

# Tony Conder

All the Faiths of the world speak of another life after death.

Perhaps we do not fully know what it is but we hold on to the hope, the belief or the knowledge of peace, rest, fulfilment and of people being reunited in love.

For Tony, the journey is beginning, but for us there is loss, grief and pain.

Every one of us has had our life touched - perhaps in the tiniest way, or perhaps totally transformed - by Tony's existence.

We would not be reading this otherwise.  
Tony, and his life, mattered to us.

It is important for us to acknowledge and accept that something fundamental has changed with his going. Life will not be the same - and life cannot, and should not be the same.

The death of each of us is in the normal order of things; it follows life as surely as night follows day. The book of Ecclesiastes had the words "a time for every season under heaven", well before they were placed in the song made famous by the Byrds.  
*There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die,.....a time to mourn and a time to dance,*

Take the *Tree of Life* as a symbol. The human race is the trunk and branches of this tree and individual men and women are the leaves, which appear one season, flourish for a summer and then die.

But while we live we are conscious of the Tree's flowing sap and steadfast strength.

We are a part of the whole - "*the collective consciousness of humanity*" - and every one of us makes a unique contribution, be it ever so small for many of us.

The physical reality of Tony has gone, but the Tree remains and it has been enhanced because of his life - and unfortunately his death.

So it will be for us as well.

While we are here, our task is to live our life fully, to seek happiness and to love each other.

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At these times we can pray for ourselves and for Tony's family.

We are standing at what has been called a "thin place" : a place where Earth and Heaven meet.

This particular thin place is where life is brought to death.

We can pray that we will be delivered from grief, fear and doubt, from despair and unbelief.

And as people of faith, we pray that our God will bring us to an understanding of His presence.

Some faith groups call that a calling into The Light.

Faith in God calls us to ask Him to grant us a Peace which the world cannot give, so that we with Tony may trust in Him, and find our purpose in life through Him.

We can pray that God has granted to Tony those things which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart imagined.

Tony is already through the barrier and freed into another reality to experience whatever awaits him there but for us, it is important to "say a final farewell" .

"Tony we wish you well and thank you for being a part of our life"

We take life so very much for granted but it is the greatest gift we have.

*"The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you.  
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace".*



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'What can I do to mark his passing?.'

You can help, support and love those who remain.

You can allow them to cry; to grieve; to laugh and to remember.

Grief takes its own time to work itself through but it is easier with friends who allow it to be what it needs to be.

You can honour your own feelings; maybe today - maybe in a weeks time - maybe in six months time.

And you can bless each day that you live and live it to the full in honour of life itself - and of Tony.

Stephen Power - Chaplain

Everton Free School and Football College family



RIP Tony