

Remembering a Loved One at Christmas

As Christmas approaches, we are often overwhelmed by memories of those we have lost. Grief can overshadow the joy normally associated with the Christmas season. Whether the loss is recent, and this is the first Christmas without your loved one, or if it has been many years, finding ways to include a loved one(s) can provide comfort and add peace to your holiday experience.

Here are some possible ways to remember your loved one. They won't all feel right for you, but we hope that there will be something that helps you to honour the life and love of those you have lost.

1. Select or make a special ornament to add to your Christmas tree. This can be done once or on an annual basis.
2. Hang a stocking with your loved one's name on it. Have each family member write a note to the person or write down a favourite memory. Place the notes in the stocking. These can be left private or shared on Christmas morning.
3. Light a candle in memory of your loved one on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day to represent their presence with you.
4. Donate to a charity that reminds you of your loved one.
5. Purchase a gift for your loved one and donate it to someone in need.
6. Serve your loved one's favourite dish at a Christmas meal.
7. Make a toast to your loved one at your Christmas meal. Have everyone at the table share a favourite memory.
8. Bake your loved one's favourite Christmas cookies. Share them with family and friends who are also missing them.
9. Visit your loved one's memorial site.
10. Make a play list of your loved one's favourite Christmas music to listen to over the holiday season.
11. Build a snowman and dress it in your loved one's scarf, hat and mitts.
12. Frame a favourite photo of your loved one for yourself or as a gift to others who are missing them.
13. Begin a journal of favourite memories of your loved one. Set aside time to add to it each year.
14. Create a memory chain. Cut strips of coloured paper about 1"x8". Have family members or friends write memories of your loved one or qualities they had on the strips. Form the completed strips into a chain of loops. Hang it on your tree.
15. Take a walk in nature. Surround yourself in the beauty of God's creation. Breathe in his healing presence.