



The Garden of Remembrance at St Mark's Church, Bedford

'Lord you have made us for yourself
and our hearts are restless
until they find their rest in you'
(Saint Augustine)

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Church of
England

**St Mark's Church
Bedford**



Methodist
Church

It's Your Funeral



The Chapel of St Mark's Church
Calder Rise, Bedford

Whilst this information is designed specifically for people in our own churches, we are aware that many people will find this booklet helpful, from other churches and further afield, especially if reading on the internet. If we can assist you in anyway please do not hesitate contact us directly. We are more than pleased to help you in thinking through these details wherever you are. Please feel able to contact us in writing, by telephone or Email. Contact details are available on the back of the booklet.

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A declaration for you to sign

The information contained in this booklet is made by me in preparation for my death. Whilst I understand that my next of kin may decide not to abide by my wishes. I have made the decisions indicated at a time when I am sound in mind and wish them to be followed wherever possible.

Signed _____ Date _____

Please print name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

We will be pleased to take a photocopy of the decisions which you have made and keep the copy securely and confidentially in the church safe. We can therefore help advise your next of kin in the event of your death. If you would like to do this please bring your completed booklet to St Mark's Church, Calder Rise, Bedford. MK41 7UY.

For church use

A copy of this booklet has been taken and is lodged in the church safe at St Mark's Church.

Person making copy and lodging in safe to sign as witness

Signed _____ Date _____

Please print name _____

Flowers. Some people like lots of flowers, others ask for only family flowers or even no flowers at all. Occasionally donations are requested instead to a special favourite charity.

I would like family flowers only Yes / No

I would like donations to be given for the following causes

Lasting Memorials. When a person dies, it is often requested that some form of memorial be provided to mark the spot where the person is buried. This also applies to the interment of cremated remains. This may take the form of a bench in the churchyard, a tree or shrub planted as a living memorial, or a wooden or traditional stone memorial. Often, the church, crematorium or cemetery will have a book of remembrance in which names can be inscribed. If you have any particular wishes, please give details below.

Expression of Thanks

We are grateful to Mr Peter Aspinall of Arnolds Funeral Service, Roff Avenue, Bedford, for his invaluable professional assistance in the production of this publication. We are also grateful to Arnolds Funeral Service, Roff Avenue, Bedford, for their sponsorship in the production of this booklet. They will be pleased to assist you with any professional advice.
Website: www.nevillefuneralservice.com

Thank you for reading 'It's Your Funeral.' It is intended to provide access to information which will help you decide what will take place after your death. During our lives we plan for many situations: education, having a family, holidays, weddings and especially our retirement. However, many of us neglect to plan our funeral. Perhaps because it is a realization of our own mortality, or it may just seem a long way off. Nevertheless, we should all make sensible preparations and it is something which I did myself some years ago, even though I hope I still have half of my life left ahead of me! Making this simple provision now lets our survivors know our wishes, it will also lessen the inevitable stress that can accompany funeral arrangements.

Whilst it is not necessary for everything to be arranged in advance, very often it would be of tremendous help to families if they knew the answers to some simple questions. Somebody will eventually have to decide—Would you want a burial or a cremation? Where would you like the funeral to take place? Where should your ashes or body be buried? Do you have any favourite hymns which you would like sung at the funeral? All of these and many more things will need to be sorted out and it is only responsible for each of us to give some indication before we die of what we would like to take place. These kinds of questions are answered simply before we die and we can therefore provide real comfort to those who are asked to make the decisions on our behalf. You may not want to make all the choices now, but hopefully this leaflet will start you thinking about those questions which you may not have considered. Please remember you need only ask and we can arrange to talk with you about the decisions which you may be considering.

There is a space for you to record your wishes and we will be pleased to make a copy for you to keep with your will, or perhaps give it to your next of kin. It is the next of kin or executor who will decide exactly what takes place, but if there is a written record it is much more likely that your wishes will be fulfilled. We are also offering a service whereby we will keep a copy securely and confidentially in the church safe. This will not be a legal document, but we will be able to advise your next of kin of exactly what you have decided when the time comes. You may decide to change this at any time. We hope that you will find this a helpful and informative publication.

Charles Royden (Minister)

Section 1 General Information

Your will. Please do ensure that you have a written will. We will all die and so everybody ought to have one, no matter how much longer you hope to live. Please record where your will may be found

I have written a will, which can be found

My next of kin is as follows

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Dealing with your body. Some people wish to leave their bodies or organs for medical purposes. Do you have any strong feelings?

I wish to donate my body organs to

I do not have any preferences and leave it to the discretion of

If permission is required for a post mortem examination I would like it to be given. Yes / No

You can decide where you would like your body to be taken after death. Some people are happy to remain in the care of the funeral director, others would like their body to be taken home.

I would like my body to be taken to the undertaker Yes / No

I would like my body to be taken home to _____

Section 4 Burial, Cremation and last place of rest

Choice between burial or cremation can be a difficult decision but some people have definite views. Please state if you have any particular wishes.

I would like to be buried / cremated

Last place of rest. Many people have graves purchased or reserved before they die for burial, or a plot for the cremated remains. Sometimes there is a burial arranged in a family grave. There are also many people who have not given the subject any thought at all and who are bewildered when it comes to deciding what to do. If you have decided on cremation but are unsure what can happen with the cremated remains afterwards, make sure that you delay the decision until you are certain. Ask the clergy or the funeral director to explain the options to you.

