

Selected Readings for Memorial Services



Sunrise Chapel

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The following are suggestions for readings to incorporate in a memorial service or celebration of life.

Select as many as you wish. Also, feel free to select readings from other sources.

Either the pastor may read them, or you may invite other individuals to read them. If you wish others to read them I will be happy to print out the individual selections on separate pages to give to the chosen readers.

Biblical Teachings from the Old Testament

1a. The LORD is my shepherd I shall not want.
He makes me to lie down in green pastures;
He leads me beside the still waters.
He restores my soul;
He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil; for You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life;
And I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Psalm 23 – New King James Version

1b. The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Psalm 23 - King James Version

2. LORD, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, you are God.

You turn people to destruction, and say, "Return, O human children." For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past, and like a watch in the night. You carry them away like a flood; they are like a sleep. In the morning they are like grass which grows up. In the morning it flourishes and grows up. In the evening it is cut down and withers.

The days of our lives are seventy years. And if by reason of strength they are eighty years, yet their boast is only labor and sorrow, for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. So teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

Psalm 90:1-6,10,12 NIV

3. He has shown you, O human, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to

love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God

Micah 6:8

4. Then [David's] servants said to him, "What is this that you have done? You fasted and wept for the child while he was alive, but when the child died, you arose and ate food." So he said, "While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, 'Who can tell whether the LORD will be gracious to me, that the child may live?' But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

Samuel 12:21-23

5. His name shall endure forever; His name shall continue as long as the sun.

And people shall be blessed in Him;

All nations shall call Him blessed.

Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel,
Who only does wondrous things!

And blessed be His glorious name forever!

And let the whole earth be filled with His glory.

Amen and Amen.

Psalm 72:17-19

6. He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust." Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence. He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler. You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow that flies by day, nor of the pestilence that

walks in darkness, nor of the destruction that lays wasted at noonday.

A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; but it shall not come near you. Only with your eyes shall you look, and see the reward of the wicked. Because you have made the LORD Who is my refuge, even the Most High, your habitation, no evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling; for He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. They shall bear you up in their hands, lest you dash your foot against a stone. You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra, the young lion and the serpent you shall trample under foot. Because He has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high, because he has known My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him, and show him My salvation.

Psalm 91

7. Make a joyful shout to the LORD, all you lands!
Serve the LORD with gladness;
Come before His presence with singing.
Know that the LORD, He is God;
It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves;
We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.
Enter into His gates with thanksgiving
And into His courts with praise.
Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.
For the LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting,
And His truth endures to all generations.

Psalm 100

8. My days are like a shadow that lengthens,
And I wither away like grass.
But You, O LORD, shall endure forever,
And the remembrance of Your name is to all
generations.

Psalm 102:11,12

9. Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; Unless the LORD guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows; for so He gives His beloved sleep. Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb is His reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are the children of one's youth. Happy is the person who has his quiver full of them; they shall not be ashamed, but shall speak with their enemies in the gate.

Psalm 127

10. O LORD, you have searched me and known me. You know my sitting down and my rising up; You understand my thought afar off. You comprehend my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, but behold, O LORD, You know it altogether. You have hedged me behind and before, and laid Your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain it. Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, You are there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there Your hand shall lead me, and Your right hand shall hold

me. If I say, “Surely the darkness shall fall on me,” even the night shall be light about me; indeed, the darkness shall not hide from You, but the night shines as the day; the darkness and the light are both alike to You. For you have formed my inward parts; You have covered me in my mother’s womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well. My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them. How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; when I awake, I am still with You. . . . Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Psalms 139:1-18,23,24

11. Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise Him in the heights!

Praise Him all His angels; praise Him, all His hosts!
Praise Him, sun and moon; praise Him, all you stars of light!

Praise Him, you heavens of heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of the LORD, for He commanded and they were created. He has also established them forever and ever; He has made a decree which shall not pass away.

Praise the LORD from the earth, you great sea creatures and all the depths; fire and hail, snow and clouds; stormy wind, fulfilling His word; mountains and all hills; fruitful trees and all cedars; beasts and all cattle; creeping things and flying fowl; kings of the earth and all peoples; princes and all judges of the earth; both young men and maidens; old men and children. Let them praise the name of the LORD, for His name alone is exalted; His glory is above the earth and heaven. And He has exalted the horn of His people, the praise of all His saints of the children of Israel, a people near to Him.

Praise the LORD!

Psalms 148

12. Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the LORD, the creator of the ends of the earth, neither faints nor is weary. There is no searching of His understanding. He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength. Even the youth shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, but those who wait on the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.

