

SPECIAL SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE

Dec. 1, 2020

Rev. Lori Fleming

PRELUDE

Music Director Craig Bohmler plays "Clare de Lune" on the piano.

WELCOME

Rev. Lori Fleming: Good evening! Welcome to Unity of Phoenix' Remembrance Service 2020. My name is Rev. Lori Fleming; I'm the pastoral care minister here.

Thank you for coming virtually to our annual service, as we remember those family members, friends and loved ones who are no longer physically with us. We'll celebrate their lives, and honor the process of grief each of us feels. We're here to remember how much each of these loved ones meant to us: to remember everything they taught us; how much they loved us; how much we loved them; and how much we still miss them physically.

We're here to honor the grieving process each of us is going through. To support one another; to heal; to celebrate the lives of those who meant so much to us, and bring a little peace into our hearts and our minds.

Let us pray.

OPENING PRAYER

Rev. Lori Fleming: Mother/Father God – you who are our Source – we open our minds and hearts to your strength and healing power. We feel your unconditional love pour over our consciousness as a healing balm on our grieving hearts. You fill us with divine understanding that, even though our loved ones have passed from our physical sight, in Spirit there is no separation. Through you, sweet Spirit, we are eternally united, one to the other. And in your loving care, we place our loved ones and ourselves. Peace and understanding now fill our hearts. And all is well. Thank you, God. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

Rev. Lori Fleming: Our Scripture comes from Ecclesiastes Chapter 2, Verse 1. This will be familiar to you. *"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to reap; 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 throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to throw away; a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silent, and a time to speak."*

Death is truly a natural part of the circle of life. Our loved ones have simply passed through this earthly experience. They've passed through the gate of death much richer than when they entered through the gate of birth. For each of them bears within their souls the rich treasure of Spirit they learned along the way. For every act of loving kindness, of unselfishness, of generosity, of thoughtfulness of others, of service to God an humanity has enriched our loved ones and equipped them for the next stage of the journey.

We release those who have passed so they can enter a new sphere of life, knowing that – although we no longer enjoy their earthly presence – we are still united with each of them in the bonds of love, which will always remain unsevered. We are reminded that death is not the end of life, but is the

beginning of a new experience of life. Because life is eternal. Life and death are both experiences of eternal life. And, still, we feel the loss and pain, because our loved ones are no longer physically with us.

In this Remembrance Service, we hold sacred space for each other. No matter what part of the grieving process you may be in at this moment, we hold you in God's love and care.

We have a beautiful service tonight. There will be a PowerPoint of pictures that you've contributed of those you've loved, and there will also be a time to light a candle in the memory of our loved ones. And we trust that the music and the meditation and the message will uplift you and comfort you in the days to come.

Let us pray.

PRAYER

Rev. Lori Fleming: Sweet Spirit, we pray holding those we love – both living and no longer living in this dimension – in our thoughts and prayers. We open our hearts and minds to your loving Spirit and light that we move through our grief. We're grateful for those who are watching this virtual service and those whose lives we are celebrating. We know their souls are safe and blessed in the loving care of God. And we know that God is with us: loving unconditionally, uplifting us above our sadness and grief into a new understanding that death is simply another phase of life. We are grateful for the opportunity to come together in love, caring and support. For this and all our blessings, we give thanks. Amen.

POEM

Rev. Lori Fleming: Someone sent me this poem; I'm not sure who wrote it, but it's called "To Those I Love and Those Who Love Me."

*"When I am gone, release me, let me go.
I have so many things to see and do,
You mustn't tie yourself to me with tears,
Be thankful for our beautiful years.*

*I gave to you my love; you can only guess
How much you gave to me in happiness.
I thank you for the love you've shown,
But now it's time I traveled on alone.*

*So grieve for me a while, if grieve you must,
Then let your grief be comforted by trust.
It's only for a time that we must part,
So bless the memories within your heart.*

*I won't be far away for life goes on.
So if you need me, call and I will come.*

*Though you cannot see or touch me, I will be near.
With all my love around you soft and dear.*

*And then, when you come this way alone,
I'll greet you with a smile and say, 'Welcome home.'"*

SONG

Cerise Patron: "Tell Your Heart to Beat Again"

