

Example: Indoor Wiccan ceremony

Note: The following uses a quarter system (i.e., North, South, East, and West) that is different from many Wiccan traditions. The quarters can easily be moved and should be adapted to the system that was favored by the deceased. Make sure to bring a compass so you can figure out the directions.

Respects to the dead (optional)

You should instruct people as they enter about any permissible ways to pay respects to the dead. This may include leaving something by a picture or viewing the body.

Gathering music

You should play music as people are seated. The music can be something that was special to the deceased or a piece such as "Partings" by Cynthia Smith or "The River is Flowing".

Opening remarks

Priest/ess:

We gather together this day/night because each of us was touched some way by _____. When someone dies, we know that it is important to gather together to acknowledge his [or her] passing. We recognize that this act of joining together as a community in the face of sorrow is a sacred act.

We gather together this day/night because each of us was touched some way by _____. When someone dies, we know that it is important to gather together to acknowledge his [or her] passing. We recognize that this act of joining together as a community in the face of sorrow is a sacred act.

In the Wiccan tradition, we separate ourselves from our normal lives by casting a circle. We use the circle to create a sacred space that reminds us of the cycles of life and death. Today we cast this circle in honor of _____, who has left our beloved earth.

Dedication of space

West:

WEST, the power of emotion and the traditional place of the dead.

We call you to come and let us feel what we need to feel. We call on tears, we call on laughter and most of all we call on hope.

Come then, oh great powers of WATER, and remain.

North:

NORTH, the power of aspiration and ideas.

We call upon you to help us forget what should be forgotten and remember what should be remembered. We call on memories from the past to guide us and dreams of the future to carry us onwards.

Come then, oh great powers of the AIR, and remain.

East:

EAST, the power of energy and passion.

We call upon you to give us the drive we need to carry on. We call on determination and strength. We call upon the flame of the candle and the light of the sun to remind us that life will continue.

Come then, oh great powers of FIRE, and remain.

South:

SOUTH, the power of the very Earth itself.

We call upon you to give us grounding and healing through our daily tasks. We call on the beauty of the mountains and bounty of the fields to inspire us as we return to our lives.

Come then, oh great powers of EARTH, and remain.

West:

We seal the circle with SPIRIT, which always remains with us.

Clergy on Life and Death

Reading: From *Safe Passages* by Sabina C. Becker

The season of grief is our shutting-down time. We prepare the cottage of our hearts for the winter, securing our windows to the world, stocking the cupboards with that which will sustain us during the cold and dark. Carefully, we rebuild our inner fire, and huddle in its warmth while the storms of winter pass, awaiting the Spring, which will come as surely as the steady passage of the days.

Reading: *A Meditation on Death* by Sabina C. Becker

Death is a piece of Life, not its opposite, not even its end, but merely one station of a larger cycle. We are born, we die, we are reborn in a different shape. Our bodies decompose and feed the flowers that feed the soil that feeds the crops that feed the livestock that feeds us. These are the facts of Life and Death: when something dies, it becomes a part of something else that lives.

We who remain are left with the memories of _____ to comfort us.

Music

Play one or two appropriate songs. The music should be something that is meaningful to the mourners or the deceased.

Examples:

- "Where You Are," by Josh Gorban
- "Turn, Turn, Turn," by The Byrds
- "Wishing You Were Here Again," from "Phantom of the Opera" by Andrew Lloyd Webber
- "Angel," by Sarah McLachlan
- "Partings," by Cyntia Smith
- "Let It Be," by the Beatles

Readings: *Praxilla of Sicyon*

Loveliest of what I leave behind is the sunlight, and loveliest after that the shining stars and the moon's face, but also cucumbers that are ripe, and pears, and apples.

Eulogy

[Relative or friend] _____ would like to share some thoughts about _____.

(Eulogy is given)

Sharing of memories

(Give people time to come and share a brief memory about the deceased.)

Final Prayer/Chant/Song

Will you all join me in "We All Come From the Goddess"?

We all come from the Goddess
And to Her we shall return
Like a drop of rain
Flowing to the ocean

Hoof and Horn
Hoof and Horn
All that dies shall be reborn
Corn and grain
Corn and grain
All that falls shall rise again

Closing Words or Prayer

I would like to share this closing poem.

Do not come when I am dead
To sit beside a low green mound,
or bring the first gay daffodils,
Because I love them so,
For I shall not be there,
You cannot find me there.
Where will I be?
I will be reflected from the bright eyes of the children,
In the smile of the bride and groom on their wedding day;
In the flames of holiday candles;
In the joy of a family gathering.
I will warm your hands through the glow of the winter fire;
I will soothe you with the drop of rain on the roof;
And make your heart leap with the rhythm of the dance;
I will flood your soul with the flaming radiance of the sunrise;
And bring you peace in the tender rose and gold of the after sunset.
All these have made me happy
They are part of me;
I shall become part of them

Announcement of Reception

(If there will be a graveside ceremony, you should give instructions on where it will be held. Additionally, if the family is having a reception, mention the time and place of where it will be held.)

Indication that ceremony is about to end

We close this portion of the rite by taking down the circle that was cast.

(If there will be a graveside ceremony afterwards state the following:)
We shall meet to conclude this memorial at graveside.

West:

WEST, the power of emotion, as we leave help us to feel and heal.

Farewell WATER.

South:

SOUTH, the power of the earth, as we leave, help us take care of ourselves.

Farewell EARTH.

East:

EAST, the power of passion, as we leave help us find new purpose.

Farewell FIRE.

North:

NORTH, the power of ideas, as we leave help us to plan.

Farewell AIR.

West:

We open this circle by invoking Spirit, which always remains with us.

Departing music

(Give instructions to leave the sanctuary while appropriate music is played)