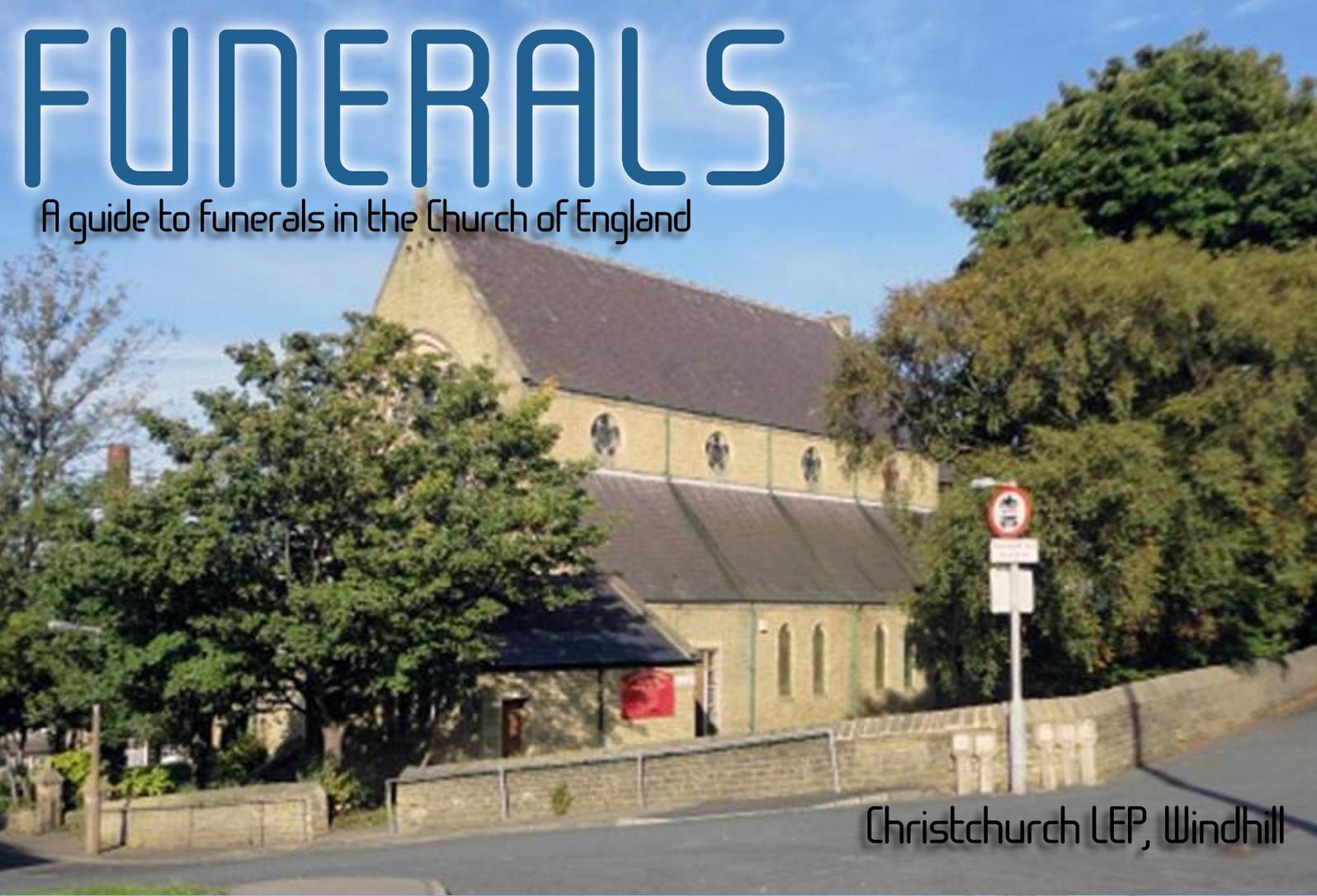


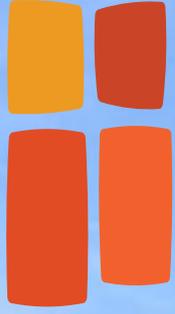
FUNERALS

A guide to funerals in the Church of England



Christchurch LEP, Windhill

Christchurch
Windhill



IN THIS GUIDE:

- Coping with bereavement
- What to do next?
- The funeral service



West Yorkshire Methodist District The Methodist Church of Great Britain



Coping with bereavement

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted” (Matthew 5:4)

Introduction

Coping at a time of bereavement is understandably difficult and the Ministry Team at Christchurch can support you in a number of different ways:

- Working seamlessly with your appointed Funeral Director so that funeral arrangements are carried out with dignity, compassion and respect;
- Visiting you before the funeral to listen, to offer you support, and to make necessary arrangements for the service itself, whether in church or at the crematorium. The minister will explain the service to you clearly and give you an opportunity to choose hymns and readings;
- The opportunity at some point in the future to hold a Memorial Service;
- Inviting you to our annual ‘*Time to Remember*’ service towards the end of October / early November which is a very quiet, informal and reflective service giving space for people to pay their respects and remember their loved ones;
- Supporting you in our prayers in church leading up to the funeral

service, and beyond; and also at the anniversary of the death of your loved one.

- Offering ongoing support. Rev Mark is a trained listener and qualified in mindfulness based Cognitive Behaviour Therapy with considerable experience of funeral ministry and bereavement support.

The funeral service

A funeral is an occasion used to mark the end of a person's life here on earth. Family, friends and acquaintances come together to express grief, share memories, give thanks for the life lived and commend the person into God's keeping. A funeral can be a small, quiet ceremony or a large occasion in a packed church.