You're shattered
Like you've never been before

The life you knew
In a thousand pieces on the floor
And words fall short in times like these
When this world drives you to your knees
You think you're never gonna get back
To the you that used to be

Tell your heart to beat again
Close your eyes and breathe it in
Let the shadows fall away
Step into the light of grace
Yesterday's a closing door
You don't live there anymore
Say goodbye to where you've been
And tell your heart to beat again

Beginning
Just let that word wash over you
It's alright now
Love's healing hands have pulled you through
So get back up, take step one
Leave the darkness, feel the sun
'Cause your story's far from over
And your journey's just begun

Tell your heart to beat again
Close your eyes and breathe it in
Let the shadows fall away
Step into the light of grace
Yesterday's a closing door
You don't live there anymore
Say goodbye to where you've been
And tell your heart to beat again

Let every heartbreak
And every scar
Be a picture that reminds you
Who has carried you this far
'Cause love sees farther than you ever could
In this moment heaven's working
Everything for your good

Tell your heart to beat again
Close your eyes and breathe it in
Let the shadows fall away
Step into the light of grace
Yesterday's a closing door
You don't live there anymore
Say goodbye to where you've been
And tell your heart to beat again
Beat again

Tell your heart to beat again

MEDITATION

Rev. Lori Fleming: I invite you to join me in a time of prayer and meditation. As we close our outer eyes, begin to move into a time of quiet contemplation. Take in a deep breath and release it slowly. As we begin to move our awareness into the very center of our being: into our souls. Into the stillness and the place of perfect oneness. In the silence, God is there. And we are alive with the radiance of divine Spirit within our souls. The light of God is in us. The love of God works through us. And in the silence, we are one with the Divine. We have unlimited faith that God works in us for good. Our faith is strong, and is the attractive power that brings forth miracles into our lives.

Each and every day we listen for that still, small voice of wisdom in our hearts, connecting us more deeply to the love of God. Filling us more fully with the life of God. Empowering us with the strength of God. With God, all things are possible. With God, abundance is the natural way. Working in and through us, Spirit is ever-present. All-powerful. All-knowing. God's love supports us. Encourages us. And we feel our oneness with the Divine now. We feel God's love flowing through our very being.

And as we take just a few moments to go more deeply within, we feel God's unconditional love for us.

SILENCE

Sweet Spirit, we come in gratitude for God's unconditional love for us. It lifts us into a higher consciousness, because love is the greatest harmonizer in the world. And when we are focused on love, everything good follows. And so we say, *"Thank you, God; thank you, God; thank you, God!"* And so it is. Amen.

REMEMBERING OUR LOVED ONES

As we view the upcoming pictures of our loved ones, we celebrate their lives, recognizing how much they enriched us. All of the things that they taught us. How we were nurtured and encouraged. While we grieve our loss of daily contact, we give thanks that they shared our lives with us. They left an imprint on our consciousness and our souls that we will never forget. Each person came to express his or her Godself in their own unique way. So tonight, we celebrate the many faces of God.

[PowerPoint shows photos and tributes of our loved ones who have passed.]

Paul Russell. Paul was a beloved doctor, father, friend and husband who is missed every day.

Don Kellogg. Loved his family, his friends, a road trip, the Service Angels, and serving coffee every Sunday morning. He is truly missed.

Patricia Ann Shoemaker Sears. Patricia Ann made her transition at 73 years of age on June 1, 2020 unexpectedly in her sleep. Missed by her sisters – all one year apart – Patti, Carol and Barbara.

Irene Tomczak (Oct. 1, 1926-Aug. 20, 1989) and Joseph Tomczak, Jr. (Aug. 19, 1925-Jan. 10, 1985). Thank you, Grandma Irene, for my near-death experience with you when you passed. You already knew I would need it when my son, Cameron, passed. Thank you both for proving to me that you were watching over my son all these years across the veil. Thank you, Grandpa Joe, for teaching me how to still smile and laugh through the physical pain.

Cameron Andrew Wolfe (Aug. 16, 1994-Feb. 1, 2018). ~Given to fly! "I am enlightened already. In the eyes of LOVE." ~Cam Wolfe LOVE!!!! Unconditionally and eternally, Mom

Jimmy Curtiss. Loving son who demonstrates that love never dies.

