**WE ARE GATHERED**

We are the people who face life after the fires

We are those whose lives

will never be quite the same again,

even though we will go on in strength and hope

We are gathered

to grieve some things,

to celebrate other things,

to claim our ground in a new way

to support each other

and to be part of the creation of the future.

**TELLING THE STORY**

Let us share the stories of what happened to us during the fires.

(People share their experiences.  This can be done in different ways – through stories, poetry, song, drama, drawings or sculpture. Again, it is good to involve children where possible.)

**THE GRIEVING**

Our lives will never be quite the same, even though we will journey on together.

The stories have been shared

Let any who wish to do so now add a word or phrase

which describes what they have lost.

(People call out words or phrases)

While we play this quiet music

let us grieve for all those things which are no more,

which have been damaged

or which will be a loss for us for some time to come

(Music is played)

We will lay to rest the things that have gone from us with respect, with honour, with tenderness and with grief.

We will gather them up into our good memories

To carry with us into the future.

**FACING THE FUTURE**

We will survive the future as we have the past,

And as we faced the fires.

(A song could be sung, a poem read or a dance performed)

In a silent moment,

let us bring to mind what we see among us

which will carry us into our future.

(a silence is kept)

Now let us take these green leaves (or flowers)

Name what we see among us for our future survival and

Strength

And place them over the symbols of our past.

Let us place them gently

as a covering of peace over that which we have lost.

Let us place them in confidence as signs

Of the renewing of our life.

(the group do so)

**LET US GO OUT**

Let us go out as the bush springs green again, restoring its beauty to us as a gift,

As the seeds are broken open by the fire for the beginning of new life

And as we bring together all that is among us for the future in this place.

Let us go from here, stronger than when we came,

Holding on to those who have lost the most, ready for all that is to come

And walk firmly into a new day,

Let us go in courage, hope and peace’