

### ***The Unfinished Symphony***

*Though never came to birth,  
Never living,  
Never dies,  
But continues its creation  
In the heart of its Creator.*

*And so, the symphony,  
The masterpiece  
The stillborn child  
Lives eternally  
In a mother's loving heart;  
In the heart  
Of its creator*

*Marjorie Gray*

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**Produced by the Women's and Children's Health Service**

© July 2003  
WCHS 0003

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## **A Ritual of Remembrance**



## Introduction

We have come together today as parents who for various reasons have experienced the early loss of a pregnancy; hidden to the world, unknown to most of the people around you, therefore usually unacknowledged. Some of you will find that the journey you've commenced will be quite lonely and confusing.

The loss of your pregnancy is no less a grief than any other life loss, a shattered dream, a loss of happiness and possibly a loss of hope in the future. It may also be a time of questioning all that you may have once held as secure or trustworthy. For some of you, in the last months, choices have had to be made, choices that have been hard, and choices for which there has been no perfect solution.

Today we gather to remember and honour those for whom there will be no gravesite to visit, no grave to decorate, no headstone or plaque to remind us of their existence. The only gift you had from them was the experience of their short time within. Through this they have touched you, become part of your lives, and are now carried by you in memory.

Today's short service is simply an opportunity to remember and acknowledge these events, and through a tradition of faith, using ritual and symbolism to support you in the journey into healing.

The essential symbol will be that of the candle.

The light of a flame has always been symbolic across many cultures and beliefs. In this context it symbolises that the lives we are remembering have been a source of light in our lives. During the service you will be invited to come forward and light a candle which you may take home to re-light on special occasions such as the date you would have expected to give birth to your baby.

## The lighting of the symbolic candles

The first candle we light represents our grief  
The second candle represents our courage  
The third candle represents our memories  
The fourth candle represents our love

## The lighting of the candle of faith

### Prayer

Comforting God, wrap us in your presence in this time of remembrance.  
Through these candles, help us to find your light, a light that will guide us step by step, day by day as we try to live fully and wholly.  
We cherish the special ways in which we have been touched by those we remember with love and thank you for the gift of their short lives.  
Amen.

## A Reading and Reflection

### Lighting of individual candles

*Parents come forward to light their candles.*  
*You are invited to do this in silent remembrance, or, if you have informally named your baby you may like to speak the name as you light your candle.*  
*After you have lit your candle please take it with you as you return to your place.*

## Prayer over the symbols

*Parents are asked to stand and hold their candles.*

## Final Prayer of Blessing

May the blessing of God go with you.  
May the grace of Jesus be your companion.  
May the strength of the Spirit empower you to go on believing in the future and trusting your dreams.