

A celebration of life

A service of thanksgiving and remembrance for our children who died at any age whom we love and commend to God

Welcome to ... United Reformed Church
(or whatever wording is applicable)

As you entered you were given a commemorative card and a candle. You are invited to write your child's name on the card. During the Act of Remembrance you will be invited to bring them both to the front where the candle will be lit.

We meet today to give thanks to Almighty God for the precious gift of life. We especially remember our children who have died and whom we love dearly.

In recalling and celebrating their lives we remember too the promise and hope which God has given us in Jesus who lived and died and loves again. For it is in the context of his life and his promises that we may escape from absolute grief and despair. Enabled by his promise we can be freed to anticipate, with joy, a shared future, bright beyond anything we have experienced or can understand, yet possible through the Grace of Almighty God, our loving Father.

Let us stand to worship God as we join in singing

Hymn: For the beauty of the earth

Prayer of approach

The Lord's Prayer

First reading

Address

Hymn: We cannot measure how you feel

Second reading

Act of remembrance

Hold fast to this moment; this time and space is for you. God waits in love, listens to what is in your heart and longs to take away the pain.

(All those wishing to participate, please come forward)

Music: Precious child

Now we remember and hold before God our children whose names are written on these cards.

In their names, too, we light these candles, symbols of love, faith and hope. May they burn brightly and lift our hearts and prayers to God.

Let us pray

Jesus said, 'Where your treasure is there shall your hearts be also.'

Minister Heavenly Father, these words would be dry as dust in our mouths if we did not trust in your promises.

All **Lord, to whom shall we go? Yours are the words of eternal life.**

Minister You have said that our names and the names of our children are written on your hands.

We are precious in your sight.

All **Forgive our lack of faith, help our unbelief, so that we may rest content knowing that they are safe in your keeping.**

Minister Encourage and strengthen us by your Holy Spirit. Help us to understand that it is a veil as thin as gossamer that separates us from them and that we are all cradled in your tender, loving care.

All **Our treasure is safe with you and there also may our hearts find peace.**

Minister We pray now for others around the world who mourn the loss of their children. May they find the blessing we seek.

All **In the name of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

Hymn: Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy

Closing responses

Minister Deep peace of the running wave to you

All **Deep peace of the flowing air to you**

Minister Deep peace of the quiet earth to you

All **Deep peace of the shining stars to you**

Minister Deep peace of the Son of Peace to you.

All **Amen.**

Blessing

Music: Gone too soon

Margaret Herbert and Compassionate Friends,
St Andrew's United Reformed Church, Sheffield