Jay Cupchak. My dear son passed of cancer. He liked me to call each morning to speak the Unity affirmations that I use to co-create with God my own cancer healing. He said it made him feel better. He was a healthy body builder; you just never know when our journey is completed. Do ALL you can while you can!

Evangeline Renee (June 2, 2016-June 21, 2016). “Look how she lights up the sky. My belle, Evangeline.” We love you!!!

Kenneth John Smart, Sr. Affectionately called Pop, his favorite response when asked how he was doing was, “FANTASTIC!”

Jerry Huvelle (1942-2002). Best Dad Ever. A man of integrity. Missed every day.

Richard Ellstrom, I (1922-2020). My Grandfather. Rest in Peace.

Jeff Van Houten (1982-2020). My Cousin. Beloved brother. He always brought the fun.

Joe Sagnis. Joe was a beautiful soul, generous, brilliant, talented and capable. He is always in my heart.

June Rose Solonika. Mom was wise, creative, kind, spiritual, gracious and friendly. I am honored to be her daughter.

Trooper (12/5/05 – 11/28/15). My best friend, my heart, my compassion. Good dog Trooper Maday.

Dennis Hayes. A good man with a loving and generous heart. He will always be my guy.

Rosena Badalaty Paterno.

Diane Robins (AKA: Angel Dee) (June 30, 1955 to Oct. 22, 2020). Rest in peace (cancer). Thank you, my friend, for all the beautiful things you left behind in my heart.

Bert Phillips. Remembering our strong, resilient mother who taught us we could be anything.

Robert Wickman. He was the LIGHT and LOVE of my life.

Monica Zontanos. A beautiful, humorous and loving, amazing wife, mother and grandmother. Deeply missed and never forgotten!

Harold “Hacky” Thurman. They don’t come any better ... family man, businessman, fantastic uncle. You are so loved!

Dewey Rowe. LOVED!!!

Elden Miller. Missing Uncle Elden.

Molly Susanne Mellinger. Died at 33 this November. Was a brilliant poet who was kind to animals and loved her family, who miss her terribly and are heartbroken.

Ray and Julie Zaporowski. Every Christmas you brought joy and fun! You’ll never be forgotten and always deeply missed. Merry Christmas, Mom and Dad!

Willa Bowman. Her life was filled with love and laughter. I love and miss you, Mom.

Margaret Neas. Mother. Passed 2002.

Hubert Neas. Father. Passed 1980.

Ruth Mary Neas. Sister. Passed 2000.

Hugh Neas. Brother. Passed 2011.

Joel Alan McNeil. Joel, you are forever loved, my son, by your Mom and family. ❤️

Alan Roberge (1993-2015). Beloved son, brother, grandson and friend. Alan was known for his handsome looks, sense of humor, genuine heart and his magic tricks.

Chris Roberge (1967-2017). Beloved father, son, brother, friend. Chris was known for his gentle soul, wood skills, loud laugh, and affection of antiques.

James Uzzanti (“Uncle Jimmy”) (1925-2020). Beloved family member to many. Uncle Jimmy was known for his feisty personality and old school Italian voice. He loved a good meal at Denny’s, cheesecake for dessert, and spaghetti for dinner. He was the life of any party.

Arleen Trentacoste. You have shown me what family means, made me feel special and loved, and shaped who I am today.

Al Trentacoste. You brought pure joy and laughter to our family and modeled what to expect from a good husband/father!

Jennifer Roady. An earth angel who left this physical plane much too soon and my beloved Goldie.

Thomas Owen Maday (5/17/16). Loving father, friend and husband. We miss you. God, please watch over him. Amen.

Bonnie Amend (1946-2018). Merry Christmas! “Every good and perfect gift is from above...” ~*James 1:17*
Forever in our hearts, Chris, Jessica and Steve.

John Lombardo. The twinkle in your eye as you smiled at me made me feel loved and protected.

Grace Lombardo. I know what unconditional love feels like because of you. I thank you for everything I am.

Gale White. You were a fighter, a fierce champion, with a larger-than-life personality. You showed me what it meant to have conviction.

Josephine White. You laid the foundation for our strong Italian heritage; made me proud to be who I am.

Benedict White. Your jokes, your generosity, your pride for us, and your unending love for grandma is still an inspiration.

Chris Sheehan. Husband, father, teacher, coach, friend. Funny, awesome, glitter, cool, silly, caring, best. We love you most.

