

## **Introduction / Opening Remarks**

### **Slide 2**

#### **Greeting**

The grace and peace of the Lord be with you

*And also with you*

### **Slide 2** - *Hymn – the Lord is my Shepherd*

We meet today in the name of Jesus Christ

We look not to the things that are seen  
but to the things that are unseen;  
for the things that are seen are fleeting  
but the things that are unseen are eternal.

I would like to welcome everyone who have come to St Pauls today, and thank you all for being here as we take leave of our friend, and brother in Christ, Tony. We also want to remember the family and friends who could not be with us today in body, but are with us here in spirit.

Today we come together  
to remember before God our *brother Antonious Leenaars - Tony* ,  
to give thanks for *his* life and to comfort one another in our grief.

So let us pray

Prayer

Gracious Spirit, creator of life, carrier of hope, make your presence known among us.

Enable us to be brave in our remembering, honest in our sorrow, and open in love and

compassion to each other. Help us to seek not so much answers to our questions, but,

rather, the patience to mourn and grieve. Enable us to remember with joy the life of one whom we have loved. Send us your peace. Amen

Human beings have sensed the mystery of death, and the pain of grief, since time immemorial. Every society has developed rites to mark the passage from life through death, and to commemorate the dead. Today we do this through this memorial service.

The wounds of grief need time and care to heal. This service may help this process, by enabling us to acknowledge our loss, give thanks for the life of Tony, make our last farewell, and begin to take up life once more.

Christians believe in God, the source and giver of life. God's good news proclaims Jesus Christ to be our living Lord, who laid down his life for us. He knew death, yet triumphed over it, and was raised by God to new life. Christians affirm the presence of the Spirit of Christ, who helps us in our weakness. Yet we, with all mortals, still face death. Those who put their trust in Christ share the sufferings of their Lord, even in the midst of God's love and care.

A Christian service proclaims the Christian hope in the face of death— Jesus Christ, whose resurrection is the promise of our own.

So We gather in the presence of God, and remember Tony, and all who he was in our lives. We will listen and respond to the word of God, and proclaim the death and resurrection of Christ, giving thanks for the life that has now ended. We then leave Tony in God's care, and we continue our life's journey.

We gather here not just to mourn the absence of our friend Tony, but also to celebrate in his life. Although we are sad to see him leave us, we can be comforted in the knowledge that he is now finally at peace and his soul has finally gone home to be with God. Even though Tony is no longer living in the flesh, the memory of him lives on in our hearts.

Many of us are here because at one time or another, Tony touched our lives in a special way – whether they were powerful statements of love and friendship, or just a friendly greeting on the street. Tony’s life and witness draws us together today, and points us forward after he is gone.

As I remember Tony, he never wanted any extra praise or particular attention, but enjoyed doing the small things that made other people happy. These memories should encourage us to follow in this Christ-like path, of doing small acts of service to others.

As Christ says in *Matthew 25:40*: “Whatever you did for the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

I think we can all attest that this is how Tony truly lived his life.

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### **Eulogy**

*I would like to now invite those who wish to come forward and tell us a little of Tony’s life journey (Highlights from the deceased person’s life can be shared accompanied by slides or some form of graphics as desired by the family.)*

Thank you to those who shared all those beautiful memories. May Tony live on in all our hearts and minds

**Slide 5**

*Life is a journey of many different roads but God is always with us*

**Slide 6**

*Sometimes we can lift our faces to the sun and know that God is with us*

**Slide 7**

*But then there are the hard journeys through pathways or pain and tears in dark places but God is with us. Nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus*

**Slide 8**

**Scripture**

We hear this message in our Scripture

What then are we to say about these things? .....Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ....

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:31-39

## **Address**

We have heard about Tony's journey through life and have heard that God travelled with him in the light as well as in the shadows

I'm sure there are times when we all feel helpless against the things which hold us back. But Christians believe that standing beside us is the gentle spirit of Jesus who walks before us, calls us on into life through the holy spirit.

The Romans reading we just heard ,

### **Slide 9**

as well as this verse in Hebrews, tells us that we are never alone in this journey of life and we know that God will never leave us nor forsake us, even until the end of time. He will walk with us down the pathways of our fears and hardship and will lead us to eternal life.

This was true for Tony. He is with God now in eternity – no more troubles, no more confusion, no more tears, only peace and love.

### **Slide 10** - Isaiah 43 reading

Listen to the prophet Isaiah who tells us

But now, this is what the Lord says—

“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;

I have summoned you by name; you are mine.

When you pass through the waters,

I will be with you; And when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze.

Since you are precious and honoured in my sight,  
and because I love you, Do not be afraid,  
for I am with you;

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Hymn – be not afraid

## Slide 12

### Candle Lighting Ceremony

*[Unlit candles are arranged before the service / funeral in the front of the room, with one larger candle lit and burning. This larger candle can be used to light the other candles by guests.]*

The Candle is the sign of the light, warmth and power of the Holy Spirit. It reminds us of Tony's journey and of ours as well. We light this candle for Tony.

