

# Example: Wiccan Graveside Funeral for Cremation

Make sure that chairs are available for those who cannot stand for long periods. Also be sensitive to the weather. If it is raining you may want a tented area or other covering.

Being outside presents challenges for setting the mood as you cannot control either the weather or ambient noise. Do not hesitate to pause if outside influences make it hard to hear. On the other hand, being outside is both comforting and allows more flexibility for the time you have for the rite.

Make sure that immediate family is closest to you so they will not have any problems hearing. For large number of people you may require an outdoor mike and speakers to make sure that everyone can hear.

The following example is especially appropriate for a cremation. It is suggested that the readings be altered if another form of funeral rite is being used.

## Gathering Music

If music is being used it should be loud enough to hear but not so loud that people cannot speak to each other or hear you. Instruct people as they arrive as how and where to stand / sit. You may use a circle, a semi-circle, or rows of people.

Examples of music that could be used are:

- "The river is flowing," by Lindie Lila
- "Dante's Prayer," by Loreena McKennit
- "Autumn Time," by Libana
- "When we are Gone," on Reclaiming's Second Chant album
- "Partings," on The Heart is the Only Nation album by Ruth Barrett and Cynthia Smith

## Opening Remarks

### Priest/ess:

We gather together today to honor to the memory of \_\_\_\_\_ who left our beloved earth on \_\_\_\_\_. We know that \_\_\_\_\_ would appreciate that we gather together out of doors and allow this to be our sacred space.

## Gathering together of family and friends

### Priest/ess:

Let us take each other's hand to symbolize that we know that we come together as a community to share in this rite. To give each other comfort and to remember our connections to \_\_\_\_\_.

## Opening Prayer

### Priest/ess:

Mother of us all gather us in your arms. You, who know the grief of losing a loved one, send us comfort.

Father and protector stand by our side. You, who know life and death, send us guidance.

We your sons and daughters call you forth to join us as we remember \_\_\_\_\_. Let us feel our sorry and remember our joys.

You may let go your hands.

## Song/ Chant

### Priest/ess (Sing 3 – 4 times):

In acknowledgement that we all return to our basic elements let us sing "The earth, the air, the fire, the water".

The earth, the air, the fire, the water, return, return, return, return  
The earth, the air, the fire, the water, return, return, return, return

I-A, I-A, I A, IA, I-O, I-O, I-O, I-O  
I-A, I-A, I A, IA, I-O, I-O, I-O, I-O

### Priest/ess:

\_\_\_\_\_ we return your ashes to the earth  
\_\_\_\_\_ we hear your memories on the wind  
\_\_\_\_\_ we see your passion in the flame  
\_\_\_\_\_ we feel your love in the rain

\_\_\_\_\_ your essence in memory remains. Travel now to the Summerland's, rest and return again.

## Second Prayer or Poem

### Priest/ess:

Take me to some high place  
Of heather, rock and ling.  
Scatter my dust and ashes,  
Feed me to the wind.  
So that I will be  
Part of all you see,  
The air you are breathing.  
I'll be part of the curlew's cry  
And the soaring hawk,  
The blue milkwort  
And the sundew hung with diamonds.  
I'll be riding the gentle wind  
That blows through your hair,  
Reminding you how we shared  
In the joy of living.

## Eulogy

### Priest/ess:

\_\_\_\_\_ would like to share some thoughts about \_\_\_\_\_.

## Sharing of memories

### Priest/ess:

We each have memories of \_\_\_\_\_. If anyone one would like to share such memories now would be the time to do so.

## Graveside Activity

**Priest/ess** (Stand next to the plant that will be given to the family to take home.):

We each wish to keep the memory of \_\_\_\_\_ alive within us. We thus add our energies to this plant to symbolize our wish to keep alive our remembrances.

(Tell each person to come up to the plant and give add a little dirt to the pot)

## **Final Prayer**

**Priest/ess:** From Hinduism, Isha Upanishad 17

Now my breath, and spirit goes to the Immortal,  
and this body ends in ashes;  
OM. O Mind! remember. Remember the deeds.  
Remember the actions.

*Added for Wiccan ceremony*

Now I must go forth to the Summerlands  
and this life leaves only memories;  
Remember me at Samahin. Remember the joys.  
Remember the love.

So Be It

## **Formal words of parting**

**Priest/ess:**

We now close this formal time together. I request that the immediate family stay for a few brief words.

(If a reception is being held instructions about where and when the reception will be are given.)

Let us leave with the knowledge that the wheel of life will continue turn giving us strength and comfort as we say merry part.

"Merry, meet, merry part, and merry meet again. Bright the cheeks and warm the heart and may the circle never end"

## **Short circling with immediate family**

**Priest/ess:**

\_\_\_\_\_ is now among the blessed ancestors. While your relationship with him/her will never be the same they will still influence your life. Remember them and keep them close to your heart.

(Anoint each person with a bit of water)

May our lady and lord give you the strength to mourn and in time to find joy.

(After you have blessed everyone)

May gentle rains join your tears  
May the breezes stir your memories  
May sparks of fire inspire your actions  
May the earth bring you healing  
May our gracious lady and noble lord  
be with you always.

Blessed be