, our anger, our fear and our questions. We are those who mourn. We seek the comfort that we can offer each other and the blessings of divine love and grace. Amen.

Prayer - John H. Robinson

Incandescent, the bright autumn leaf clings to the branch, holding on to glory, then floats to the ground in its fine array -- down to winter's snows and spring's muck and mold. Does it rant and rave into that good night? Or does it, Lord, make this last burst of glory in song of praise for its fate, knowing its part in life is to follow thy will on through mud's spring from leaf to humus, to be drawn up in some other summer's flowers? So may we, O God, choose your fate, knowing tomorrow, defeated or lost, holds yet greater summer,

Prayer

by M. Maureen Killoran (from "Remembering Well", by Sarah York)

Spirit of Life, and so also or Companion in times of death, be with all who gather here in their hour of sadness, Help us to recall that we come into the world in mystery and we go away the same. Give us strength to feel the blessing of connection, which goes deeper than human knowing, and hope enough to honor the gifts of life, even in these dark days.

Be with _____ - and all _____'s family and friends. Save them from bitterness or hardness of heart, Keep them open to feeling the love that remains for them, ever renewing in the world. In their grief, help them to remember always the gifts and cherish the memory that came from knowing _____.

May all here present carry forward the goodness, the love, and the courage of _____, whose life and death have brought us together today. Keep _____ safe, and may those who love her/him rest assured of what is most true, that his/her goodness and her/his beauty are at rest in the healing and sustaining heart of God.

Prayer

by M. Maureen Killoran (from "Remembering Well", by Sarah York)

O God of hope and healing, we gather in your presence because we don't know what to do with our hearts in this time of loss. We call you by many names. Some of us do not call to you at all, but we are here, together on this day.

Grant that we may go from this place empowered by your strengthening presence. May the living energy of compassion open to us the healing that comes when we give ourselves permission to grieve.

Spirit of light and also of darkness, welcome _____'s body that will soon return to the embrace of the maternal earth, and sustain his /her spirit in the joyful celebration of eternity.

Be with this family today and in the weeks to come. May they know always that no matter how great the pain, the joy that comes from loving is always worth the risk. Help them to see, in the days ahead, the adventures that lie before them, to value the freedom that comes with new beginnings, and to know that, though _____ walks beside them no longer, they are blessed forever by the legacy of her/his love.

O God who knows our every hope and fear, cradle gently the distress of all who feel so deeply the loss of this good man/woman. Touch those who through this sorrow are reminded of the cumulative losses of their lives. Grant that each of us may hold on to a shining moment of memory, that we may carry it in our hearts as a candle, to companion us in the dark. May we have faith that goodness reigns, that hope endures, and we may feel your presence in our hearts through the continuity of trust and love. Amen.

Prayer for an Child or Infant Death

by M Maureen Killoran (from "Remembering Well" by Sarah York)

God of hope and grieving, we are silent in your presence.

Help us to know that every life is whole in your eyes,
no dream is incomplete in your heart.

Grant that we may come before you and each other with a measure of gratitude for the gifts we have been given – for the privilege of this bitter celebration in the circle of supportive family and friends, for the possibility of healing, for the promise of the sunrise after the lengthy desperation of grief's night. Give to (*names of parents*) the courage to continue. Grant that they may hold fast to one another in this time of sorrow and that their family and friends may find the strength to be supportive, not backing away from the intensity of grief.

Let the stories be told over and over.

Let the tears be honored as a token of caring and of love.

Let the dreams be named and not forgotten.

Let anger be in time eased into forgiveness.

Spirit of Compassion, inspire these people to hug easily and often, for it is your hand that soothes us through this human touch. Let all hopes be cherished, that they may find a new focus and in due course come to live again.

Spirit of Life and Hope, we trust that you have taken _____'s spirit to your bosom. Help now those who remain on this earth, those whose challenge it is to reconstruct their lives and begin again in love. Amen.

Responsive Readings

From UUA Hymnal "Singing the Living Tradition"

Respond to each line with the words: "We remember you."

In the rising of the sun and in its going down.....

In the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter.....

In the opening of buds and in the rebirth of spring....

