



The Church of England
Diocese of Ely

WEST NORFOLK PRIORY GROUP

FINCHAM | MARHAM | NORDELPH | RUNCTON HOLME WITH
SOUTH RUNCTON |
SHOULDHAM | SHOULDHAM THORPE | STOW BARDOLPH | STOW
BRIDGE | TOTTENHILL | WATLINGTON | WIMBOTSHAM |
WORMEGAY

THIRTEEN VILLAGES. ONE MISSION.



**ORGANISING A FUNERAL, INTERMENT OF ASHES OR A
MEMORIAL STONE**

IN A CHURCH OR CHURCHYARD

**Information
for Next of Kin**

CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Contact Details	4
Funerals	6
The Funeral Service	7
Scripture Readings	8
Music at Funerals	13
Tributes	15
Facilities, Parking and Funeral Wakes	16
Churchyards, Interment of Ashes and Memorials	17
Closing Reflection	24

INTRODUCTION

At this time of loss, the West Norfolk Priory Group community would like to offer our condolences and assure you of our prayers.

Preparing the funeral service of someone who has died can be a difficult thing to face. This booklet has been prepared to make things easier. May the time you spend reflecting on the Word of God strengthen your trust and faith in God's love and mercy.

This booklet summarises much of what the Lay Minister will explain to you when they meet with you, and will be a useful reference point for you when considering what form the funeral should take. We will make contact and arrange a home visit if possible as soon as the request for a funeral has been received. We are here to support families and friends through a very difficult time and also offer continuing support when needed. The Lay Minister will have a lot of experience of preparing and celebrating the Funeral Liturgy of the Church. They will welcome your suggestions and consider how they can then best prepare the Liturgy in line with the Church's tradition, appropriate to the one who has died and respectful to those who gather to pray for them. We hope you find what follows helpful at this difficult time.

Our contact details are:

The Church Office,

West Norfolk Priory Group

c/o Home Farm

Lynn Road

Stow Bardolph

PE34 3HT



Tel: 07596 707469

The Church Office is open Monday–Friday, 10am – 1pm



Email: office@westnorfolkpriorygroup.co.uk



Website: www.westnorfolkpriorygroup.co.uk

Pastoral Assistant: pastoral@westnorfolkpriorygroup.co.uk

When someone dies who do I inform?

- ☐ The next of kin (if not present)
- ☐ The family doctor (if the person dies at home)
- ☐ The Priest
- ☐ The Funeral Director (if the family is using one)

In addition, if someone has died unexpectedly or in unusual circumstances, the police will need to be informed. Do not touch or move anything in the room/house.

Registering a death & other practical matters: what happens next?

The death will need to be registered within five days unless it has been reported to the coroner. Further details concerning these procedures can be found in a booklet available from the Department of Social Security. If the cause of death is clear, the doctor will issue a medical certificate and a formal notice confirming that he/she has signed the certificate. This notice gives information on how to register the death and will enable funeral arrangements to be made.

If the doctor reports the death to the coroner, there may be a delay while a post-mortem or inquest is carried out. The coroner's office will advise you on what arrangements may be made. If the family wishes to use a funeral director, it is quite proper to invite estimates from different firms.

FUNERALS

Funerals in the West Norfolk Priory Group express the Christian hope of the Resurrection and Christ's promise of eternal life. They are not primarily a celebration of the deceased's life, which may occur later in a Memorial Service, but a rite of passage to commend the deceased to God in His mercy and commit the body or cremated remains to the earth. Funeral services in West Norfolk Priory Group usually take place on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Funerals in our churches are dignified occasions and are combined with a following Cremation at the Crematorium or Burial in the churchyard. If you would like a funeral or a service for the interment of ashes in one of our churches, we ask that you contact us with as much notice as possible. Our churches are used for worship during the week and at weekends. Additionally, they are used by our local schools and for community activities. The best and quickest way to agree on dates for a service is to contact the Church Office first. Especially with funerals and memorial services, it is best to meet Funeral Directors **AFTER** you have agreed some dates with the church.