It reminds us that the Spirit always moved ahead of him and us. It is a symbol of the warmth of the love of God for Tony and for us. That love surrounded Tony and it surrounds us, wherever we go. It gives us courage for the next step in our journeys.

We here today because we remember with fondness and love Tony Leenaars, because he was a part of our lives and we will always carry his memories in our hearts and as a part of our very beings. He was cared for and loved by Nick in particular along with many other of us. He will always, in part, remain with us here at St Pauls.

Now, I invite you to come forward to light a candle in memory of Tony, perhaps say a quiet prayer and remember a special time you spent with him.

*[After all candles are lit, and there is a small pause, continue with the ceremony.]*

Not so long ago I was listening to a Pod Cast and the presenter put forward this thought – there is really only life – life on earth and life in eternity – death is only a transition I believe this is what we hear in the following poem

### Slide 13

Poem -

I am standing on the seashore.

A ship spreads her white sails to the morning breeze and starts for the ocean.

I stand watching her until she fades on the horizon.

And someone at my side says "She is gone"

Gone where?

The loss of sight is in me, not in her.

Just at that moment when someone says

"She is gone."

There are others who are watching her coming.

Other voices take up the glad shout

"Here she comes".

That is dying.

### Slide 14

*Prayers*

If we trust in God, he will take care of us in life and in death.  
Let us pray with confidence to him in our hour of need.

Now that Tony's labours and sufferings are over, may God bring him to a place of light, happiness and peace.

Gracious God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
we thank you that you received tony by baptism  
into the family of your Church on earth,  
and granted *him* the gift of eternal life.  
*He* ate with us the bread of life  
and drank from the cup of salvation.  
We thank you for all your goodness to Tony,  
in Christ our Saviour. Amen.

We pray for those who mourn

We pray that Tony's memory will live on among us and that  
all the dead, especially those we have loved may enjoy  
eternal life.

Merciful God,  
we pray for Tony's *family and friends*,  
*remembering especially Nick*,  
whose sense of loss is so keen.  
When we cannot understand the things that happen,  
and are weighed down by grief and loneliness,  
uphold us in your love.  
Give us the assurance of your constant care,  
that we may have courage for the days ahead.  
through Jesus Christ our friend. Amen.

We pray for those who have gone before us  
God of grace and glory  
we remember those who have gone before us,  
who have stood by us and helped us,  
who have cheered us by their sympathy  
and strengthened us by their example;  
We remember especially today Tony's beloved wife Leonie

Help us so to live, that in dying,  
we may rejoice with them in the promise of a glorious  
resurrection;  
through your Son our Redeemer. Amen.



Let us now join together in the prayer that Jesus taught us

### Slide 15

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever. Amen

### **THE FAREWELL**

#### Slide 16

You, O Lord, are full of compassion and mercy:  
slow to anger and of great goodness.  
As a father cares for his children:  
so is your care, O Lord, for those who fear you.  
For you know of what we are made:  
you remember that we are but dust.  
Our days are like the grass:  
we flourish like a flower of the field;  
When the wind goes over it, it is gone:  
and its place will know it no more.  
But your loving-kindness, O Lord  
endures for ever and ever  
on those that fear you:  
and your righteousness on their children's children.

Amen.

Now to him who is able to keep you from falling,  
and to make you stand without blemish  
in the presence of his glory with rejoicing,  
to the only God our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
be glory, majesty, power and authority,  
before all time and now and for ever. Amen.

Loving Lord, we pray that you will support us all day long, till  
the shadows lengthen and evening falls, and the busy world  
is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done;  
then in your mercy, Lord, grant us a safe lodging, a holy  
rest, and peace at last.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. *Amen*

## **The Commendation**

Almighty God,  
in your great love  
you crafted us by your hand  
and breathed life into us by your Spirit.  
Although we became a rebellious people,  
you did not abandon us to our sin.  
In your tender mercy  
you sent your Son  
to restore in us your image.  
In obedience to your will  
he gave up his life for us,  
bearing in his body our sins on the cross.  
By your mighty power  
you raised him from the grave  
and exalted him to the throne of glory.  
Rejoicing in his victory  
and trusting in your promise  
to make alive all who turn to Christ,  
we now commend Antonious Leenaars to your mercy  
and we join with all your faithful people

and the whole company of heaven  
in the one unending song of praise:  
glory and wisdom and honour  
be to our God for ever and ever.

Amen.

### **Closing Prayer**

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the life of our brother Tony. We thank you for the gift of eternal life, and we live in the hope of this promise every day knowing that our days on this earth are numbered but that life with You is eternal.

We pray that You especially uphold and strengthen those closest to tony , that You may give them courage and strength to face the time ahead with courage and perseverance.

May You keep us all steadfast in our love and faithfulness to you, Father, and may we follow the path that You have laid out before us. All this we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

### **Blessing and Dismissal**

Thank every one of you for coming today to take leave of our brother Tony . Nick would like to invite you all to join us in the hall for some light refreshments and to share your memories of Tony.

Go now in peace,  
The peace which passes all human understanding  
And may the God who is your loving parent  
Stand between you and all harm,  
The God of loving-kindness  
    look upon you with grace  
And the Spirit visit you with healing and peace.

*Amen*