

Guidance for those arranging a funeral or burial at

The Parish Churches of Eskdale Benefice

in the

Diocese of Carlisle

When someone dies there are a number of complex practical things to sort out, alongside all the emotions which you may feel. This handout is to guide you through some of the complexities associated with organising a funeral or a burial at St Catherine's, St John's, St Michael's or St Paul's.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions or wish to talk to me. I can be contacted at the Vicarage

Anne Baker

Rector

Eskdale Benefice

Tel. 019467 23242

General

Sometimes the person who has died has left instructions about what they want at their funeral. Of course it is important to honour these as far as possible, though you should not feel anxious or guilty if for some good reason this does not work out. The person who has died would not want to dictate in a hurtful way to us, just as we would not want to dictate to those who come after us.

Funeral or Cremation

An early, practical, consideration is whether the deceased person is to be buried or to be cremated.

If the deceased person was resident in the parish, on the electoral roll of the local church parish or had obtained a special agreement to be buried locally (this agreement is known as a 'Faculty') then a Funeral service followed by burial would be possible.

If, on the other hand, the deceased wished to be cremated it would be possible to hold the Funeral service either in Church or at the Crematorium and the ashes can be then be buried in the consecrated area of the Churchyard. Anne Baker will be able to explain what is, and what is not, possible.

Hymns

When choosing hymns for the funeral service, do remember the difficulty of having hymns which no-one knows. Sometimes it may be impossible to locate a half-remembered hymn, but clergy and organists usually know a wide range and will be able to help. You may need to check about the tune - many hymns have more than one.

Typically a funeral in Church will have two or three hymns but there is no rule about the number.

A funeral is of course a sad occasion for those who are left, but a Christian funeral is also founded on the hope of the Resurrection - so it may be appropriate to have an Easter hymn amongst those you choose.

Music

We are able to play recorded music in our Churches. Our organists have a good repertoire - so if you would like a particular piece of music, do please ask - but if you have nothing particular in mind, our organists will play something appropriate.

Readings

We always have a Bible reading. You may also want a non-Biblical reading - perhaps some poetry or something like that - the vicar, Anne Baker, will be able to help you choose both hymns and readings that are suitable for both you and the person who has died. Sometimes a family member may like to do a reading or even write a poem - and even if they need to stop and collect themselves in the middle of reading, there is no problem.

Eulogies

Sometimes a family member or close friend may wish to, or be prepared to, do a Eulogy; or they may write something which the Vicar can read. But in any case, the vicar, Anne Baker, will always preach a brief address to talk about the hope of the Resurrection, and the promise of God's love.

Style

Some funerals are very elaborate, others are very simple. Our experience is that often the plainest funerals, with some silence to allow those who mourn to be still and quiet together in God's presence, can be the most memorable and helpful.

Collection

Strictly, all collections taken in Church must be for the Church - which is of course a charity; however, sometimes families would like donations to go to an appropriate Charity and many Churches have a policy of allowing, as a concession, that the collection in Church be split between a nominated Charity and the Church. Please ask the Vicar about this. An alternative is for donations to be sent via the Funeral Director.

Prayers

Here are two prayers which you may find personally helpful:

God our Father, you know our thoughts and share our sorrows.
Lead us out of desolation to the caring comfort of your love.
When we forget what happiness is, renew in us fresh springs of hope.
When we feel bereft of peace, restore our hearts and calm our fears.
And when we come at last to our departing, bring us home with you for ever, the family of God complete; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Lord, it is night. The night is for stillness. Let us be still in your presence, O God. It is night after a long day. What has been done, has been done; what has not been done has not been done; let it be. The night is dark. Let our fears of the darkness of the world and of our own lives rest in you.

The night is quiet. Let the quietness of your peace enfold us, all dear to us, and all who have no peace. The night heralds the dawn. Give us hope that we shall see a new day in Christ. **Amen.**

Feelings

Bereavement is one of the most difficult things we ever face. Our feelings can be a confusing mixture of shock, guilt, anger, pain (which can feel as bad as physical pain), loss... Many bereaved people experience as much as a year of low health - colds, aches and pains, stomach upsets... Some people feel that they can't remember things, or that they can't be bothered with anything. Some worry because they think that they have seen or heard the person who has died (this is because we are looking for that person so hard that our sight and hearing almost play tricks). We lose our sense of perspective - one minute we are wondering how we can cope with the next few hours, the next we are wondering what to do about something a year away. And everyone asks, "how long will this last?" to which there is no answer - except that it never goes away, but we learn to live with the loss, and eventually routine and normality do re-assert themselves.

Help and Support

All of these reactions are normal - and indeed natural; what else would one expect to feel? However, sometimes these feelings can be too much for us and we need to look for help.

Our GPs are one route to help and support. Friends are another; don't be afraid to talk to them - they will be happy to listen to you as you would be happy to listen to them. The Vicar and the Church will also be there for you; clergy often try to visit a few weeks after a funeral. For those not directly and intimately connected to the person who died, life gets back to its normal busyness all too quickly - but they do care, and they may be waiting for you to say you want something.

Some helpful contact details for national organisations:

CRUSE *promoting the well-being of bereaved people*
www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk
0844 477 9400

SAND
supporting anyone affected by the death of a baby
www.uk-sands.org
020 7436 5881

Age UK *supporting older people*
www.ageuk.org.uk
0800 169 6565

Compassionate Friends *supporting parents whose son or daughter has died*
www.tcf.org.uk
0845 123 2304

Samaritans *a listener at any time*
www.samaritans.org
08457 90 90 90

Local Contact Numbers

Rector
 Revd Anne Baker 019467 23242

Churchwardens:

Eskdale **St Catherine's Church**

 Charles Browne 019467 23479
 Tony Fox 019467 23214
 John Wedley 019467 23126

Irton **St Paul's Church**

 Barbara Wright 019467 25296
 Janet Jennings 019467 24321

Muncaster **St Michael's Church**
 Phyllida Pennington 01229 717203
 Keith Bridges 01229 717707
 Julie Garner 019467 27375

Waberthwaite **St John's Church**
 Catherine Winzor 01229 717649
 Karin Jones 01229 717268

In conclusion

Please remember that I am available for you at this distressing time.
Don't hesitate to contact me for help, advice and support.

Anne Baker