About the Funeral Service

The purpose of the Funeral Liturgy is to offer worship and thanksgiving to God, the author of life; and to offer support to the bereaved. The Church of England encourages us to celebrate a funeral in two main stages: The Funeral Liturgy, which is an act of worship to God and commending the deceased to God's mercy; this is followed by the Committal at the cemetery or crematorium. The

Minister you are in contact with will help you to consider what is best and practical for your particular circumstances.

THE FUNERAL SERVICE

The Order of Service for a Funeral is typically set as follows:

Reception and Entrance of the Deceased

Introit/Processional Hymn

Collect (Opening Prayer)

Optional Tribute or Reading

A Reading from the Holy Scriptures

Sermon

Hymn (optional)

Bidding Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn (optional)

Final Commendation

Procession to Place of Committal

(with option of hymn, organ voluntary or '*In paradisum*')

As the local Church of England, funeral services conducted within the West Norfolk Priory Group must be in accordance to the rites of the Church of England. Each service will include readings from the Bible.

An additional reading or poem may be appropriate but they must be brief, in line with the Christian faith and approved by the priest in advance. The maximum length of a tribute (if there are two) should be four minutes (450 words) each. A single tribute should be no longer than eight minutes (950 words). There should be no more than a total of two tributes.

Two or three hymns can, if you wish, be sung at different points of the rite, as explained above. An organist will always be present for church services and music played on the organ or sung, may also be used to good effect throughout the service at appropriate moments. Churches within the West Norfolk Priory Group only permit sacred music as played by the appointed church organist and must fulfil the requirement of the Church of England's Canon Law 'that only such chants, hymns, anthems, and other settings are chosen as are appropriate, both the words and the music, to the solemn act of worship and prayer in the church as well as the congregation assembled'. We regret that we cannot permit popular music. Recorded music is not generally permitted but rare exceptions may be discussed with the Lay Minister.

Where a service is recorded, please note that due to copyright regulations, the organist's fee will increase.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

The Word of God is a source of encouragement and consolation for the faithful of God. It is Jesus who speaks when the scriptures are read in Church. Even when we read these readings to ourselves privately we are invited to listen for the voice of the Lord. The readings that follow, which contain a brief description of their

content, are those which are approved for use at Christian funeral services. They can also serve as a source of spiritual reading in the days and weeks that follow the funeral service.

The Scripture reading (s) may be read by family members or friends. Please be sure to choose a reader who is able to read clearly and audibly, so that those present will be able to hear the reading you have chosen. If you feel that family members or friends will not be able to read, then please let the Lay Minister know and they will happily arrange for one of the regular parish readers to read the chosen text at the funeral.

FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT

Job 19:1, 23-27 (He whom I shall see shall take my part)

Ecclesiastes 3: 1-4 or 1-8 (life without God in the world is hopeless)

Isaiah 25:6-9 (the Lord will wipe away the tears from every cheek)

Lamentations 3:17-26 (the favours of the Lord are not all passed... great is his faithfulness)

Daniel 12:1-3 (many will awake, some to everlasting life)

FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT

Romans 5:5-11 (having died to make us righteous, is it likely that Jesus will now fail us?)

Romans 5:17-21 (the good act of one man brings everyone life and makes them justified)

Romans 6:3-9 (we believe that having died with Christ we shall return to life with him)

Romans 8:14-23 (what we suffer in this life can never be compared to the glory which is waiting for us)

Romans 8:31-35, 37-39 (with God on our side who can be against us?)

Romans 14:7-12 (the life and death of each of us has its influence on others)

1 Corinthians 15:20-28 (death came through one man and in the same way the resurrection of the dead has come through one man)

1 Corinthians 15:51-57 (we are not all going to die, but we shall be changed)

2 Corinthians 4:14-5:1 (we know that when the tent we live in on earth is folded up, there is a house built by God for us, and everlasting home in the heavens)

2 Corinthians 5:1, 6-10 (to live in the body means to be exiled from the Lord)

Philippians 3:20-21 (our homeland is in heaven)

Thessalonians 4:13-18 (do not grieve like other people who have no hope)

2 Timothy 2:8-13 (If we have died with him, then we shall live with him...)

1 John 3:1-2 (we are already the children of God, but what we are to be in the future has not yet been revealed)

1 John 3:14-16 (he gave up his life for us; and we too, ought to give up our lives for our brothers)

GOSPEL

Matthew 5:1-12 (the beatitudes – happy are the poor in spirit...)

