

FUNERALS AT ST THOMAS CHURCH EXETER

The death of a family member or a friend is one of the hardest things we have to deal with in life. It is always difficult and we have to make important decisions and arrangements in a relatively short space of time.

Along with your chosen Funeral Director, we are here to help and guide you through the process; to care and support and enable you to have the kind of service you feel most appropriate. You may already have ideas about the service, or have been left instructions. This leaflet contains information about the Funeral Service as well as some suggestions for where decisions need to be made by you. Although we are required to include some of the elements in the service, we will be as flexible as possible to accommodate any ideas or requests you may have.

The Funeral Service

There are a number of elements in the Service which are explained below:

Receiving the coffin

You have the choice to follow in behind the coffin, or to be seated beforehand. When the coffin arrives at the entrance to the Church or Crematorium Chapel, the Minister will say a short prayer. You can choose the music to be played as the coffin is brought in and depending on the music you choose, the Minister will either say some Opening Sentences as they lead the coffin in, or after the entrance music ends.

The Welcome

The Minister welcomes the congregation and leads the opening prayers. The words used in the Service are taken from the Church of England Book of Common Worship.

Hymns and Music

At this point, you have the option to sing a hymn or remain seated and listen to a song of your choice. Some hymn suggestions are located further on in this booklet. We suggest two or three hymns in Church and up to two hymns at the Crematorium; you may have choices of particular significance.

Reading/s

This would normally include a reading from the Bible, however, an additional reading or poem can be used during the service. The Minister would normally say a few words on the Bible reading either here or during the tribute.

Tribute/Address

The focus of the Funeral service is the person who has died and as far as is possible is a celebration of who they were; their character and life story. It also marks the sadness of loss. It is, therefore, a very important way of evoking memories and feelings.

You may like to write a tribute for the Minister to read, in which case please send this to the Minister at least three days before the service. Alternatively, the tribute can be read by someone else. If this is the case it is important that the text is well prepared and brief, we suggest one side of A4 typed so that, if asked, it can be read by the Minister on the day if emotions take over.

If you would prefer the Minister to prepare the tribute, or you are not sure what you would like to do, simply discuss this part of the service with the Minister during the pre-funeral visit.

A further Hymn or piece of music may be included here

Prayers/Lord's Prayer

The Minister will say a few short prayers at this stage followed by the Lord's Prayer.

The Commendation and Committal

The Service will now draw to a close with the prayers of Commendation and Committal. The Minister will usually ask you to stand at this point. The prayer of Committal will be said straight after the prayer of Commendation if the service is being held in a crematorium. If a service of burial is to follow, or the service is being held in Church prior to cremation, then only the prayer of Commendation will be said at this stage, the Committal prayer will be said at the graveside or crematorium.

The Blessing and Closing Prayer

The service will close with a Blessing or Closing Prayer. After this your choice of exit music will be played and you may leave when you are ready to do so.

Suggested Hymns.

This list is not comprehensive; it just gives you some examples of hymns you may like to use during the service.

- *The Lord's my shepherd*
- *Praise my soul the King of heaven*
- *Abide with me*
- *The day thou gavest Lord is ended*
- *Amazing grace*
- *The King of love my shepherd is*
- *All things bright and beautiful*
- *Morning has broken*
- *Dear Lord and Father of mankind.*

Service Booklet

Your Funeral Director will have asked you if you would like an Order of Service printed. If you have opted to have one then we will make sure that the Funeral Director has all the information they need once we have discussed and made any arrangements with you.

Fees

There are some Statutory Fees that we are required to charge to take a Funeral Service, however, your Funeral Director will arrange this with you we do not take any fees directly.

After the Service

The planning of a Funeral Service and the day itself can be quite tiring and you may find that you do not have the space needed or the opportunity to explore your feelings of grief fully during this time.

If you would like to meet with a member of clergy or with one of our Bereavement Team then please contact us, we are available to visit you at home after the funeral if you would like us to do so.

If you have any questions, please contact us or raise them with the Minister when they visit you.

You can also look at the Church of England website for more information and suggestions.

www.churchofengland.org/life-events/funerals



**'My Peace I give to
you'
John 14:27**

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