Iva Rogers Black Goldman (10/21/31 - 3/12/20). Lifelong believe in the Power of the Spoken Word ...
University professor for 58 years. Wife, mother, friend, mentor – from frozen Minnesota to Hawaii’s shores to Paradise Valley – loved and missed every day.

Amanda Kathleen Cruse (15th June 1986 – 19th Feb 2017). My sweet Angel, Amanda! My heart is full of memories, with pride I speak your name. You are always and forever alive within my heart. Love and miss you. ~Mom

Robert Torre (Transitioned 11/20/20). USAF veteran (Korea), father of six, family business owner. Loved people and people loved him back! He spread positive energy to all, even after a stroke seven years ago.

Seaman C. Sedockin (February 1931-June 2020). Graduate of City College, New York City. Father of Lisa B. Lumbard of Unity of Phoenix. Known for his quotes, including: “There is only one race. The Human race!”

Dale James Arola. Teacher, mathematician, outdoorsman, fisherman, hunter, handyman, remodeler, camper, gardener, wood carver, individualist, family man.

Michael Hudson (10/29/89 – 04/01/09). Beloved nephew. Pure love and joy. You live on in our hearts forever!

Mildred Dudley. Wonderful Mother. We miss and love you. And now, we get it! XOXOXO

Jimmie Dudley (1954-2012). An amazing brother who left us way too soon.

Ron Hudson (1932-2003). A gentle man and loving father. “Blessed are the peacemakers ...”

Barbara Garman. Thank you for all you taught me! I love you!

Walter C. Thompson. He lived the change he wanted to see in the world. All of us aspire to be the same model of love that he was. He lit up the room and everyone around him. We miss him every day!

Raymond Brossart. We miss your gentle soul so much! Thanks for all you gave us: love, support, strength, strong values and work ethic, a love of the arts, and your mischievous sense of humor. We love you and miss you every day.

Donna Meier. Best friends forever! One of the sweetest souls I have ever met; she always had a smile on her face. I miss her.

Carol Arndt. A sweet grandma who made all of her grandkids feel special.

We bless and hold each of these precious souls in love and light.

CANDLELIGHTING IN HONOR OF OUR LOVED ONES

Rev. Lori Fleming: During this part of our service, I will light some candles and say some words to help you direct your consciousness to remember those you've lost.

I light the first of these 12 candles with a special memory. The last six I'll direct you to think about the loved ones as you honor their lives.

I light this first candle to remember people in other countries who have passed this last year. We celebrate their lives and we grieve with their family and friends.

I light this second candle in memory of all of the people across the world who have died because of COVID-19. We will miss each of you and bless you on your way into the next phase of your life.

I light this third candle in memory of all of the children who have died this year. They were taken by their parents at too young an age; yet, they left an indelible imprint of unconditional love in their parents' and family's lives.

I light this fourth candle in memory of all the spouses and partners who've made their transition this year. Whether you were together for one day or 60 years or more, we celebrate the promise you made to love each other forever.

I light this fifth candle in celebration of all the people who have passed away this year who made a difference in our lives. Those teachers, mentors, guides and gurus who saw the good in us when perhaps we couldn't see it for ourselves.

I light this sixth candle for all the pets who've we've loved and lost in our lives. For the unconditional love they gave us. For the listening ears. For the face licks and joys as they greet us when we come to the door. We remember our beloved pets as part of our family.

As I light this seventh candle, I invite you to remember someone you have loved and lost.

As I light this eighth candle, I invite you to celebrate someone who's gotten their angel wings.

I light this ninth candle, and I invite you to honor someone who went the extra mile for you when maybe you didn't deserve it, but you really wanted it.

I light this tenth candle, and invite you to remember someone who's touched your heart in wonderful, loving ways.

I light this eleventh candle to share a special memory of a loved one to took the time to guide us, counsel us, and teach us right from wrong.

And I light this twelfth candle for everyone I know – and everyone I don't know – who has left this phase of life and moved on to the next blessed life form. Even though they may have passed from our physical sight, there is no separation.

SONG

Cerise Patron: "I Let You Live"

If I had a time machine
Would I go and change the past?
Would I make it so my time with you was not my last?
Would I go and see if there was any way
To make it so you lived on earth just one more day?
And when I ask these questions I'm reminded that
Every being has to follow their own path.