Please indicate where you would like the burial to take place.

I have a burial space reserved at _____

I would like my body / cremated remains to be buried at

Special types of burial. These can be expensive and not always available, but for some people it fulfils an important need or carries on a family tradition. Please indicate if any of the following are important to you.

I would like to be buried in a vault / catacomb / mausoleum

Green Burial. People often ask for burial in an environmentally sensitive way. This can be achieved by using biodegradable coffins and the burial can take place in a woodland burial ground where the emphasis is on caring for the environment. The Church of England has a consecrated woodland burial ground in Barton, Cambridgeshire, and more are planned for the future. This is usually a simple burial in a natural environment.

I would like arrangements to be made for a woodland burial Yes/ No

People taking part. There are many ways to become involved with the organising of the funeral and you can usually do as much or as little as you would like. Remember that the funeral director may not know you or the person who has died, and he will appreciate your help with the preparation of the deceased for the coffin. Dressing the person, getting the hairstyle correct and using just the right amount of make-up, is important but you can also ask the funeral director to deal with this on your behalf, if you prefer. You can provide the coffin yourself, help to carry the coffin into and out of church or at the cemetery / crematorium, or even provide the transport if you wish. If you have any strong feelings about what you would like to do, inform the funeral director at the time of planning the funeral.

Many relatives consider carrying the coffin a privilege and if they are reasonably fit it will present no problem. If a cremation has taken place, then somebody can be asked to carry the casket and place it into the grave.

I would like the following person (s) to be asked if they would like to help to carry my coffin / casket

After the Funeral Service

Decisions relating to any reception after a funeral will be affected by the nature of the service, who will be coming, and where they will have travelled from. Occasionally it will be appropriate to have a small gathering in a home or restaurant afterwards. Sometimes a room is hired with a small buffet to save the family the trouble of making personal arrangements. You may have a particular wish concerning the arrangements made for those attending your service.

Embalming

Embalming can play an important part in looking after the person who has died but it is not always necessary and it is never compulsory. It is only carried out with the permission of the family but it is very difficult to describe the embalming process to anyone, when they are grieving.

It is very important, therefore, that in collating all the information which you will need to plan the details of a funeral, that you talk to your funeral director about the benefits and the disadvantages of embalming, so that you can make an informed choice. The process involves removing bodily fluids and replacing the blood with a formalin based fluid. The funeral director has to have permission from the family before embalming takes place.

If you wish for more information for planning your funeral, talk to your funeral director for more details to help you make your choice.

- It may be recommended in order to enhance the appearance of the body for relatives to see, as it preserves the body for a longer time.
- Sometimes embalming is necessary, for instance, it may be required for reasons of hygiene when a death occurs abroad and the body is flown home, or when there is a long delay before the funeral.

Where your choice is for a woodland burial, you will not be asked for permission to embalm as this conflicts with the "environmentally friendly" concept of such a burial.

Under normal circumstances do you wish your body to be embalmed
Yes / No

Section 2 Initial Arrangements

Planning a funeral in advance. Trying to arrange a funeral for someone who has died, when you are unsure about his or her wishes, can be very upsetting, but paying for a funeral in advance is not always the answer. The clergy, in conjunction with any funeral director will be able to give free advice on the arrangements for a funeral and the costs involved so that you can plan accordingly. However, if you already have a pre-paid funeral plan, please record the details below.

I have a funeral plan/insurance. The details are as follows

Who would you like to be responsible for the arrangements?

Ultimately the next of kin or executor will agree the decisions that have to be made regarding the funeral service. You may wish to consult a solicitor if you wish to make alternative arrangements.

I would like the following person (s) to be largely responsible for arranging my funeral

Which funeral director would you like to be used? You do not have to use the services of a funeral director but they can be of enormous help. Your choice of funeral director should not be based on cost alone, but consider also the standard of service, premises, vehicles and most of all, customer care. It is always better to decide on a funeral director in advance.

I would like the following funeral director to be used

Would you like the funeral announced in any special newspapers? This may include a local paper in another part of the country. Or would you like any special people informed of your death? If you have a list of friends then you may wish to attach it to this booklet.

I wish my death to be announced in the following papers

Section 3 The Funeral

Where would you like the funeral to take place? You may decide exactly where the service takes place. It is possible to hold the whole service in church, or a part of the service may take place in church followed by a committal at the crematorium or graveside afterwards. Many families appreciate the body being brought in the coffin to lie in the chapel on the night before a funeral and sometimes prayers are said with the family. This is an opportunity for them to prepare privately for the funeral the following day and we do encourage this; there is no charge by the church.

I wish the service to be held in _____ church

If you are thinking of cremation would you like the service to continue at the crematorium Yes / No

I would like the whole service to take place at _____

Who would you like to lead the service of worship? You may also have somebody else take part in the service in some way, perhaps by reading a piece of the bible or a poem.

I would like the service to be led by _____

I would like the following person to take part _____

What will happen in the service? Some people have no particular wishes about the service, others want to plan absolutely everything. Please indicate if you have any special requests

The music I would like is _____

I would like the following readings/bible passages/poems
