CONGREGATION AHAVATH CHESED
HIGH HOLY DAY CEMETERY SERVICE

Thank you for being here today to honor the memory of your dear friends and loved ones. The custom of visiting the graves of loved ones began sometime in the late middle ages. About 600 years ago, Rabbi Jacob ben Moses Ha-Levi Mollin of Germany introduced the custom of visiting loved ones at the cemetery either before Rosh HaShanah or between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur.. It soon spread to the Sephardic community as well. It is a wonderful way to affirm that our departed loved ones are both remembered and loved.

Religious thinkers have explored the concept of Immortality for thousands of years; it surely can be understood in many ways. We ultimately find the answers to our questions, but only when we are unable to share those answers with the living. The power of loving memories offers us a tangible way to immortalize those whom we love. As long as we remember them with love, they are alive in our hearts. Perhaps that is the most meaningful form of immortality of all.

Today we share a few brief prayers as we continue this lovely tradition. Today we remember loved ones who are buried at Evergreen or King David or at far way places . Wherever they reside, their essence is in our hearts. Let us give thanks for all that was good, true and beautiful in their lives. May their memory be a source of blessing and comfort to us all. As we pause to remember our departed loved one, let us take a few moments to connect with them as we silently offer the following prayer:

SILENT MEDITATION: To this sacred place I come, drawn by the eternal ties that bind my soul to yours. Death has separated us. You are no longer at my side to share the beauty of the passing moment. I cannot look to you to lighten my burdens, to lend me your strength, your counsel, your faith. And yet what you mean to me neither withers nor fades. For a time we touched hands and hearts, still your voice abides within me, still your tender glance remains a joy to me. For you are part of me for ever; something of you has become a deathless song upon my lips. And so beyond the ache that tells how much I miss you, a deeper thought compels: we were together. I hold you still in mind, and give thanks for life and love. The happiness that was you, the memories that do not fade, are a gift that cannot be lost. You continue to bless my days and years. I will always give thanks for you. (From "On The Doorposts of Your House" CCAR Press, 1994).

THE POWER OF MEMORY

It is hard to speak about oneness when our world is not complete, when those who once brought wholeness to our lives have gone and only memory can fill the emptiness their passing leaves behind. But memory can tell us only what we were, in company with those we loved; it cannot help us to find what each of us alone must now

become. Yet no one is really alone; those who live no more echo still within our thoughts and words, and what they did is part of what we have become. We do best homage to our dead when we live our lives most fully, even in the shadow of our loss. For each one of our lives is worth the life of the whole world; in each one is the breath of the ultimate one. In affirming the one, we are brought closer to the source of life, in whose unity no one is alone and every life finds purpose.

Psalm 23

מִזְמוֹר לְדָוִד. יְיָ רֹעִי, לֹא אֶחְסָר. בִּנְאוֹת דֶּשֶׁא יַרְבִּיצֵנִי,
עַל־מֵי מְנֻחוֹת יְנַהֲלֵנִי. נַפְשִׁי יְשׁוֹבֵב. יַנְחֵנִי בְּמַעְגְּלֵי־צֶדֶק
לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ. גַּם כִּי־אֵלֵךְ בְּגֵיא צַלְמָוֶת לֹא־אִירָא רָע, כִּי־
אַתָּה עִמָּדִי; שִׁבְטְךָ וּמִשְׁעַנְתֶּךָ הֵמָּה יְנַחֲמֻנִי. תַּעֲרֹךְ לְפָנַי
שֻׁלְחָן נֶגֶד צֹרְרָי. דִּשַּׁנְתָּ בַשֶּׁמֶן רֹאשִׁי, כּוֹסִי רְוָיָה. אַךְ טוֹב
וָחֶסֶד יִרְדְּפוּנִי כָּל־יְמֵי חַיָּי, וְשַׁבְתִּי בְּבֵית־יְיָ לְאֹרֶךְ יָמִים.

PSALM 23

You are my shepherd, I shall not want.
You let me lie down in green pastures;
You lead me beside the still waters, and restore my soul;
You guide me in the paths of righteousness for the sake of your name.
Even when I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil, for You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.
You set a table before me in the presence of mine adversaries.
You have anointed my head with oil; my cup is overflowing.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life;
And I shall dwell in Your house as long as I live.

BEFORE EL MALE RACHAMIM PRAYER

O God, we remember that we are but strangers upon earth. Like a shadow, our life flees away. Help us, O God, to walk in your sight that, when the few years of our earthly pilgrimage are ended, we may be ready to meet our end with tranquil mind. To **YOU** we look for comfort and strength when one of our beloved is taken from us, and a link is broken in the chain of love which binds us together in family union. Though we walk through the shadow of death, we shall fear no evil for YOU are with us as a source of strength and courage. Amen.

