

As a celebrant, I create a sacred space where the funeral is to be held. Depending on the location, this may involve creating a small altar with flowers (these may be from your garden, or wildflowers from a meadow, or a florist), a beeswax candle or two, or if outdoors, it may be marked by elements of Nature, such as maple leaves, rosehips, etc. It will include a photo and mementos which represent your loved one and/or belief system. At the start of the ceremony, I will welcome the mourners. As they arrive, the mood will be created by the chosen music.

My role is to seamlessly lead us through the ceremony from start to finish, incorporating music, readings, stories, the eulogy, family tributes, and any symbolism used, such as candle lighting, silence, prayer, bell-ringing, songs, hymns or chanting, releasing butterflies, blowing bubbles or planting a tree.

*"When words are inadequate, have a ritual."*

Anon

## **Veronika Robinson**

*Independent Funeral Celebrant*

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*I am available throughout Cumbria,  
and up to 100 miles from Penrith.*

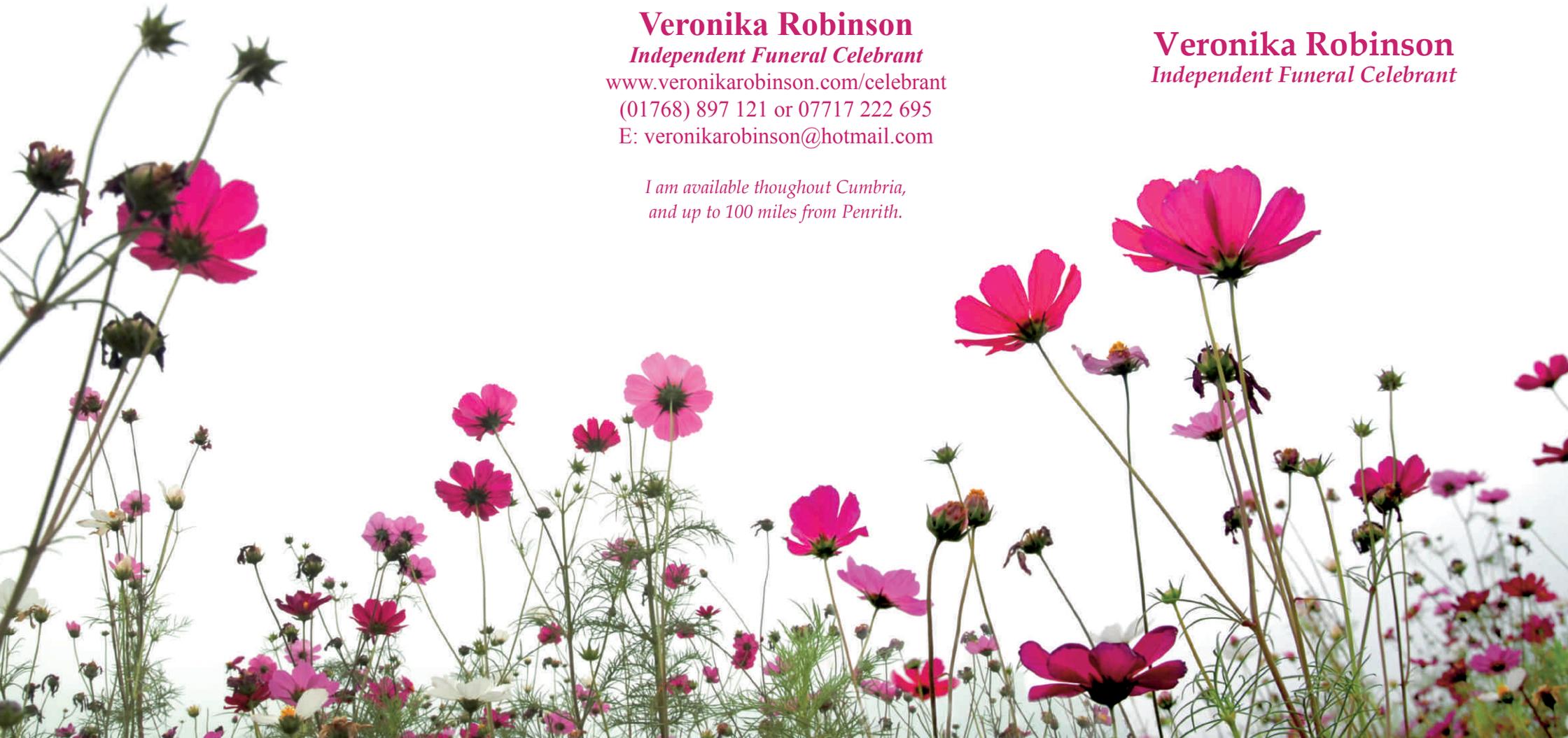
# *Celebrating a Life*

*Choosing a life-centred funeral*

*"This is what happens around the world;  
if you love, you grieve, and there are no exceptions."*

## **Veronika Robinson**

*Independent Funeral Celebrant*



As a life-centred funeral celebrant, I hope to help you see the funeral as a vital part of your grieving process. When you entrust me with your ceremony, I will share the stories of your loved one's life in a beautiful and meaningful way.

As a celebrant, I create, write and officiate a personalised, heart-felt ceremony based on your wishes, whether they are religious, spiritual, secular, New Age, holistic or other. My role is to help, guide and work with your family to ensure every aspect of the ceremony is as you would wish.

My job begins by coming to spend time with you and your family for two to three hours. We'll sit around your table\* where I'll listen as you share your memories. I want to hear all your stories: funny, sad, inspiring, life-changing. Children's artwork or other creative expressions may become part of our conversation. My promise to you: I am sensitive, empathetic, and will capture the essence of your loved one's life.

*\* We may meet at the funeral home or other place of your choice, if you don't wish to meet in your own home*

After my visit, I will write a draft ceremony for you to approve by email or phone. It can be changed or amended as often as you need, until the night before the ceremony. I will be at the funeral venue at least half an hour before the ceremony is due to start. Afterwards, if you desire, I will attend the funeral tea or wake. If you wish, I can lead with a prayer or blessing before refreshments are served.

I have more than twenty years experience as a celebrant. I am a specialist in ritual. The ceremony we create together is a final gift to the deceased. A life-centred funeral validates them as an individual. My role is to feel the loss of your loved one and how it impacts your life, and to put that into a meaningful farewell.

As I write the eulogy, I will ensure that I distil the essence of their life. My role is to articulate and illuminate all that was loved and valued about them. I have a long background as a writer, and bring this skill to my ceremony work.

As your celebrant, I will guide you through the order of service and make recommendations, based on your life view (or that of the deceased) for songs/hymns, readings/poems, as well as ideas for including beautiful elements to symbolise the feelings of the family. It is often the small touches, such as a single home-grown scented rose in a small vase, by a photo of your loved one, that bring real visual beauty to the ceremony.

Rituals are what we add to ceremonies to bring added meaning. As with ancient traditions, they reflect our personal beliefs. The reason for including them is to help people move through their initial response of grief, to a place where they can start working with their grief and expressing their sadness.

Ceremonies are like a healing doorway, and they allow us to cross the threshold into the new life before us. Our emotions are at their highest at this time, and often it is a ritual that can help us best express our feelings.

My purpose, as a life-centred funeral celebrant, is to honour you in your healing, and give you the space to mourn through the sacred word-medicine of the ceremony. We are united in death, but our job is to celebrate a life.

Life-centred funeral ceremonies are authentic and have substance. It is a time for people to express how they feel about the deceased.