So I let you live
As the wind in my hair
As the butterfly that gracefully flies through the air
I let you live
As the dreams of my heart
For I know that when you're there, you are never far
Because I know that I can't let just let you go
I let you live.

I've never known such pain
As I have in losing you
But I'm trying to do what you would want me to
And so I take each day and I try to make the best
And I'm grateful for every blessing that I have
And I know that you're still with me in the end
It's just differently than what I had planned

So I let you live
As the wind in my hair
As the butterfly that gracefully flies through the air
I let you live
As the dreams of my heart
For I know that when you're there, you are never far
Because I know that I can't just let you go
I let you live.

If I had a time machine
I guess I'd have already gone
And changed what I could to what I thought went wrong
And so maybe this is the only way
That things could have happened on that tear-filled day
And so I'll hold the memory of you in my heart
And I know that means we'll never be apart

So I let you live
As the wind in my hair
As the butterfly that gracefully flies through the air
I let you live

As the dreams of my heart
For I know that when you're there, you are never far
Because I know that I can't just let you go
Oh, I know that I can't just let you go

So I let you live
As the wind in my hair
As the butterfly that gracefully flies through the air
I let you live
As the dreams of my heart
For I know that when you're there, you are never far
Because I know that I can't just let you go
I let you live
I let you live
I let you live.

CLOSING

Rev. Lori Fleming: We're grateful for this opportunity tonight to celebrate the lives of those we love. We remember; we grieve; and we give thanks. Life is so precious, and much too short for most of us. But we must remember that life is eternal. As spiritual beings, our souls were created before birth, and will continue to live long after our bodies die.

Tonight we've honored those we love and, in the process, we feel a deep and profound change in our own souls. We may still feel the hurt of loss, but each day we grow stronger as we understand that life and death are simply two sides of the same coin. We recognize we're accepting a new way of being and living. The process of mourning is probably never complete, but it is a process. Eventually we can let go of the pain and begin to recognize the love we feel for our loved one. We can focus on the wonderful, fun times we shared together. The times we laughed; the times we cried. The times we shared meals and just daily life events. In this new normal, we achieve a kind of equilibrium: a balance. It reminds us that, truly, people are the most important things in our lives.

Love knows no distance or time. As we think of our loved ones, we open our hearts and our minds, and we're grateful for the time we were able to spend with them. There's only a thin veil between the physical world we live in and the spiritual world into which our loved ones have moved.

So tonight we celebrate our loved ones. We recognize that we will carry them in our hearts our whole lives, never forgetting them. Remembering the wonderful, amazing times we shared. Tonight we honored our loved ones by living our lives to the fullest, because before too long we, too, will leave this life and move on into the next realm of existence. And so we celebrate both their lives and our own.

CLOSING PRAYER

Rev. Lori Fleming: I invite you to close your eyes and be fully present in this moment. We give thanks for each and every soul we've remembered tonight. We're grateful for the time we spent with them. We honor our own feelings of grief and loss, knowing that time will heal all wounds.

As we center our hearts and minds with Spirit, we're strengthened and we are at peace. We recognize that the importance of finding meaning in the future is not to forget the past but, instead, to embrace it. That all the memories of those who have gone before us are lessons for the future to love more deeply, to be fully present in every moment, and appreciate what we have right now.

Sweet Spirit, we feel the presence of God all around us. We recognize God's light and are uplifted as God enfolds us in love, affirming that all is well. Spirit is providing the strength we need to go on without

those we have loved, and we remain calm and assured. And we know that our loved ones are in God's tender care. And so we say Amen.

PRAYER FOR PROTECTION

Rev. Lori Fleming: We're grateful for this opportunity tonight to celebrate the lives of those we love. We remember; we grieve; and we give thanks. Life is so precious, and much too short for most of us. But we This is the end of our Remembrance Service. To close, we will affirm the Prayer for Protection using the word "you" instead of "us."

*"The light of God surrounds you;
The love of God enfolds you;
The power of God protects you;
The presence of God watches over you;
Wherever you are, God is. And all is well."*

Thank you for joining us tonight. God bless you and all of your families. Have a blessed Christmas season.

POSTLUDE

Music Director Craig Bohmler plays Brahms' "Opus 118" on the piano.

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