

Funerals during restrictions due to Coronavirus

Firstly, please accept our condolences and deepest sympathy upon the loss of your loved one. We are here to help, and realise how difficult it is to be trying to plan a funeral during this time of Coronavirus restriction. We have put together the following guidance, but please do also speak to your officiating minister to discuss details.

What type of funeral can we have at the moment?

In our larger churches, such as Berrow and Eldersfield, we can offer you a service in Church limited to 30 socially distanced mourners. At our smaller churches like All Saints Hollybush, we are able to offer a service at the graveside, or while interring ashes, because the Church is just too small to allow for social distancing.

Who can attend?

Owing to the restrictions currently in force, attendance is limited to a total of 30 people, provided they can safely socially distance. We also have to bear in mind that those particularly at risk of catching Coronavirus due to age or underlying health conditions should consider very carefully whether it is wise for them to attend. You will need to discuss your own particular circumstances with your officiating minister and Funeral Director.

What about a service at a Crematorium?

Each crematorium is operating under its own particular guidelines, so you will need to liaise with your Crematorium and Funeral Director to see what is possible.

Could we have a second service at a later date?

Absolutely. Once the current restrictions are lifted, we would be happy to assist in organizing a memorial service or service of thanksgiving for your loved one, which all who wished to remember and give thanks for their life would be able to attend.

What if I am unable to attend the funeral service?

Sad though it is not to be able to be there for the service itself, there are things that you can do from a distance while it is happening;

- Why not take a few moments to think, write, or draw some of your memories of the person? Later you may be able to share that with others at a special memorial service.
- You can still pray at home, maybe with a candle lit by a special photo of the person – we can give you some prayers if you wish or point you in the direction of some online resources.
- You could also read a poem at home or look at Psalm 23
- You could write a card to others who are missing the person you are grieving.
- Remember that when this crisis is over [and it will pass] there will always be services both formal or informal for remembering that can be organised by the local church.

If you were unable to say goodbye

Having to maintain social distancing might have prevented you from saying goodbye. This is particularly hard, and the best thing to do is to talk to someone about your feelings.

Writing a letter to the person who has died, saying all the things you were unable to say in life can be helpful, as can lighting a candle, and reflecting on happy memories and good times shared while looking at photos of your loved one.

Prayer Examples

Dear God, Thank you for xxxx, for all that they meant to me and others. I so wanted to say goodbye, to be alongside my friends and family. Help me to know you are there, Holding all my hopes, Holding all those I Love, especially xxxx, And holding me this day. Be close this day with your peace and hope. Amen.

Loving God, Life is so strange just now – I don't know what to do. Comfort me with your presence, Be with all who grieve And give us strength and courage to face this and all the days ahead. Amen.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with any queries. We are here to help.

Rev'd Julie James
Tel: 01531 651795
julie.m.james@btinternet.com

Rev Anthea Elston
Tel: 01684 833 278
revanth@eightoaks.com