

MASONIC MEMORIAL SERVICE

© 2004 Ann Arbor-Fraternity Lodge 262, F&AM. A Model Memorial Service written for Blue Lodges, adapted from the Michigan Masonic Monitor & Ceremonie. Researched & Edited by Karl W. Grube, Ph.D. and Sean S. Dykhouse, PM

Brothers, Family and Friends, we are here assembled as Free and Accepted Masons in Memorial Service, to pay tribute to a beloved Brother and Friend, _____ who has answered the Summons of his Creator, and has preceded us into the everlasting joy and refreshment of the Great Celestial City, in which, ere long, we shall all be reunited for a Glorious Eternity.

The Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons is not, nor has it ever professed to be a religion, and this Memorial Service is not intended to take the place of a sacred service. However, from time immemorial, each person admitted to its rank must have professed a belief in Deity, and the lessons taught and virtues learned in Masonry are firmly founded on a Reverence for things Sacred, an unshakable Faith in a Creator by Whom all things were made, and from Whom all blessings flow.

My Brothers, Family and Friends, it is time-honored custom among the Fraternity of Free and Accepted Masons, at the request of a Brother, or his family, to provide an appropriate Memorial Service. In conformity to this custom, we are now assembled in the character of Masons, to offer up to his memory before the world, this tribute of our love and affection, thereby demonstrating the sincerity of our esteem for him.

Death and the dead are with us again, my Brothers; teaching us the brevity and uncertainty of human life and the instability of human fortune, and demanding of us the last sad offers of charity and brotherhood.

Our beloved Brother _____, was born in _____ on _____. (Anno Lucis 59__)
He first sought *Masonic Light* in _____, Free & Accepted Masons where he received the *Entered Apprentice Degree* on _____, he was Passed to the *Degree of Fellowcraft* on _____, and raised to the *Sublime Degree of a Master Mason* on _____.

He was called to that Celestial Grand Lodge on _____ to join with his many friends who have gone before him, and set for him a place of honor.

While the occasion admonishes us to consider the uncertainty of human life and the certainty of death, with equal urgency it graciously invites us to regard death as the open door through which man passes from his labors on earth to nobler service in the world to come. We present these Masonic Emblems as a memento of his service and in his remembrance.

(Apron)

The lambskin or white leathern apron is an emblem of innocence and the badge of a Mason. The apron is presented to every Free and Accepted Mason upon his initiation to the Lodge. This Apron is similar to the one that was presented to Brother _____ on the night that he received the Entered Apprentice Degree. In this presentation we are taught that the apron is yours, to wear through an honorable life, and at our death, for we are all born to die, that it will be laid upon the casket which contains your lifeless remains and lowered beneath

the silent clods of the valley. By it we are continually reminded of that purity of life and conduct so essentially necessary to our gaining admission into the Lodge above, where the Supreme Architect of the Universe presides.” This emblem we now deposit in memory of our departed Brother.

(Glove)

This glove is a symbol of fidelity and is emblematic of the Masonic friendship which binds us to him, whose memory now lies before us. It reminds us that these mortal eyes shall not see him again, yet by the practice of the tenets of our noble order, and a firm faith, and the steadfast trust in the Supreme Architect, we hope to clasp once more his vanished hand in friendship and love. Those whom virtue unites, Death can never, never separate. This glove we now deposit in his memory.

(Acacia)

This evergreen, which once marked the temporary resting place of the illustrious dead, is an emblem of our faith in the immortality of the soul. By it, we are reminded that we have an immortal part within us which survives the grave, and which shall never, no never die. This, too, we deposit. Alas, my Brother.

For as much as the spirit of our departed brother has returned unto God, who gave it, we therefore now commit his memory. Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust: looking for the general resurrection at the last day and the life of the world to come.

Brothers, the last offices which we pay to the dead serve a three fold purpose. (1) They do reverent honor to a deceased brother. (2) They are meant to convey to those who feel most keenly this afflictive dispensation, the blessed assurance of the Grand Architect of the Universe protecting care, and the alluring hope of a happy reunion in the Celestial City, whose builder and maker is God. (3) Finally, they constitute a lesson to the living. It matters not now to him whether three or five have gathered to perform his memorial, or that hundreds have assembled with the insignia of the Craft to perform his services. It is of little moment whether the wild winds chant his requiem or that it be accompanied with rare and costly music and the minstrelsy of many voices. He has gone to accomplish the destiny of our fraternity. While we pause to shed a sympathetic tear for our beloved Brother, let us cast around his foibles, whatever they may have been, the broad mantle of Masonic Charity, nor withhold from his memory the commendation his virtues deserve.

And now Brothers, let us ponder well the lessons of this hour. We are born, we live, and we die. But is death the end of man and the expiring hope of all faithful Masons? No – we pause not on our first or second step, but true to our profession look forward for greater light. As the span of our earthly existence is drawing to a close, the Sacred Book, that Great Light in Masonry removes the dark cloud and bids hope and joy rise up to cheer and sustain us. It points beyond the grave to the breaking light of the resurrection morn and the opening scenes of a glorious Eternity.

Then, my Brothers, let us so live that when our dissolution draws nigh, the entrance to the dark valley of the shadow of death may be illuminated by the consciousness of a well-spent life and the hope of a glorious immortality.

And now, may the Grand Architect of the Universe, in his infinite goodness, extend a blessing to him and all of us. So Mote It Be! **All Brothers** - SO MOTE IT BE!

We commend our deceased Brother to the earth.

(Raise hands to elbow level – extend arms – palms down)

We treasure his memory in our hearts.

(Hands crossed over chest – right over left)

We commend his spirit unto the Grand Architect of the Universe who gave it.

(Raise arms to 45 degree angle and let fall)

Soft and safe to you, my Brother, be your earthly bed. Bright and glorious be your rising from it. Fragrant be the acacia's bloom which here shall flourish. May the earliest buds of spring unfold their beauties over your resting place, and here may the fragrance of the summer's latest rose linger longest. Though the cold blasts of autumn may lay them in the dust, for a time, they shall surely bloom again. So in the morning of the world's resurrection, your mortal frame, now laid low in the dust by the chilling blasts of death, shall spring again into newness of life and unfold in immortal beauties in realms beyond the skies. Until then dear Brother _____, Fare Thee Well,

(Brothers All) ...Fare Thee Well.

THREE RAPS OF THE GAVEL – Brothers, together join me in Grand Honors for our departed Brother.

And now may the blessings of the Grand Architect of the Universe rest upon us and all mankind; may brotherly love prevail throughout the world among Masons and all mankind and every moral and social virtue cement us, both now and forever more. So Mote It Be!**Brothers** - **SO MOTE IT BE!**

This concludes the formal portion of the Masonic Memorial Service. We would ask that each of you remain seated while the Masons present pass by and pay their last respects and depart the room. The family of _____ would then request that you would join with them in _____ for some light refreshments.