

## **A Celebration of Life**

### **WELCOME**

**Good Morning. Welcome to all of you, gathered today as an expression of your love for beloved husband, Dad, Uncle, Grandfather, and friend - Thomas F Welton. May grace surround you this day.**

**We come to mourn and to honor Tom, to lay his earthly body to rest and to support each other as we grieve, knowing that whatever we feel – deep sadness, loss, confusion, anger, joy at suffering’s last breath for him – it is good and right. There’s no right way to travel this journey of grief. I pray that today you find peace in giving thanks for a life well lived.**

### **MUSIC**

**When Tom drew his first breath, life came flooding into a new way of being. The Breath said, watch me, and learn to live in the present moment. Feel me, and know the ebb and flow of Life.**

**Move with me, and I’ll invite your very being to dance. Make sounds with me and I shall teach your heart to sing.**

**Follow me, said the Creator, and I’ll lead you out to the farthest reaches of the Universe... and inward to the deepest parts of your being. I am the flow of Life between every single part of you and all that is.**

**Just a few short days ago the creative breath was let go and this time it didn’t return. And so now we gather to remember his story, to offer sympathy to those whose lives have been forever changed by his death and to celebrate all the wonderful things**

**He brought to the lives he touched.**

**We human beings have sensed the mystery of death, and known the pain of grief, since time immemorial. The eternal cycle of life is in all our journeys, from the rising and setting of the sun; to the passing of the seasons where the joy of new life in spring inevitably gives way to the darkness of winter, but never without the hope of another spring to come. And so we touch the reality of death by commemorating the passing of those whom we love, but always in the hope that beyond this physical world there is a deeper life to be embraced.**

***Romans 8:38-39***

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, [39] Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**We are here today because of love: our love for Tom and God's love for him and us. It's because we love people so deeply that their absence makes us grieve so deeply.**

The death of one we love is never easy. When death happens, when we “lose a loved one” we lose his stories, the tales he told, but not the tales told about him. I know there are wonderful and many stories and thoughts that will be shared in a moment. That is how he will go on living – for you, for his grandchildren and beyond.

**While death does separate us physically, we are reminded that nothing can truly separate us in love.**

His love for each of you lives on in you now. In Susan, In his children and their families; in the friends he knew. In many lives he touched, his memory and his love will never end.

Don't be surprised if you don't grieve like others who have no faith, who never had a dad or a husband like yours. You've grieved since the moment he took his last breath. You'll grieve still, and the hole in your heart which he once filled will, in time, be less ragged and raw. But it will never be completely filled. For the hole in your heart where he lived is the measure of the amount of love he had for you and you had for him. You already know that life is fragile and precious and loving. And you know that he is carried on wings like eagles, gone to where he came from, to where we, each in our turn, will join him and all who have gone before - in freedom, in joy and compassion, warmth, wholeness and holiness, in our eternity we call heaven.

### **Open to the dtr in law**

The farewell

**As we come to the time of farewell, may we be wrapped in peace. To love someone is to risk the pain of parting.**

**Not to love is never to have lived.**

**The grief which we now experience is the honoring of our love.**

Gentle Creator, be among us today, holding us in peace and gentleness. Fill this space with winds of hope and healing that begin to mend our saddened hearts. As we mourn and grieve, laugh and cry, remind us that death is only change; that John will always be with us in the memories of our hearts. As the sun shine outside, we seek the warming rays break through our heaviness and lift our spirits. As we are all together in one small community today, may we each find comfort and support from our fellow sojourners. May it be so.

**The Committal and commendation**

**May the rising of the sun bring you new hope every day.**

**May the moon gently restore you by night.**

**May the rain wash away your tears,**

**and the breeze blow new joy into your being.**

**And all the days of your life may you walk gently through this  
land and know its peace.**

**Amen.**