

ANIMAL MEMORIAL SERVICE

Gathering Words

Dear Friends,

We gather here together to honor the beloved memory of _____ who has recently passed.
_____ was a much loved member of the _____ family, and he/she will be missed greatly.

Today, we honor _____'s beautiful loving spirit, kind eyes, (once) playful demeanor, and unconditional love. Like an angel, _____'s presence calmed his/her family, soothed them at the end of the day, and made them feel loved when they needed it most. As we say goodbye to this wonderful dog/cat/horse, etc., we are thankful for the gift we have received of having been a part of his/her life, as well.

Reading

To Every Thing There is a Season – Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

To every thing there is a season,
and a time to every purpose under the heaven:
A time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;
A time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
A time to cast away stones,
and a time to gather stones together;
A time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to get, and a time to lose;
A time to keep, and a time to cast away;
a time to rend, and a time to sew;
A time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
a time to love, and a time to hate;
A time of war, and a time of peace.

Prayer

Let us pray:

Heavenly Father/Creative Spirit/Source of Peace (choose one):

We thank you for the opportunity to have known _____. We thank you for the gift of his/her friendship, and for what he/she has taught us about loving others. Because we are humans and not perfect, we ask for forgiveness if there was ever a time when _____'s needs were misunderstood or not attended to quickly enough.

_____ was deeply loved by his/her human family, and we know _____ deeply loved them as well.

Heavenly Spirit, we ask that you watch over _____ and forever keep him/her in your loving arms, until his family can be there to care for him/her again. Until then, we ask that the special memories of this beloved pet be blessed forever and ever.

Amen.

Officiant's Address

I want to thank you for inviting me to honor the life of your beloved animal friend _____, today. As all of us here know, an animal can be a very special member of a family. Although I did not know _____, I feel as if I had known him/her by the loving accounts I have heard about _____ from his/her family (and from the photos his/her family has shared with me). It is obvious how deeply loved _____ was, and he/she will never be forgotten.

There is nothing else in life like the relationship we have with our animal friends. Animals are great listeners. They seem to be able to understand what we are saying when we talk to them, and they don't argue back. They don't judge us, and they don't hold a grudge.

I believe we share our lives with animals to learn what they can teach us:

- To love unconditionally,
- To care about others rather than our possessions,
- To remember to be playful in life,
- To remember to snuggle with those we love,

- To observe the world around us with curiosity and enthusiasm,
- To wake up knowing that each day is a new adventure
- To remind us to take a walk and enjoy the sunshine from time to time,
- To trust that the world will provide everything we need,
- And to remind us, “Don’t worry. Be happy”.

As we celebrate the life of _____ who was a very special and much-loved friend, we are thankful for these important lessons he/she taught us about life.

Reading from Scripture:

Reflection

Sharing by the family

Prayer – Adapted from “Prayer for Those Who Mourn”

Loving Spirit,

Give me the grace to mourn with dignity.

Give me the grace to mourn in peace.

Give me the grace to mourn without shame and embarrassment.

Give me the grace to mourn fully so that my heart will be healed.

Give me the grace to mourn out loud and cry until my crying is done.

Give me the grace to mourn the loss of the one I loved,

And to understand others when they must face a similar road.

Give me the grace to mourn with patience

And to be tolerant of my own need to love through this at my own pace.

Give me the grace to accept that I am in mourning

And to be at peace with that while my heart mends.

I pray that my time of mourning will be made easier through my understanding

That mourning is good for my heart.

May mine be a good mourning, one that cleanses my heart, and renews my spirit.

May my memories of my beloved _____ be for a blessing, so that I may be ready to love again.

Amen.

Closing Blessing

We are reminded that our bodies return to the earth,
while our spirits are set free to reunite with the Creator.

As we say goodbye to our beloved _____, we express our
deepest gratitude for the blessing of his/her sweet presence.

Through _____, we learned compassion.

Through _____, we learned patience.

Through _____, we experienced joy.

Through _____, we learned to think about someone else other than
ourselves, and learned to be both giving and forgiving.

Through _____, we learned about friendship and loyalty.

Through _____, we learned about innocence humility and
forgiveness.

Through this beloved animal, we were shown the best qualities of humankind,
And found that the highest virtue of all is kindness to others.

Through our beloved _____, we were shown the greatest gift of all, the
gift of unconditional love.

As we go forth from this day, may these important lessons be within our hearts and
upon our lips.

May we remember to share them with others. In sharing them, we will truly honor
the memory of _____, and keep his spirit in our lives.

As you leave, we read from Numbers 6:24-26:

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

May the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you;

May the Lord lift up his countenance upon you,

And give you peace.