

Guidelines for Preparing a Personal Remembrance

You have just been honored with the responsibility of sharing a personal remembrance of a loved and cherished friend or family member now deceased, at a public worship event. How do you begin to put in words your experience of this loved one? Here are some guidelines that we would like you to follow, in order to facilitate a worship experience that everyone will appreciate and remember.

- **Less is More:** You may be only one of several or more people sharing; therefore its best to keep your remembrance to no more than four –five minutes – that means no more than 2 pages double spaced. The audience will lose the impact of your story after that amount of time. Keep your sharing to one or two vignettes of your experience of the loved one. Others will fill in other parts of this person’s life – so, you don’t need to say everything you know about them.
- **Type it Out:** Please manuscript your presentation. This will help you focus on that one or two important experiences that illustrate the loved one’s life. Also, when up in front of a congregation of people, you will have the security of your story completely written, so that you don’t get lost if you get nervous. It also gives the Pastor the ability to read or finish the remembrance for you, if you are too emotional or unable to deliver the remembrance for any reason.
- **Who are You:** Begin your sharing with introducing your name and how you knew the person who is deceased. Not everyone attending the service will know who you are. Identifying yourself gives everyone an idea of the role you played in the life of the one being celebrated.
- **How to Begin:** Think of an experience you had of the person you are honoring – or an adjective that captures who they were to you. Use that experience/adjective to build a story about what you loved in this person. You might want to begin with these words: “Thank you _____ for...” and then end with “I will always remember you.” This is of course a suggestion to help you get going on your presentation.
- **Finally:** Remember that your presentation is about the loved one and not **you!** Talk about what they were like, how they lived their life, what they did, what you loved about them. Don’t include other people’s experiences of them – just yours – unless those experiences illustrate your own.

We hope these guidelines help you to do the best job you can at capturing the important memories of the one you loved – and seamlessly add to the overall experience of worship that you are participating in. Thank you for your part.