



Sands Garden Event of Remembrance and Hope Saturday 6 June 2020

You have found the Sands virtual Garden event of Remembrance and Hope.

All the details of the readers and the music can be found on the Sands website (www.sands.org/garden) in the Order of Service.

We usually hold this event in the Sands Remembrance garden at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire. But this year, 2020, for obvious reasons we're holding a virtual event instead.

You will hear from Sands Ambassadors, bereaved parents, Sands staff, a bereaved sibling and also healthcare professionals with readings and poems. There will also be a period of reflection for you to remember your own babies.

We will end the event with a time of hope. Hope that we can create a beautiful legacy for all the babies we are remembering; through raising awareness, through providing the best possible care and support for families and parents at a really challenging time and in saving babies' lives.



Welcome

My name is Clea Harmer and I am the Chief Executive of Sands. I would like to welcome all of you to this very special event - the Sands Annual Service of Remembrance and Hope – which we have chosen to celebrate online this year.

Sands is working to support families and parents during these uncertain time, and this online event means that, from you home, you have an opportunity to spend time remembering the babies you hold close in your hearts. Your babies have been, and will continue to be, such an important part of your and your family's lives.

In remembering them, we can also acknowledge and celebrate your deep love for them, and the fact that they will have touched your lives in unique ways. Despite the fact that they are not here, they will always be a central part of today. As Paulo Coelho wrote, *"Never. We never lose our loved ones. They accompany us; they don't disappear from our lives. We are merely in different rooms"*.

June is Sands Awareness Month. The 2020 theme, Supporting professionals, highlights that healthcare staff pour immense amounts of time, dedication and resilience in caring for bereaved families and, now more than ever, deserve our gratitude and support. The readings, music and contributions from all of you that we will share today are an acknowledgement of our babies. Let us come together to celebrate the love that we have for them. Thank you.



KSAVI, Sands Ambassador and bereaved mother reads **Look For Me in Rainbows** by Conn Bernard

Forever changes the world. 'Look for me in Rainbows'

Time for me to go now, I won't say goodbye;
Look for me in rainbows, way up in the sky.
In the morning sunrise when all the world is new,
Just look for me and love me, as you know I loved you.

Time for me to leave you, I won't say goodbye;
Look for me in rainbows, high up in the sky.
In the evening sunset, when all the world is through,
Just look for me and love me, and I'll be close to you.

It won't be forever, the day will come and then
My loving arms will hold you, when we meet again.

Time for us to part now, we won't say goodbye;
Look for me in rainbows, shining in the sky.
Every waking moment, and all your whole life through
Just look for me and love me, as you know I loved you.

Just wish me to be near you,
And I'll be there with you.



Louise DeLuen, a midwife at County Durham and Darlington Foundation NHS Trust reads
The Midwife by Emily Clayton

These eyes have witnessed beauty
Which some may never see,
Of rawness, power, strength and love,
Of two becoming three.

These ears have listened carefully
To each pure and unique song,
When women feel so vulnerable
But are so immensely strong.

These hands have guided, soft but firm,
And gently rubbed and soothed,
From bump, to that first draw of breath,
The mountains, they have moved.

This heart has burst a thousand times,
With each new perfect birth,
A miracle, a small shot of joy,
A blessing to the Earth.

This soul is full of happiness,
'Though sometimes cries and weeps,
For most are born and taken home,
But some, we cannot keep.

These eyes have witnessed beauty
Which I've been blessed to see,
Of rawness, power, strength and love,
Of women feeling free.



Rebekah Walsh, a midwife at Bath NHS Trust reads '**... Than Be A Midwife**' by Jenny Clarke

I'm a Midwife and I'm proud
But there's no need to say it loud
Midwives see sadness, give kindness
See happiness and pain
Support women and families
Some who lose, some who gain
There are many facets to our role
And being 'with woman' is in our souls
To be present as a child arrives
Is a true honour in our eyes
We hope. We give. We cry. We care.
We are so privileged to just 'be there'
It sounds a cliché but it's true:
There's nothing else I'd rather do



Musician **Jen Armstrong** performs '**Not Alone**'



Bereaved Sibling, **Katie Alexander** reads her own **Letter to Daisy**

Dear Daisy, Yesterday would have been your fifth birthday and it's hard to even know where to begin with this. There's so many emotions rushing through me, yet all I feel is numb.

It's hard to explain the way baby loss feels because you just remember everything. I remember the pure happiness that we felt when Mum told us she was pregnant with you. And I remember the early spotting warnings. And I remember the 12 week scan when we were told that something wasn't quite right. A week later we had the full results and all I remember is the deafening cries from our mum. And I remember the day you died as if it was yesterday.