Matthew 11:25-30 (come to me all you who labour and are overburdened)

Matthew 25:1-13 (stay awake because you know neither the day or the hour)

Matthew 25:31-46 (he will place the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his right)

Mark 15:33-39, 16:1-6 (the stone rolled back from the tomb)

Luke 7:11-17 (Jesus raises the son of the widow of Nain from the dead)

Luke 12:35-40 (happy are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes)

Luke 23:33, 39-43 (Criminals taunt Jesus on the Cross)

Luke 23:44-46; ('Father into your hands I commit my spirit')

Luke 24:13-35 (Road to Emmaus)

John 5:24-29 (whoever believes in me has eternal life)

John 6:37-40 (whoever comes to me I shall not turn away)

John 6:51-58 (I am the living bread)

John 11:17-21 (I am the resurrection and the life)

John 11:32-45 (the raising of Lazarus)

John 12:23-28 (unless a grain of wheat falls on the ground and dies, it remains but a single grain)

John 14:1-6 (there are many rooms in my Father's house)

John 17:24-26 (Father, the world has not known you, but I have known you)

John 19:17-18, 25-30 (the death of Jesus on the Cross)

If you have another Bible reading you would prefer, or if you are unsure which reading to choose, please discuss this with the Lay Minister, who will be happy to help.

MUSIC AT FUNERALS

As mentioned above, music in the churches of the West Norfolk Priory Group must fulfil the requirement of the Church of England's Canon Law 'that only such chants, hymns, anthems, and other settings are chosen as are appropriate, both the words and the music, to the solemn act of worship and prayer in the church as well as the congregation assembled'. We therefore regret that we cannot permit popular music. What follows in this booklet is a sample of suggested music; any other requests can be discussed with the Minister who is organising your funeral. Please note the Music fees that you are likely to incur. You are kindly asked to note that the West Norfolk Priory Group does not allow recorded music (CD's etc) to be played during funerals at its churches.

SUGGESTED HYMN CHOICES:

POSSIBLE MUSIC PIECES

C/S Jesu, joy of man's desiring – J S Bach

C/S Laudate Dominum – Mozart

C/S The Lord is my shepherd – Schubert

C/S Panis angelicus – Franck

S Ave Maria – Schubert or Bach/Gounod

S Pie Jesu – Fauré

ORGAN PRELUDES

Bach – BWV 622, 654, 731, 670, 678, 552 Pt2

Elgar – Nimrod from Enigma Variations

Introit/ Recessional

Lord of all hopefulness

The day thou gavest

Abide with me

Guide me, O thou great Redeemer

Be thou my vision

Dear Lord and Father of mankind

Make me a channel of your peace

Love divine, all loves excelling

The Lord's my shepherd

The King of love my shepherd is

Suggested Hymns

- Abide with me
- Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer.
- Praise, My Soul, The King of Heaven.
- Dear Lord and Father of Mankind.
- Making Me a Channel of Your Peace.
- Morning has broken
- The Day Thou Gavest Lord Has Ended
- How great Thou art
- All things bright and beautiful
- The Lord is my shepherd

If you have a favourite hymn which is not included in the above list, please discuss this with the Lay Minister.

TRIBUTE

Tributes are permitted at a funeral of a loved one, but are not essential. If you are going to have a tribute please discuss this further with the Minister. A few basic points to reflect on:

- The tribute should be read by one person, who you know will be able to read it clearly and audibly. If they are nervous, then a second person is able to come and stand by their side to support them.
- The tribute should be no longer than 8 minutes.

- The content of the tribute must be appropriate to the sacredness of the Service and the building in which it is being read.

The main purpose of the homily is to preach the Gospel and to instil in us hope in the Resurrection.

