

Graveside Service after Indoor Funeral

Gathering together of family and friends

Depending on the number of people, you can ask those in attendance to either form a "circle" or to just link hands from row to row.

Prayer/statement of intent

This prayer or statement indicates how the remains of the person will be handled.

Graveside activity

There are many activities that may be performed. The people may shovel dirt, plant seeds, place coins by the vessel or write down memories of the deceased. The key thing here is to allow everyone to participate in some way.

During this activity, chanting, playing music or drumming is appropriate.

Final prayer/chant/song

This should be powerful and solemn, with the purpose of releasing the person from this life and allowing them to move on to the next, in whatever spiritual tradition applies. For atheists, a poem or song about the body of the deceased feeding new life in nature might be appropriate.

Formal words of parting

You should indicate that the family will stay for a private moment after the official ceremony. This gives the family time to grieve privately and also lets everyone else know that they should quietly depart.

Wiccan clergy may end the public service with these traditional words: "Merry meet, merry part, and merry meet again. Bright the cheek and warm the heart, and may the circle never end".

Short circling with immediate family and close friends

You should end with a private moment just for the family and close friends. This is the time for prayers and words of comfort and compassion. This should acknowledge their loss and give hope for the future.

Example (Wiccan): *While we never get over the loss of those closest to us, we do move on with the rhythms of life. After mourning, the pain lessens, and we move into a new relationship with those who are no longer physically with us. May the Lady and Lord send you comfort and strength during this season and know that the Wheel of Life will turn again.*