

Funerals

Funeral ministry is an important part of our service to the local community. This is available to anyone who lives in the Parish of Northfield and anyone who has a connection with the church whether recent or in the past.

We offer funeral services in church, at a graveside and in local crematoria. The churchyard is still open for burials.

Every service is personally planned by the minister leading the service with the family of the deceased or their next of kin. A tribute or eulogy is an important part of the service and these can be delivered by family / friends or by the minister.

A short reading from the Bible forms part of the service and the minister will help you choose this. Poems or similar can also be included.

We are very fortunate to have a skilled organist to play our traditional pipe organ but we can also play original CD's or legally down-loaded music.

We can also offer Memorial Services which are similar to funerals but usually sometime after the burial or cremation.

Making Arrangements

In planning the funeral it is best to contact a funeral director. You can start to plan the funeral and reserve a date before you have the death certificate, especially if the death does not need to be referred to the coroner. The Funeral Director will discuss arrangements with you and then contact the church to arrange the time and place. The service may be in St Laurence Church or at a crematorium with cremation or burial following (or even preceding.) Our Parish Office staff will then ensure that the minister taking the funeral will be in touch as soon as possible to help you prepare the service. They can also advise on the church costs involved.

If you have just been bereaved, the last thing you will feel like doing is dealing with paperwork. There are, nevertheless, a number of steps which must be taken as soon as possible.

You normally need to register a death within 5 days. You will find full details of how to do this [here](#). You will also find some good general advice on [this page](#) about how to plan a funeral.

To arrange for the burial of ashes you are welcome to contact the Parish Office direct but can also go through a funeral director.

Churchyard

St Laurence Churchyard still has space to offer full graves and ashes plots. We also have a Memorial Garden where we can bury ashes. This must be done under the oversight of a member of St Laurence staff – usually a minister. Scattering of ashes is not permitted in the churchyard.

The churchyard regulations are quite complex Please read the short version on our Contact page (The full regulations can be read here: [click here](#)).

Please note that although quite a lot of graves have small gardens and memorabilia on them **this is no longer permitted beyond 6 weeks following the burial**. During the Covid years we were very relaxed about this as many people had to cope with the trauma of very small funerals. We are now having to tighten up on this as they cause problems when we have to re-open nearby graves and make grass cutting difficult.

You CAN place fresh flowers on graves, especially in vases which form part of the headstone or plaque.

If you have a query regarding what can be placed on a grave or plot, you may also contact the solicitors who deal with the regulations: The Diocesan Registry at Shakespeare Martineau LLP, 1 Colmore Square, Birmingham B4 6AA, telephone 0121 214 0000.

Installing a Headstone or Plaque.

It is best to wait at least 6 months before installing a headstone so the ground can settle. Written permission from St Laurence Church is required before any memorial stone can be installed.

The application form to install or amend a memorial in a churchyard can be found [here](#) but many local memorial masons have copies and understand the regulations so are able to provide guidance.

USEFUL INFORMATION

Arranging a funeral

[Practical Advice From DirectGov](#)

National Association of Funeral Directors <https://www.nafd.org.uk>

<https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/funerals>

[National Association of Memorial Masons](#)

Bereavement support

<https://www.ataloss.org/>

[Facing Bereavement](#)

[Cruse Bereavement Care](#)

Supporting those following stillbirth and neonatal deaths <https://www.sands.org.uk/>

Supporting children, young people and families with bereavement in the West
Midlands area <https://edwardstrust.org.uk/>