אֵל מָלֵא רַחֲמִים, שׁוֹכֵן בַּמְּרוֹמִים, הַמְצֵא מְנוּחָה
נְכוֹנָה תַּחַת כַּנְפֵי הַשְּׁכִינָה עִם קְדוֹשִׁים וּטְהוֹרִים
כְּזֹהַר הָרָקִיעַ מַזְהִירִים לְנִשְׁמוֹת יַקִּירֵינוּ שֶׁהָלְכוּ
לְעוֹלָמָם. בַּעַל הָרַחֲמִים יַסְתִּירֵם בְּסֵתֶר כְּנָפָיו
לְעוֹלָמִים, וְיִצְרוֹר בִּצְרוֹר הַחַיִּים אֶת־נִשְׁמָתָם. יְיָ
הוּא נַחֲלָתָם. וְיָנוּחוּ בְּשָׁלוֹם עַל מִשְׁכָּבָם, וְנֹאמַר:
אָמֵן.

EL MALE RACHAMIM IN ENGLISH TRANSLATION: : God full of compassion, Eternal Spirit of the universe, grant perfect rest under the wings of Your Presence to our dear friends and loved ones who have entered eternity. Master of Mercy, let them find refuge forever in the shadow of your wings, and let their souls be bound up in the bond of eternal life. The Eternal God is their inheritance. May they rest in peace, and let us say: Amen. (Traditional Memorial Prayer about 400-500 years old)

IN THE RISING OF THE SUN

In the rising of the sun and in its going down, we will remember them.
In the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter, we will remember them.
In the opening of buds and in the rebirth of spring, we will remember them.
In the blueness of the sky and in the warmth of summer, we will remember them.
In the rustling of leaves and in the beauty of autumn, we shall remember them.
In the beginning of the year and when it ends, we shall remember them.
When we are weary and in need of strength, let us remember them.
When we are lost and sick at heart, let us remember them.
When we have joys we yearn to share, let us remember them.
So long as we live, they too shall live, for they are now a part of us, as we remember them with love.

BEFORE THE KADDISH

Early or late, all must answer the summons to return to the Source of Being, for we lose our hold on life when our time has come, as the leaf falls from the tree when its day is done. The deeds of the righteous enrich the world, as the fallen leaf enriches the soil beneath. The dust returns to the earth, the spirit lives on with God. Like the stars by day, our beloved dead are not seen by mortal eyes. Yet they shine on forever; theirs is eternal peace. Let us be thankful for the companionship that continues in a life stronger than death. We join together in prayer:

MOURNER'S KADDISH קדיש יתום

יִתְגַּדַּל וְיִתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא בְּעָלְמָא דִּי־בְרָא כִרְעוּתֵהּ,

Yit·ga·dal ve·yit·ka·dash she·mei ra·ba be·al·ma di·ve·ra chi·re·u·tei,

וְיַמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתֵהּ בְּחַיֵּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל־בֵּית

ve·yam·lich mal·chu·tei be·cha·yei·chon u·ve·yo·mei·chon u·ve·cha·yei de·chol beit

יִשְׂרָאֵל, בַּעֲגָלָא וּבִזְמַן קָרִיב, וְאִמְרוּ: אָמֵן.

Yis·ra·eil, ba·a·ga·la u·vi·ze·man ka·riv, ve·i·me·ru: a·mein.

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלַם וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא.

Ye·hei she·mei ra·ba me·va·rach le·a·lam u·le·al·mei al·ma·ya.

יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח, וְיִתְפָּאַר וְיִתְרוֹמַם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא, וְיִתְהַדַּר

Yit·ba·rach ve·yish·ta·bach, ve·yit·pa·ar ve·yit·ro·mam ve·yit·na·sei, ve·yit·ha·dar

וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלַּל שְׁמֵהּ דְּקוּדְשָׁא, בְּרִיךְ הוּא, לְעֵלָּא מִן כָּל־

ve·yit·a·leh ve·yit·ha·lal she·mei de·ku·de·sha, be·rich hu, le·ei·la min kol

בִּרְכָתָא וְשִׁירָתָא, תֻּשְׁבְּחָתָא וְנֶחֱמָתָא דַּאֲמִירָן בְּעָלְמָא,

bi·re·cha·ta ve·shi·ra·ta, tush·be·cha·ta ve·ne·che·ma·ta, da·a·mi·ran be·al·ma,

וְאִמְרוּ: אָמֵן.

ve·i·me·ru: a·mein.

יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל,

Ye·hei she·la·ma ra·ba min she·ma·ya ve·cha·yim a·lei·nu ve·al kol Yis·ra·eil,

וְאִמְרוּ: אָמֵן.

ve·i·me·ru: a·mein.

עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם בִּמְרוֹמָיו, הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל־כָּל־

O·seh sha·lom bi·me·ro·mav, hu ya·a·seh sha·lom a·lei·nu ve·al kol

יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאִמְרוּ: אָמֵן.

Yis·ra·eil, ve·i·me·ru: a·mein.

May the Source of peace send peace to all who mourn, and comfort to all who are bereaved. Amen.

AFTER THE KADDISH: The departed have entered into the peace of life eternal. They still live on earth in the many acts of goodness that they performed, and in the hearts of all who cherish their memory. May the beauty of their lives abide among us as a loving benediction. May the Source of peace send peace to all who mourn, and comfort all the bereaved among us. And let us say Amen.