

Memorial Service - 1
Rev. David Ritchie – Grand Chaplain

My Brothers we are called here today to pay our final respects to Brother_____. We gather with heavy heart and a true sense of loss. To _____(widows name), his family, friends, and those who knew him best we offer our sympathies and our prayers.

As Freemasons we are taught that when clouds gather darkly, when sorrow and affliction come nearest to our hearts, to look humbly to the Supreme Architect of the Universe for the hope, comfort, and support which he alone can give. Let us Pray:

Comfort us and give us hope, O Lord. Be with us and those whom _____ held dear. Strengthen us for the days ahead and heal us of the hurts of this world. Bless the memories we hold dear of the life and times shared with our brother. Let us have the faith to remember that death is not the end it is the beginning. As we leave this earthly home we enter into one not made with hands eternal in the heavens. Amen.

Response: So mote it be.

Let us now hear words of comfort from the Psalmist:

Psalm 46

(Psalm 23,27, 91,121, or other appropriate psalm may be used.)

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea.

Though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its tumult. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the most high. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved, God will help her right early. The nations rage, the kingdoms totter: he utters his voice, the earth melts. The Lord of hosts is with us: the God of Jacob is our refuge. Come behold the works of the Lord, how he has wrought desolation in the earth. He makes wars to cease to the ends of the earth; he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear, he burns the chariots with fire. "Be still, and know that I am God. I am exalted among the nations, I am exalted in the earth." The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

The words of the Psalmist, "for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forevermore." were heard on _____(month/ date/ year) when Brother _____ was initiated an Entered Apprentice in _____Lodge # _____. After being asked "In whom do you place your trust?" and answering "God" _____(Brother's name) was made a Bearer of burdens and given the working tools of this degree. He was given the Twenty-four inch Gauge and the Common Gavel. With the Twenty-four inch gauge he was taught to properly divide his time. That he may take eight hours to work, eight hours to rest and refresh himself and eight hours to serve his fellow man and worship his Creator. The Common Gavel was to teach him to rid his mind of the vices and superfluities of life, and so by striving to rid himself of earthly imperfections, that he may come to find his proper place in the Spiritual Temple that house not made with hands eternal in the heavens.

On _____(Month. Day, Year,) Brother _____ heard the promise of God's

faithfulness in the words of Amos "Then said the Lord; Behold, I will set a plumb-line in the midst of my people Israel: I will not pass by them any more." and was passed to the degree of Fellow Craft. As a hewer of stone he was given the Plumb, the Square and the Level. The plumb taught him to walk uprightly and justly before God and man. The Square to remind him to square his actions by the square of virtue, and the level to teach that we are all traveling upon the Level of Time to that undiscovered country from whose borne no traveler returns.

On _____(Month, Day, Year) in _____Lodge#_____, Free and Accepted Masons the words of Ecclesiastes the Preacher taught that we should remember our creator in our youth..."Or ever the silver cord be loosed or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern; then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." And after this lesson of mortality and immortality Brother _____ was raised a Master Mason. As a Master of the Work he was given all the tools of Freemasonry to build the earthly temple of his life, but more especially he was given the Trowel. As A Master Mason _____(name) was taught to use the Trowel for the noble and glorious purpose of spreading the cement of brotherly love and affection. It is this cement that binds us together as a fraternity of friends and brothers . It is this brotherly love and friendship that we shared with our brother that we now honor. His friendship will be greatly missed.

On the day _____(Name) was raised a Master Mason he was given his Lambskin, or white leathern apron. His attention was called to the purity of it and he was charged to keep it from stain or blemish from any action of his own. The

Lambskin is an emblem of innocence, and the badge of a Mason. It is more ancient than the Golden Fleece or Roman Eagle, more honorable than the Star and Garter. I now place this Lambskin upon the casket.(place apron upon casket or table) A fitting tribute to this man and to this Mason.

The acacia, or evergreen, is a symbol of eternal life. It is with certainty that our bodies shall fail and we will, as is the fate of all men, quit this mortal world. It is with equal certainty that the spirit shall go on were the grave has no dominion and death no power.

The body of our brother we commend to his Creator.
(Deposit acacia)

We commend his spirit unto God who gave it.
(Right hand raised)

And we will cherish his memory in our hearts.
(Hand to heart.)

I now invite the brethren to pay their respects.
(The brethren file past.)

Brother _____ served as

(Masonic history including offices held and history in appendant bodies.) (If appropriate a short personal remembrance may be included here.)

(Turn again toward the casket)
Clothed now as a Mason and surrounded by symbols of

immortality I do not say “good-bye”, but “farewell, until we meet again.”

(Turn back to family and brothers)

Let us unite in prayer:

Supreme Architect of the Universe, Let Brotherly Love strengthen and cement us at this time of loss. May the promise of eternal life comfort us and all who held _____ (name) dear. Let us go forth into the world being made better for having known _____ (name.) We have been given the tools to build our earthly temple, may we ever live and work so that when the final role is called we may hear, “ Well done good and faithful servant.” May we go now with hope and peace in the knowledge of your love. Amen