

## Remembering your loved one at home

Here are some ideas:

- Find a time and place where you can be undisturbed for a while. Turn off the phone.
- Light a candle as a sign of God's love and light with you
- Be still. As you breathe, imagine God's love filling you with every inward breath, and all your worries and fears leaving you with every outward breath
- Remember your loved one. Maybe a photo album, or particular possessions will help you to remember
- Offer these memories to God. Talk to God about your loved one. Tell God how much you miss them, what you appreciated most about them, the things you find hardest without them. Ask for God's help and peace
- Finish with a prayer, such as the Lord's Prayer, or this prayer:

*Loving God, thank you for all those I love, but see no longer.  
Especially I remember .....(name)  
Help me to leave her/him in your care and make me ready to share with her/him  
and all your people in the life of eternity. Amen.*

### Church services

We will remember you and your loved one in our prayers leading up to, and around the date of the funeral.

You are always welcome at any of our services.

**Our main Sunday service is at 10.30am, where all are welcome, including children of all ages.**

### Getting in touch

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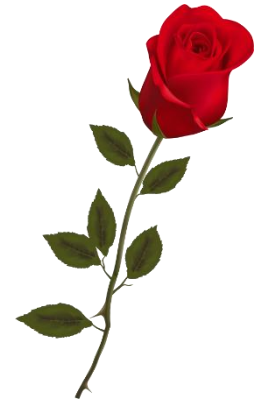
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ST OSWALD'S  
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# When a loved one dies ...



## What about the funeral?

The practical arrangements for the funeral will, of course, be taken care of by the Funeral Director, who will work with the Minister to ensure that the service is all that you want it to be.

It may be that it's a while since you last attended a funeral, or perhaps there are younger members of your family who have never been to a funeral before. Either way it can help you to be more relaxed if you remind yourself of what a funeral is all about, and what will happen.

This leaflet is designed to help.

Also, on the back page, you'll find some ideas for remembering your loved one in prayer.

## What is a funeral for?

### A funeral helps us say 'Goodbye'

Sometimes when a person dies there is no chance to say 'Goodbye' properly. Even if there was the opportunity for goodbyes, there is still the need for us to 'pay our last respects.'

For Christians, this also involves commending the person who has died into God's love and care. It's the formal way of 'handing the person back' into the arms of the God who created them.

The prayer in the service, known as the 'Commendation' prayer, goes like this (or similar words):

*God our creator and redeemer, by your power Christ conquered death and entered into glory. Confident of his victory and claiming his promises, we entrust (person's name) to your mercy In the name of Jesus our Lord, who died and is alive and reigns with you, now and forever. Amen*

Often, when someone we love dies, it can be hard to accept that they really are gone. The formal farewell of the funeral can help us to face this reality. It also provides the opportunity for those who weren't with the person when they died, to say their goodbyes.

### A funeral helps us deal respectfully with the body

Although Christians believe that after death we no longer need our earthly bodies, we also know that bodies are very important, because God made us physical beings, not just spirits.

The respect with which we treat the body of someone who has died is a sign of all that the person meant to us when alive. It also points us ahead to the physical reality of the new heaven and earth that God has promised.

### A funeral reminds us of our own mortality

A funeral gives us the chance to remember that all of us face death one day—the day when we too will see God face to face. A funeral may give us a chance to prepare our own hearts. One of the prayers often used in the service goes like this:

*Grant us, Lord, the wisdom and the strength to use well the time that is left to us here on earth.*

## What happens at the funeral?

### A service in church, followed by cremation:

After a welcome and opening prayer the service will normally include the following elements:

- **Readings** from the Bible.
- One or two **hymns** if wanted.
- Some words about the **life of the person** who has died, as a way of sparking off your own special memories.
- A short **talk** based on the Bible reading.
- **Prayers**, including thanksgiving for the life of the person who has died, and prayers for those who mourn.
- The **Commendation** prayer, when we commend the person into God's love and care.
- We then leave the church to go to the crematorium, where the committal takes place.
- The **Committal** is when we commit the person's body to be cremated.
- A final **blessing**.

### A service in the crematorium only:

The basic elements are the same as above, but will take place entirely in the crematorium chapel.

### Memorial Garden at St Oswald's

**There is a dedicated area for burial of ashes in our churchyard. Please ask if you would like to know more about this.**

### A burial service:

The main part of the service takes place in the church (or cemetery chapel) and includes all of the elements mentioned above.

After the Commendation prayer the congregation move to the graveside for the Committal, final prayers and blessing. The Minister and Funeral Director will always explain what is happening next.

## After the funeral

### The offer of a visit

People naturally look to their family for support at times like this, but it can sometimes help to talk to someone else as well. If you would like someone to call round for a chat or to pray with you, then please don't hesitate to get in touch.

### Opportunities for remembering

Once a year (usually at the end of October) we hold a Memorial Service. There is an open invitation to anyone who has been bereaved, and we especially send an invitation to everyone who has been bereaved in the last few years.

It is a simple but special service of prayers, readings and hymns, with a brief address and time for your own memories and prayers. We also read out the names of those we have been asked to remember.

### Book of Remembrance

Please contact us if you would like the name of your loved one added to our **Book of Remembrance** which is kept in church.