In the blueness of the sky and in the warmth of summer.....

In the rustling of leaves and in the beauty of autumn.....

In the beginning of the year and when it ends....

When we are weary and in need of strength.....

When we are lost and sick at heart.....

When we have joys we yearn to share.....

Yes, we remember you. So long as we live, _____ too shall live, for
he/she is a part of all who have known her/him.

(You may also use this litany to add additional verses pertinent to the person)

"And there may be other times that invoke _____'s memory in particular. I invite
you now to add to this litany a phrase that comes to your mind, and we will all respond
again to each phrase with the words, "We remember you."

From Roland B. Gittelsohn

Responsive Reading

All Souls

by May Sarton
from "Singing the Living Tradition"

Did someone say that there would
be an end,

*An end, Oh, an end, to love
and mourning!*

What has been once so interwoven
cannot be raveled, nor the gift
ungiven.

*Now the dead move through all
of us
still glowing.*

Mother and child, lover and lover
mated,
are wound and bound together
and enflowing.

*What has been plaited cannot
be unplaited-
only the strands grow richer
with each loss*

And memory makes kings and
queens
of us.

*Dark into light, light into
darkness, spin.
When all the birds have flown
to some real haven,*

We who find shelter in the
warmth within,
Listen, and feel new—cherished,
new-forgiven,
*As the lost human voices speak
through us and blend our
complex love,
our mourning without end.*

Responsive Reading

Those Who Live Again

by George Eliot
from "Singing The Living Tradition"

O, may I join the choir invisible of
those immortal dead who live again
in minds made better by their presence:

*Live in pulses stirred to generosity,
in deeds of daring rectitude,
in scorn of miserable aims that
end with self;*

In thoughts sublime that pierce the
night like stars, with their mild
persistence urge our search to
vaster issues.

*So to live is heaven, to make
undying music in the world,
breathing a beauteous order
that controls with growing sway
the growing life of humanity.*

Than better self shall live till human
time fold its eyelids, and the human
sky be gathered like a scroll within
the tomb.

*This is life to come, which martyred
souls have made more glorious for us,
who strive to follow.*

May I reach that purest heaven—
be to other souls the cup of strength
in some great agony;

*Enkindle generous ardor, feed
pure love, beget the smiles that
have no cruelty;*

Be the sweet presence of a good
diffused, and in diffusion ever
more intense.

*So shall I join the choir invisible,
whose music is the gladness of
the world.*

Reading from "The Prophet" by Kahlil Gibran

You would know the secret of death.
But how would you find it unless you seek it in the heart of life?
The owl whose night-bound eyes are blind unto the day cannot unveil the mystery of light.
If you would indeed behold the spirit of death, open your heart wide unto the body of life.
For life and death are one, even as the river and the sea are one.

In the depth of your hopes and desires lies your silent knowledge of the beyond;
And like seeds dreaming beneath the snow your heart dreams of spring.
Trust the dreams, for in them is hidden the gateway to eternity.
Your fear of death is but the trembling of the shepherd when he stands before the king
whose hand is to be laid upon him in honour.
Is the shepherd not joyful beneath his trembling, that he shall wear the mark of the king?
Yet is he not more mindful of his trembling?

For what is it to die but to stand naked in the wind and to melt into the sun?
And what is it to cease breathing, but to free the breath from its restless tides, that it may
rise and expand and seek God unencumbered?

Only when you drink from the river of silence shall you indeed sing.
And when you have reached the mountain top, then you shall begin to climb.
And when the earth shall claim your limbs, then shall you truly dance.

Quotes

What greater thing is there for two human souls than to feel that they are joined for life; to
strengthen each other in all labor, to rest on each other in all sorrow, to minister to each
other in all pain, to be one with each other in silent, unspeakable memories at the moment
of parting.

By George Elliot

Perhaps wisdom is simply a matter of waiting, and healing a question of time.
And anything good you've ever been given is yours forever.

From "Kitchen Table Wisdom", by Rachel Naomi Remen, M.D.

