

IN MEMORY'S GARDEN
O. E. S. Memorial Service

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This service should be given after close of Chapter or during recess. Lights are lowered. Unlighted candles are on the Altar, (or Pedestal). Chaplain, Conductress, Associate Conductress, and Star points are in outer room.

Soloist sings: - "In The Garden".

Worthy Matron speaks:

Another year has passed into silence, and again we come to this solemn hour to bow in humble submission to the inevitable. Each day we are reminded that death is the common fate of humanity, and we pause to pay tribute to those who were our sisters and brothers, (names may be mentioned) who have passed to the Great Beyond. Life is a garden where flowers bloom to bless, and to give us happiness for a time, then God's finger touches them, and they are taken to His garden above for they are needed there. We are in the garden of sweet memories. May these memories linger, and may their gentle streams so enrich the soil of our hearts that they may bring forth abundant harvest of charity, truth, and loving-kindness.

Chaplain enters slowly from preparation room, carrying open Bible. Passing north of Esther's station, she takes position west of Altar and reads aloud the first three verses of St. John 14. After reading, she slowly and reverently places Bible upon the Altar, steps back, bows, and passes to her station.

Conductress and Associate Conductress enter from outer door and preparation room door respectively, Conductress carries wreath of fern leaves and Associate Conductress carries lighted candle. They pass diagonally to Altar, and take positions, standing together west of Altar. Associate Conductress lights candles on Altar.

Associate Conductress:

In sweet memory we now light our candles
To remind us of life's eventide,
When the shadows all gather around us,
And with them God's love does abide;
In the glow, we are thinking of loved ones
Who have gone to that garden so fair,
Where the flowers will never cease blooming,
For the light of His presence is there.

Conductress places the wreath upon the Altar. They step to south and north of Altar, bow, and step back to stations.

Star points enter from outer door, each carrying flowers appropriate to their respective stations. They form line back of Esther's station, with Adah to north, and march to positions between their stations and Altar as follows: Adah marches diagonally to point south and east of Altar, taking position between her station and Altar. Electa starts immediately after Adah, marches diagonally to point north and east of Altar, taking position between her station and Altar. Ruth starts after Electa, crosses to position between her chair and Altar. Martha starts after Ruth, crosses to position between her station and Altar. Esther steps to position in front of her station. March should be timed so all will reach position at same time. They remain standing while speaking.

Adah:

Out on the hillside the violets grew,
Budded and blossomed in God's great light,
They were watered and fed by the morning dew
And shed their fragrance by day and night;
But in time, each violet just drooped and died,
And to earth no more did it's beauty give,
For God had touched it and taken it where
In His garden above, it could bloom and live.

Ruth:

The flower of gold shed a lovely light,
It was guarded and watched with tender care,
And earth gave it's best to make it grow,
For it wanted to keep it's beauty there;
But in God's garden there was a space
Where a cluster of gold could bloom above,
So God transplanted this little flower
To bloom evermore in His garden of love.

Esther:

The fairest flower that with us grows
Is the lovely lily so pure and white,
To the morning it gives it's light of love,
To dispel the gloom of the darkest night;
But God had need of the lily fair
To give it's light to this garden of love,
So He touched this lily and placed it there,
To shed it's light in His garden above.

Martha:

In a shady nook beside the wall,
Where they blend with all the colors there,
We find the leaves of the dainty fern,
Tended and watched with the greatest care;
But even the fern with it's foliage green,
We find will always droop and die,
For God must have it's lacy leaves
To complete His beautiful garden on high.

Electa:

By a little wall a rose once grew
To give it's bloom to the morning light,
It was fed and caressed by the evening dew
And shed it's sweetness by day and night;
But earth could not keep this little flower,
And the little rose soon wilted too,
And was taken to bloom in that garden of love,
Where it's blossom still welcomes the morning dew.

Associate Matron goes from her station to position west of Altar. She begins speaking, and gathers the flowers from each Star point as she speaks of their respective flower.

Associate Matron:

The river of life flows soft and sweet
Through the garden of love so fair,
Some day we will gather these choicest flowers
That God has transplanted there;
The violets bloom in this garden of love
Where the jessamine gently entwines,
And the lily so white in beauty blooms
With the fern leaves and the vine;
The rose still blooms beside the wall,
With a fragrance that is rare,
For God takes care of all the flowers
That He plants in His garden there.

After placing flowers in wreath, she continues:

As we place these flowers within the wreath
That encircles our garden of love,
We will do it in memory of those who have gone
To that beautiful garden above;
We should not grieve for our loved and lost,
For they dwell in that land so fair,
Where the rivers flow, and the flowers bloom,
And the birds sing so sweetly there;
Our loved ones have gone to that beautiful home
Prepared by our Father above,
They will gather the flowers that He has placed there,
While they finish their mission of love.

When Associate Matron finishes speaking, she steps back and Chaplain approaches Altar for prayer. Officers gather around Altar as in Initiation service.

Prayer:

Our Father in Heaven, we bow in reverence and humble submission to Thy divine will. We thank Thee that Thou art the Friend of every sorrowing heart, and our refuge and help in time of trouble. Bless those who mourn. May they abide within Thy sheltering care, in the beautiful garden of peace, and by the still waters. We are grateful for the lives of the loved ones who have passed beyond the great mystery and await our coming. With their blessed memory to help us, may we so live that we may come to the sunset of our lives with the comforting assurance that whosoever liveth and believeth in Thee, shall never die. Strengthen us for tomorrow's task, and keep us ever in Thy love. In the name of our Lord, and for His sake, we ask it. Amen.

Solo: Beautiful Isle of Somewhere.

Officers remain standing around Altar until the beginning of last verse, then pass to stations.

If Chapter service is to be resumed immediately, Associate Conductress at beginning of last verse, goes to Altar, takes wreath, and passing to east, places it at foot of dais, and returns to her station.

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