# Baby Loss Awareness Service Outline

God who cares, you’ve stored my tears in your bottle.

Psalm 56:8 *The Message* paraphrase: ‘You’ve kept track of my every toss and turn through the sleepless nights, each tear entered in your ledger, each ache written in your book.’

## Welcome Liturgy

We come together in our grief, in memory of the life that we carried but could not hold, the life we held but we could not bring home, that we brought home but could not stay.

We come together in our grief, in memory of all the moments that should have been: the milestones that should have been reached, the birthdays that should have been celebrated and the family that should have been together.

We come together in our grief and bring to you every tear shed and every plea uttered. We bring our sorrow, our anger, our questions and our fears.

God of comfort, we pray that you will be with us in our grief, the same as you are with us in our joy. We pray that you will mend our broken hearts and will bring your healing.

In Jesus’ name, we pray. Amen.

## Creative Prayer of Remembrance:

*At the focus point of the room, maybe on the holiness table, have a large candle alight. This candle could be lit before the service or during the first song.*

*As an act of remembrance take a few moments of silence together.*

Merciful Father,

We come to you in remembrance of the young lives that we deeply love. As part of the wave of light, we light a candle and bring to you the names of the precious lives that we have lost.

In your word, you tell us that you are the light, and there is no darkness in you. Today as we light these candles, we pray that your light would come and shine upon the dark places within us, upon the grief, the anger, the questions and the deep sadness we feel. Shine on us.

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Amen.

*In the silence, encourage people, if they would like, to come and light a candle in remembrance. If they feel comfortable, encourage them to speak out loud the name of the life they are remembering.*

## Thought

● Recall a time when someone showed you great care. You might like to share about how someone cared for you in a time of great loss, or simply in everyday life. For example, receiving a bunch of flowers, the cooking of a meal or a handwritten card. Talk about how it made you feel valued and loved.

● Throughout the Bible we see how God cares - he is a God of love. One of the main messages in Scripture tells of God caring for his people and drawing them to him.

● Furthermore, we see that God cares for the suffering of his people and hears them when they are struggling.

#### Suggested Bible verses:

○ **Exodus 2:23-25**

‘…The Israelites groaned in their slavery and cried out, and their cry for help because of their slavery went up to God. God heard their groaning and he remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and with Jacob.So God looked on the Israelites and was concerned about them.’

God went on to save his people from their slavery and their suffering.

○ **1 Samuel 1:10**

‘In her deep anguish Hannah prayed to the Lord, weeping bitterly.’

**1 Samuel 1:19**

‘…and the Lord remembered her.’

God heard Hannah’s tears for a child, and he listened to her.

○ David was a character who suffered and went through times of fear and loss. Psalms is a powerful book when we are grieving as the language is real and raw. The Psalms, some of them written by David, tell us time and time again that God cares for us in the suffering and grief we might feel.

**Psalm 34:15 *MSG***

‘God keeps an eye on his friends, his ears pick up every moan and groan.’

**Psalm 18:6**

‘In my distress I called to the Lord; I cried to my God for help. From his temple he heard my voice; my cry came before him, into his ears.’

● God cared for the life that you are here to remember today. He is Creator God who cares for his creation and every life is precious to him. God cares for us too, and the pain and grief that you are feeling matters to him.

● We have a God who does more than care. He is a God who feels pain too. We see this in John 11:35 when ‘Jesus wept’ after his good friend Lazarus died.

● God sits with us in our grief and provides comfort.

Psalm 34:18: ‘The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit.’

● God cares for us in our grief, so much so that every tear we cry is important to him.

Psalm 56:8 (*MSG*) says, ‘You’ve kept track of my every toss and turn through the sleepless nights, each tear entered in your ledger, each ache written in your book.’

● Read the lyrics from ‘Someone Cares’, written by John Gowans (*SASB* 10).

Do you sometimes feel that no one truly knows you,

And that no one understands or really cares?

Through his people, God himself is close beside you,

And through them he plans to answer all your prayers.

*Someone cares, someone cares,*

*Someone knows your deepest need, your burden shares;*

*Someone cares, someone cares,*

*God himself will hear the whisper of your prayers.*

Ours is not a distant God, remote, unfeeling,

Who is careless of our loneliness and pain,

Through the ministry of men he gives his healing,

In their dedicated hands brings hope again.

● Today we can cry out to God and know that he is listening. We can find comfort in our God who cares and know that he will be with us in our grief and sorrow. We can also rest secure in the knowledge that every life matters to God, that he weeps with us in remembrance and that his love extends to those who are no longer with us.

## Creative Response:

Set-up: Purchase some small bottles (similar to these: <https://amzn.eu/d/8CC6sGv>) – you could make little labels with the words of Psalm 56:8 written on, to put inside or on the bottles.

Play a song for reflection (find song suggestions below). In this time, encourage people to come forward to the front and take a bottle as a reminder that God cares for them and their loved ones especially in their grief.

## Song suggestions

During the service you may want to spend time singing, listening to and reflecting on these songs. Alternatively, the songs can be given as recommendations during pastoral visits for grieving families.

*Note: the links below are sourced from YouTube – if necessary, make sure you have skipped the adverts before your time of reflection to avoid ruining the atmosphere.*

* ‘I am not alone’, Kari Jobe: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bfveawSAHJA>
* ‘Bow the knee’, International Staff Songsters: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x_XoU6pGbBM>
* ‘Blessings’, Laura Storey: <https://youtu.be/Cd6J6Wgnv4M>
* ‘Thy will be done’, Hilary Scott: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PAmh3yvmzXs>
* ‘Jireh’, Maverick City: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w_gCSJI6DKM>
* ‘O come to the altar’, Elevation Worship: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OpfuKKH_SCE>