I believe that imagination is stronger than knowledge-
That myth is more potent than history.
I believe that dreams are more powerful than facts-
That hope always triumphs over experience =
That laughter is the only cure for grief.
And that love is stronger than death.

By Robert Fulghum

Exerpts from "The Leaf and the Cloud"
By Mary Oliver

When loneliness comes stalking, go into the fields,
Consider the orderliness of the world.

Notice something you have never noticed before,

like the tambourine sound of the snow-cricket
whose pale green body is no longer than your thumb.

Stare hard at the hummingbird, in the summer rain,
Shaking the water-sparks from its wings.

Let grief be your sister, she will whether or no.

Rise up from the stump of sorrow, and be green also,
Like the diligent leaves.

A lifetime isn't long enough for the beauty of this world
And the responsibilities of your life.

Scatter your fowers over the graves, and walk away.
Be good-matured and untidy in your exuberance.

In the glare of your mind, be modest.

And beholden to what is tactile, and thrilling.

Live with the beetle, and the wind.

Page 6

When death,
carts me off to the bottomlands,
when I begin
the long work of rising --

Death, whoever and whatever you are, tallest king of
tall kings, grant me these wishes: unstring my bones;
let me be not one thing but all things. and wondrously
scattered; shake me free from my name. Let the wind, and
the wildflowers, and the cabbird never know it. Let
time loosen me like the bead of a flower from its wrappings
of leaves. Let me begin the changes, let me --

Can you imagine a world without certainty?

The wind rises the wind falls.

The gravels of the world,
the stones of the world
are in their proper places.

The vast, writhing
worms of the sea
are in their places.

The white gulls
on the wet rocks
are in their places.

All is certainty.

Pg. 37-8

Excerpts from "The Leaf and the Cloud"

By Mary Oliver

Goodbye to the goldfinches
in their silver baskets,
Goodbye to the pilot whales, and the curl of their spines
in the crisp waves.
Goodbye to the grasshopper.
Goodbye to the pond lilies, the turtle with her
cat's head.
Goodbye to the lion's mane, floating in the harbor
like a spangled veil.

Goodbye to the moon uprising in the east.
Goodbye to the going forth, and coming home.
Goodbye to the going forth, and holding on, and worrying.
Goodbye to the engine of breath.

The knee sings its anguish.
The ears fill with the sound of ringing water.
The muscles of the eyes pull toward sleep.

Goodbye to the swaying trees.
Goodbye to the black triangles of the winter sea.
Goodbye to oranges, the prick of their fragrance.
Goodbye to the fox sparrow,
goodbye to the blue winged teal.
Goodbye to lettuce, and the pale turnip,
and the gatherings of the rice fields.
Goodbye to the morning light.
Goodbye to the goldfinches and their wavering songs.

Slowly
up the hill,
like a thicket of white flowers,
forever
is coming.

Pg. 40-1

Think of me
when you see the evening star.
Think of me when you see the wren
the flowing root of the creek beneath him,
dark... silver... and cold

Remember me I am the one who told you
he sings for happiness.
I am the one who told you
that the grass is also alive, and listening.

alleluiath alleluiath
sighs the pale-green moth
on the screen door,

alleluiath alleluiath
the red tongues of the white swans
shine out of their black beaks
as they shout
as their wings rise and fall

rise and fall
oh rise and fall
through the ragging flowers of the snow.

Pg 52-3

Readings from
"Learning to Fall The Blessings of an Imperfect Life"
by Philip Simmons

".....If eternity includes all time, then we are living in eternity now. But we must widen our angle of view enough to see it. When we do, we feel in touch with life's unchanging essence, the bedrock beneath the flowing stream. We enter the eternal live beneath the surface of this passing one." (pg. 149)

"When we accept out impermanence, letting go of our attachment to things as they are, we open ourselves to grace. When we can stand calmly in the face of our passing away, when we have the courage to look even into the face of a child and say, "This flower, too, will fade and be no more," when we can sense the nearness of death and feel its rightness equally with birth, then we will have crossed over to that farther shore where death can hold no fear for us, where we will know the measure of the eternal that is ours in this life." (pg. 151)