Isaiah 40:28-31

13. The spirit of the LORD God is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, . . . to comfort all who mourn, to console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

Isaiah 61:1-3

**Biblical Teachings
from
the New Testament**

14. And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy. Your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. **Joel 2:28,29**

15. Again the word of the LORD of hosts came, saying, “Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘I am zealous for Zion with great zeal; with great fervor I am zealous for her.’ Thus says the LORD: ‘I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth, the Mountain of the LORD of hosts, the Holy Mountain.’ Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Old men and old women shall again sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each one with his staff in his hand because of great age. The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets.’” **Zechariah 8:1-5**

16. “And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.”

John 12:23-24 King James Version

17. “I tell you the truth, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.”

John 12:24 New International Version

18. “Hearken; Behold, there went out a sower to sow: And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up. And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth: But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up, and choked it, and it yielded no fruit. And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred. And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

Mark 4:3-9 AV

19. “Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path,

and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants, so that they did not bear grain. Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, multiplying thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times." Then Jesus said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."
Mark 4:3-9 NIV

20. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
Matthew 5:4

21. Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal: but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal: for where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
Matthew 6:19-21

22. Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise person who built his house on the rock; and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. Now everyone who hears these sayings of Mine and does not do them, will be like a foolish person who built his house on the sand; and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.

Matthew 7:24-27

23. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh . . . Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.

Luke 6:21,25

24. Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. One who believes in me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in me shall never die."

John 11:25,26

25. Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to myself: that where I am, there you may be also.

John 14:1-3

26. Most assuredly I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come, but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world.

John 16:20,21

27. Therefore you now have sorrow, but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.

John 16:22

Teachings About Life After Death from the Theological Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg

28. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on. “Yes,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.”

Revelation 14:13

29. And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a loud voice from heaven, saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with people, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God.

And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.”

And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.”

And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to one who thirsts.”

He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My child.

Revelation 21:1-7

30. Human life from infancy to old age is nothing else than a progression from the world to heaven. The last age, which is death, is the transition itself. This is why, in the Bible, “burial” means resurrection, because it is a complete putting off of the body.

Emanuel Swedenborg - Secrets of Heaven #3016e

31. When a person dies it is like passing from shade into light because he/she passes from the things of the world to those of heaven, and from the things of the body, to those of the spirit. The life that a person has gained for him/herself in the world, follows him/her. Without dying altogether, no one can put off the life acquired from infancy [and put on the new life of the spirit]. When people pass into the other life they leave many things behind which have no place there such as care for food, for clothing, a place to live, and also for gaining money and wealth. When the external things of the body and the world are taken away, the person is the kind of person that he/she has been inwardly. Love to God and love toward the neighbor are what make a person to be human.

Emanuel Swedenborg - Secrets of Heaven #3957

32. When a person dies he/she leaves behind him the external things of the natural level, but carries with him into the other life the deeper aspects, where they serve as a foundation on which spiritual and

heavenly things can be based. For when a person dies he loses nothing except his bones and flesh. He keeps his memory in which everything he has done, spoken, or thought is recorded. And he keeps every natural affection and desire, and so every deeper aspect of the natural level. He does not need its external aspects.

Emanuel Swedenborg - Secrets of Heaven #5079:2

33. In order that people may live to eternity, that which is mortal in them is taken away. The part of them that is mortal is their material body, and this is taken away by its death. In this way the part that is immortal in them, which is their mind, is unveiled and they then become spirits in human form. . . . All who have lived well, when they enter heaven, come into an age like that of their early manhood or womanhood in the world, and continue in it to eternity. . . . Eternal life is also eternal blessedness. This condition of people is the purpose of creation.

Emanuel Swedenborg - Divine Providence #324

34. When someone's body can no longer perform its functions in the natural world in response to the thoughts and affections of its spirit (which it derives from the spiritual world), then we say that the individual has died. This happens when the lungs' breathing and the heart's systolic motion have ceased. The person, though, has not died at all. We are only separated from the physical nature that was useful to us in the world. The essential person is actually still alive, because we are not people because of our bodies but because of our spirits. After all, it is the spirit within us that thinks, and

thought and affection together make us the people we are.

We can see, then, that when we die we simply move from one world into another.

Emanuel Swedenborg - Heaven and Hell #445



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Sunrise Chapel is a Christian Church based on the Bible and the Theological Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg.

It is part of the worldwide denomination known as The New Church. www.newchurch.org

We welcome you to learn more by attending our worship services, small groups and other activities.
www.sunrisechapel.org