

The Parish of Louth and Deanery of Loutheresk



The Church's ministry to the bereaved

The Church seeks to help those who have been bereaved to remember the life of a loved one, commend that life to God's everlasting care, and help people find comfort at a time of loss. This leaflet is intended to give you a little information about the Church's ministry at this time.

What normally happens before the funeral?

As soon as we know the details of the funeral, we will add the name of your loved one to the list of those who we pray for day-by-day in the parish.

It is important to us that the service is a fitting remembrance of the person you loved and in the days before the funeral the minister will normally visit you to find out a little about the person who has died and to help you plan the details of the service. They will help you to choose a suitable Bible reading and any hymns you would like sung at the funeral. They will also help you to arrange a tribute to your loved one if you would like one to be offered.

What normally happens at a funeral?

In the service we are reminded of the Christian belief that love can transform grief, and the understanding that we hope in a life beyond this one that is freed from the constraints of time and the limitations of human nature. We also remember the practical call to comfort each other at a time of loss.

Whilst the funeral service may vary to reflect the life of the person we remember the following elements are normally included:

- Introductory prayer
- There may be a tribute to recall the life of the person we remember
- A reading from scripture
- Prayers
- A prayer commending your loved one to God's care
- A final prayer asking for God's blessing on the rest of our own lives

There are normally also two or three hymns sung during the service, and some people like to include poems, readings or personal recollections to help remember the life we are celebrating. The funeral normally ends either with a burial at the

Cemetery or at the Crematorium. If the body has been cremated there may be a final short service to bury the ashes in a churchyard or cemetery.

What happens after the funeral?

After the funeral the minister will normally make a follow-up visit, and they remain available to you for as long as you need them. The Church will also continue to remember you and your loved one in their prayers – particularly at a service held at the end of October or beginning of November. This All Souls Service, is a time when we remember all those who we have ministered to during the year and is a chance for you to come and remember those you miss once the immediate strains of the first few weeks are over. Many funeral directors also arrange a Memorial Service, and you may well receive an invitation to this. A year after the funeral you might want to mark the occasion (sometimes called a 'Year's Mind') – please contact us if this is something that you might like to discuss as there are different ways of doing this. The church and its ministers are there for you in the weeks, months and even years after the funeral – so please feel free to call on us at any time.

What do the fees cover?

The basic fee for a funeral in a Church of England church is set by law and helps to pay for the minister who takes your service and the verger who ensures the church is prepared for the service. It covers the pre-funeral visit, any preparation time, the day itself and any follow-up visits that your family need.

In addition, there may be charges for other people involved that the church passes on to them (e.g. the Organist), and in winter we may ask for a contribution to the cost of heating the church building.

There is normally an open plate collection at the end of the service of which the church passes on a proportion for any charity you nominate. Donations given to the church are used to maintain the building as a place of prayer for the community and to help our work supporting those in need.

For more information

Most arrangements for a funeral are made through an undertaker (also known as a funeral director) who is normally your first point of contact. However, if you wish to contact one of the parish clergy please feel free to do so. Details for the Parish of Louth are at <http://www.teamparishoflouth.org.uk/pdf/whos-who.pdf>, and the Deanery Administrator (01507 610247) can put you in touch with any other clergy.