Christchurch does not have a churchyard, but it is not uncommon for the Priest in Charge or Assistant Preach to conduct funeral services for families resident in the parish or for families who had historical connections with the church or parish - either at a local municipal cemetery or crematorium.

Services may take place in church, at the cemetery / crematorium or begin

in one and conclude in the other (for example a service in church followed by a committal at the crematorium).



What do I need to do next?

Practical steps

The first step

If you would like to arrange a Christian funeral service, the first step is usually to establish contact with your selected Funeral Director. They will then begin to make necessary arrangements on your behalf, including booking a service at church and / or the cemetery / crematorium. They can advise you on every aspect of the practicalities of the funeral.

They will also get in touch with the Ministry team at Christchurch on your behalf. We will be provided with information about the deceased, details of the next of kin, and when and where the funeral service is due to take place.

The next step

The next step would typically involve you being contacted by the minister appointed to conduct the service. They will arrange to visit you at home, or speak to you by telephone if you live some distance away.

They will support you by providing a listening and compassionate ear, and will explain the service giving you plenty of opportunities to ask questions.

We suggest that you may wish to think about any particular music and hymns, Bible readings or poems that you would like to be included in the service. The minister can provide advice on these matters.

The minister will also explore with you options for a tribute or eulogy being shared in the service; whether a family member or friend will bring the tribute, or whether you would like the minister to bring the tribute on behalf of the family. Remembering the life of a loved one is often a helpful and important part of the process of grieving.

Help for the journey

Be patient with yourself. There will be bad days, but the number of better days will slowly increase. At times you might even think you are 'going out of your mind' but don't worry, this is a common feeling that will pass.

Don't panic! Sometimes grief may come over you like an unexpected wave. This is normal, even several months into your journey.

Talk about your loved one. There are many memories to enjoy. Don't worry if it makes you upset; people will understand. Never be ashamed of your tears! They are nature's medicine.

Choose your friends. People who listen to us and offer practical help are pure gold. Those who keep telling us they know how we feel - and they tell us how *they* feel, are little comfort.

Family. If you have a close family then thank God! But remember we all grieve in our own way which may explain some awkward moments. If there have been rows in the past, don't expect this bereavement to automatically put everything right.

Anniversaries. These are always hard, so try and plan some things to do. Choose your friends well that day!

Allow yourself to laugh again. It is not showing disrespect to our loved one to begin to live again. It's what they would want.

Give yourself time. Don't expect to 'get over it quickly'. Things will never be the same, they will be different. But there will come a time when you just know deep inside that it's time to look to the future in a new way.

God. Maybe you haven't thought much about God for years. Now is

the time to remember that he is always with you. Your loved one is now understanding this in a new and exciting way! Starting or deepening a time of prayer can be a real life-saver. Try reading Psalm 23 or Psalm 103 from a Bible before you start.

Going to church. Thousands have started going to church when they have lost their loved one. It may be strange to you at first but it offers real support and comfort. Services at Christchurch are every Sunday at 10am.



The Funeral Service

What happens in the service?

Main features of the service

By now you will probably have decided where you would like the funeral to take place and whether the deceased will be buried or cremated. If the service is in Church the usual practice is to have one or two hymns, perhaps with some processional (coming in) and recessional (going out) music.

If the service is at the Crematorium please bear in mind that the duration of the service **cannot** exceed 20 minutes. This does limit what the service can feature, but the presiding minister will endeavour to produce a service specific to your requirements within the time available.

The main features of the service may vary depending on the location, but would typically include:

- **Procession into Church or Chapel** (Usually the mourners will have gathered inside, and the procession is led by the minister, followed by the pall bearers and then the immediate family. Once inside the church, the minister will invite those gathered to stand and read some sentences from the Bible)
- **A Welcome and Introduction** (The minister will welcome those present to the service)

- **Opening Hymn** (Everyone is invited to stand and the first hymn is sung)
- **Tribute** (A representative of the family or the minister will share a tribute celebrating the life of the deceased)
- **Readings from the Bible** (one or more readings from the Bible are read out at the point, and sometimes a poem as well)
- **A Sermon** (A brief sermon is shared)
- **Prayers** (The minister leads a time of prayer)
- **Commendation** (The minister invites everyone to stand, and commends the deceased to the mercy of God)
- **Second Hymn** (An optional second hymn may be sung)
- **Committal** (The deceased is committed into God's hands)
- **Closing Prayers and Blessing** (the service is concluded with some closing prayers and a final blessing)
- **Recession out of Church or Chapel** (The ministers will depart from the church or chapel and bid the mourners farewell)

What alternative services are available?

We are sometimes approached and asked to conduct alternative services for people. These include memorial services or an interment of ashes.

Can you recommend a Funeral Director?

We have worked with all of the local Funeral Directors, and some from further afield. We are unable to endorse any specific company. We are more than happy to let you know of various funeral directors in your area.

Are there any restrictions on the type of memorial I can choose for a burial or ashes plot in the graveyard?

It is important that families making arrangements for a memorial stone for a plot appreciate that we must ensure compliance with the Diocesan Churchyard Regulations (a brief guide to this is available at www.abbrv.co.uk/da7).



For further information or to discuss funeral arrangements please contact us at:

Revd Mark Watson
Christchurch LEP Windhill,
7 Red Beck Vale, Shipley, BD18 3BN

lordsmyshepherd@yahoo.co.uk

Tel: 01274 986447

www.bethanyhope.co.uk