

**WHEN WE LOSE SOMEONE WE LOVE**



When someone we love dies, we can experience many different reactions and emotions: things can seem quite unreal  
we may find what has happened really hard to accept  
we may feel angry, or desperately sad, or lost and confused  
sometimes we find that doing everyday things actually helps, and sometimes we feel unable to do anything  
sometimes we want other people close by, and sometimes we wish they would go away

It helps if we understand that all of this is quite normal. Bereavement throws our world into turmoil. Inevitably, we struggle to make sense of what has happened.

At times like this, our thoughts may turn to God. We may feel angry and want to blame God for what has happened. Or, we may feel a need to ask God to help us cope with our grief and loss. Both of these responses are also natural.

God understands and accepts how we feel in all situations. God's love for us and desire to help us are described in the Bible. Here are some verses that offer encouragement and hope in difficult times.

***Jesus said, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.'* (John 11:25-26)**

***(Jesus said) 'Come to me all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.'* (Matthew 11:28)**

***(Jesus said) 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.'* (John 14:27)**

If you have a Bible, you might like to look also at:

Psalm 23

John 14:1-6, 18-19

Romans 8: 31-35, 37-39

You, or someone close to you, have probably contacted a Funeral Director already and made a time for a visit to go through arrangements for the funeral. Funeral Directors are professional people who will carefully assist and advise you as you make all the necessary arrangements and decisions.

If you decide to ask a Uniting Church minister to conduct the service, they too will make a time to come and visit you. They will talk with you, and other family members, about the person who has died, and explain for you the nature and purpose of the funeral service.

This is best understood through the words with which the service begins:

***We are here today to give thanks to God for the life of NNN and to affirm the Christian conviction that while death is the end of mortal life, it marks a new beginning in our relationship with God. We are also here to share the sorrow of those who mourn, and to offer them our love and support.***

The funeral service will include prayers, readings from the Bible, and a short address by the minister. There will also be opportunity to remember, and give thanks for, the life of the person who has died. You can talk freely with the minister about any special requests you may have.

(If the service takes place in a church, it is normally followed by a short act of committal at a crematorium or graveside).

With your consent, the minister will arrange to visit you again after the funeral and will be available to offer ongoing support as you pick up the patterns of daily life once again.

If you feel that you would like to pray, but do not know what to say, you may find the following prayer helpful:

***Dear God,  
Death has taken NNN from us;  
Our faith in life is shaken;  
Our minds keep on asking – why?  
Why does joy end in sorrow?  
Why has our loving ended in tears?***

***Father, please help us to face our grief.  
Give us grace to accept the mystery of life.  
Give us wisdom to understand that –  
Even if our questions were answered,  
Even if we did know why –  
The pain would be no less,  
The loneliness would remain,  
And our hearts would still be aching.  
Father, please help us to live with our grief.***

***Give us comfort,  
That we may endure;  
Give us new strength,  
That we may walk by faith  
Towards the promise of tomorrow;  
Give us fresh courage,  
That we may turn back to life  
With love and deeds that will bless the living.  
Father, please help us, and transform our grief.  
Amen.***

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