"We all have within us this capacity for wonder, this ability to break the bonds of ordinary awareness and sense that though our lives are fleeting and transitory, we are a part of something larger, eternal and unchanging." (pg.152)

".....There are times when the fact that we are in different bodies, or have lived in different centuries, or that some of us have died while others live on or are yet to be born, seems a trivial difference compared to what unites us and abides. Our journey takes us to suffering and sorrow, but there is a way through suffering to something like redemption, something like joy , to that larger version of ourselves that lives outside of time." (pg. 153)

"Some of us going willingly to the edge, some of us are driven to it, some of us find ourselves there by grace. But all of us get there at some time in our lives, when through the gateway of the present moment we glimpse something beyond. And when we do, may we open ourselves to wonder, may we surrender to the mystery that passes understanding, may we find ourselves at the threshold of this eternal life." (pg. 154)

My Life: I did it right...

I would that my death diminish no one.
Rather, I hope my life enriches all whom
it touches.

Let it be said, for so I have lived:

I learned how to live.
I learned how to love.
I learned how to think.
I learned how to feel.
I learned how to serve God and Man,

And I did so.

I lived with compassion.

I experienced life,

Sometimes tasting and sampling,

More often, feasting and devouring.

I experienced joy,

Beheld beauty,

Hugged life and love in others,

Felt their hugging me,

Tasted and Savored Nature's Gifts,

Made love passionately,

Took time to smell the roses,

Touched a baby's skin,

And a kitten's fur,

Petted a dog.

Swam in the sea,

Rode a horse,

Soaked in hot water,

Skied in the snow,

Walked in the rain,

Ran on the beach,

Held people in my arms,

Was held in people's arms,

Heard symphonies, blues, jazz,

Listened to birds,

Saw sunrise and sunset

Caught a fish,

Sailed a boat,

Climbed a mountain,

Slept under the stars,

Slept between clean sheets,

Bore children and loved them,

Loved others that weren't mine,

Cried tears, both sad and glad,

Got angry, Got scared,
Was courageous,
Gave up being brave,
Was curious and adventuresome,
Stopped feeling guilty,
Learned not to suffer,
Took responsibility,
Learned to dance,
Danced this life

(The only dance there is)

Almost died several times,

And finally...I did.

The world has been good to me, and I
have been good to it. I had companions,
and have been a companion, and we've
walked a way together, and enriched
each other, and celebrated life together.

Life is a celebration, and therefore, so is
death. Is a sunset less beautiful than a
sunrise? I have lived with integrity and
died with it, too. I have found
wholeness and I am complete with life.
Would I do it over again?

No need to...

I did it right the first time.

By Marian S. Shaw

"My Bill Of Last Rights"

The Right To Be In Control: Grant me the right to make as many decisions as possible regarding my care. Please do not take choices from me. Let me make my own decisions.

The Right To Have A Sense Of Purpose: I have lost my job. I can no longer fulfill my role in my family. Please help me find some sense of purpose in my last days.

The Right To Reminisce: There has been pleasure in my life, moments of pride, moments of love. Please give me some time to recollect those moments. And please listen to my recollections.

The Right To Be Comfortable: The pain involved in dying is multifaceted. Although not all my pain can be taken away, please relieve whatever portion you can.

The Right To Touch And Be Touched: Sometimes I need distance. Yet sometimes I have a strong need to be close. When I want to reach out, please come to me and hold me as I hold you.

The Right To Laugh: People often - far too often - come to me wearing masks of seriousness. Although dying, I still need to laugh. Please laugh with me and help others to laugh as well.

The Right To Be Angry And Sad: It is difficult to leave behind all my attachments and all that I love. Please allow me the opportunity to be angry and sad.

The Right To Have A Respected Spirituality: Whether I am questioning or affirming, doubting or praising, I sometimes need your ear, a non-judging ear. Please let my spirit travel its own journey, without judging its direction.

The Right To Hear The Truth: If you withhold the truth from me, you will treat me as if I am no longer living. I am still living, and I need to know the truth about my life. Please help me find that truth.

The Right To Be In Denial: If I hear the truth and choose not to accept it, that is my right. Please honor this right along with all these other rights. One day, you too will want the same rights.