Now, five years on I feel content, and sad of course. Losing you wasn't easy. But I feel content knowing that you are in peace, you're where you're meant to be. Your body was never destined for this earth, but your memory is. I remember everything and that's why we will remember you. We talk about you, we write about you, we celebrate you. All because we love you. You are part of us whether on earth or in heaven.

Daisy, you are the sister I had, yet never had, and yet I'll have you for ever.

A time of reflection and remembering

We have now reached the time in our event, a special time to reflect and remember and to see how other families have been remembering their babies during Covid. It's also an opportunity to remember those other special people during this challenging time.

A short slideshow of images sharing just a few of the ways families have been remembering their babies during set to gentle reflective music. Please click through to the next part of this special event



Julia Gray, Sands Befriender and bereaved mother reads **And You Held Me** by Janet Morley

And there was no time
and you held me
and there was only wanting
and being held
and being filled with wanting
and I was nothing but letting go
and being held
and there were no words
and there needed to be no words
and there was no terror only stillness
and I was wanting nothing
and it was fullness
and it was like aching for God
and it was touch
and warmth
and darkness
and no time
and no words
and we flowed
and I flowed
and I was not empty
and I was given up to the dark
and in the darkness I was not lost
and the wanting was like fullness
and I could hardly hold it
and I was held
and you were dark
and warm
and without time
and without words
and you held me.

Lonely Lullaby written and performed by bereaved mum, **Lyndsey Lang**



David Haig, Sands Ambassador and bereaved father reads **Then and Now** by Ruth Sparrey

When you left me
A face appeared
A face marked by sorrow
The face said it all
I was not alone then

When you left us
Words appeared
Words of condolence
The words said it all
We were not alone then

When you left us
Thoughts appeared
Thoughts wishing peace
The thoughts said it all
You were real then

When you left us
Flowers appeared
Flowers grown in remembrance
The flowers said it all
You were real then

Now you have been gone awhile
The face is still there
And now, I understand its meaning

Now you have been gone awhile
The words no longer come
But, their kindness will never be forgotten

Now you have been gone awhile
The thoughts sometimes find us
When we are able to let them in
Though you have been gone awhile
The flowers continue
For you are our blessing that lets us grow



These things written and performed by bereaved mum **Natasha Blackwood**



Clea Harmer, Sands Chief Executive reads **Let it be hope** by Nikki Banas

If you only carry one thing throughout your entire life, let it be hope.

Let it be hope that better things are always ahead.

Let it be hope that you can get through even the toughest of times.

Let it be hope that you are stronger than any challenge that comes your way.

Let it be hope that you are exactly where you are meant to be right now, and that you are on the path to where you are meant to be ... because during these times, hope will be the very thing that carries you through.



We hope you have found this a special and supportive time for remembering your babies.

At Sands we know that this year has been incredibly challenging when we haven't been able to travel to those special places we might usually go to, to remember birthdays and anniversaries. But we would love to see your photos and pictures of how you have been remembering your babies during this time and these can be uploaded via the Sands website. Please go to sands.org.uk/garden.

Please don't forget that Sands is always here to support you for however long you need us.

You may want to make a dedication on our new permanent memorials page or to use the activity sheets for siblings.

Sands dedication page can be found at: sands.dedicationpage.org/sandsgarden

Colouring sheets can be found at: sands.org.uk/gardenday

Lynsey Lang's beautiful daughter, Evalyn, was stillborn on the 8th November 2016. Lyndsey writes a blog and shares her experiences of life after loss. Visit afterevalyn.com

Natasha Blackwood wrote *These Things* following the death of her daughter and this is included on her debut album *Ease Back*. Visit harterymusic.com and read about it here: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/first-listen-natasha-blackwood-ease-back-1.5489841>

Support from Sands

Freephone Helpline: 0808 164 3332

Email Helpline: 0808 164 3332

www.sands.community

www.sands.org.uk/app

General Enquiries

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Sands is the leading stillbirth and neonatal death charity in the UK. Sands exists to reduce the number of babies dying and to ensure that anyone affected by the death of a baby receives the best possible care and support for as long as they need it.

Sands provides bereavement support services both nationally through its Freephone helpline, mobile app, online community and resources, and locally through a UK-wide network of around 100 regional support groups.

Sands works in partnership with health care professionals, trusts and health boards and offers a range of training programmes and bereavement care resources to ensure that every bereaved parent and family receives the best possible care wherever they are in the UK.

Sands promotes and funds research to better understand the causes of baby deaths and save babies' lives. The charity also raises awareness of baby loss and works with governments, key influencers and other stakeholders to make reducing the number of babies dying a priority nationally and locally.

Over the past 40 years, Sands has grown into a national charity with a powerful vision, to create a world where fewer babies die, shared by dedicated volunteers, fundraisers, members, donors, healthcare professionals, partners, staff and bereaved parents and families.

www.sands.org.uk/donate



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