Visiting Clergy

We will be happy to discuss involvement of other clergy in the service, but please note that the local Vicar will always be the officiant. In addition, all external ministers will be subjected to the prevailing Safeguarding processes of the Church of England which may take some time to complete. Any participation must be fully agreed with the local officiant prior to the service.



FACILITIES

Some of our churches have facilities – Marham, Stow Bridge and Watlington. We regret that our other churches do not have facilities at the moment.



PARKING

All our churches have very limited parking.



FUNERAL WAKES AND GATHERINGS

Our churches do not have Hall facilities to cater for funeral wakes and gatherings. But many parishioners have found the following establishments to be well located and helpful:

The Andel Lodge

48 Lynn Road,

Tottenhill, PE33 0RH

Phone: 01553 810256

<https://www.andellodge.co.uk/>

Stow Hall Gardens

Stow Bardolph

King's Lynn

Norfolk

PE34 3HU (Just off the A10, north of Downham Market)

<https://stowhallgardens.co.uk/>

Spaces in the Churchyard and Reservation of Plot

A parishioner has a right to be buried in the churchyard of the parish in which he or she resides or where they are on the church electoral roll, provided that there is still room for burial or the deceased is being interred in an existing grave of a parent or spouse. However, a parishioner does NOT have a right to be buried in a particular place, which is a matter for the Minister to decide at their sole discretion. Anyone wishing to be buried in a particular place in a churchyard can

only acquire a right to be buried there by obtaining a Faculty to authorise the reservation of an exclusive right of burial in a particular grave.

There is a special form of Faculty Petition which should be used in connection with an application to reserve a grave space. An applicant should complete Part A of the Faculty Petition and ask the Minister to complete Part B. In Part B, the grave to be reserved should be referred to by row and number on a churchyard plan. The completed form should then be sent to the Registrar, together with a resolution of the Parochial Church Council in support. A fee is payable on lodging the Petition, which is the normal Faculty fee, as specified under Fees. The fee will be requested on receipt of the Petition by the Registrar.

The Petition will be sent to the Chancellor of the Diocese, who will normally direct that Public Notices are published at the church, to give notice of the application to parishioners and an opportunity for objections. Such notices have to be published for 28 days. If no notices of objection are received by the Registrar, the Chancellor will normally direct the granting of a Faculty.

Where, for example, husband and wife desire to be buried together, they may either (a) make one application for the right for both to be buried in the same grave, in which case only one set of fees is payable, or (b) make separate applications for the reservation of two adjoining grave spaces, in which case the above fees are payable in respect of each separate application.

If you live in village where the churchyard is closed or you live outside one of our villages, it may be possible for you to be buried in one of our churchyards. Please ask.

Interment of Ashes

The Church of England does not permit the scattering of human remains in its churchyards. But you may request for a parishioner's ashes to be buried in the churchyard. English law requires that the "ashes of a cremated body should be reverently disposed of by a minister in a churchyard according to the Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 1992". There is a statutory fee for this short service and there will be a modest charge for a sexton and vergger.

Please note that a pet's ashes cannot be buried with you or your loved one. A booklet on Churchyard Regulations and information for families is available.

Memorials and Churchyards

Churchyards are special places which exist for both the living and the dead. Together with the church building, they are vested in the Incumbent and as consecrated ground they are set apart for the reverent and Christian burial of parishioners.

Because they are shared spaces, churchyards need to be looked after for the benefit of today's generations as well as those to follow. The Churchyard Regulations seek to encourage good practices in order to create and maintain a place of peace, dignity and respect for the departed.

There is no automatic or legal right to place a memorial in a churchyard. The authority here rests with the Chancellor of the Diocese, who has granted delegated powers to incumbents and parish priests (i.e. rectors, vicars, priests in charge and team vicars), who have the discretion to allow memorials into their churchyards which are consistent with the Diocesan Churchyard Regulations.

Any departure from the Churchyard Regulations requires permission by way of a faculty. Further information can be found on the Diocesan Registry's website here:

<https://elydiocesanregistry.co.uk/>

Guidance and rules governing the upkeep of our churchyards can be downloaded from the links below.

- [Ely Diocesan Churchyard Regulations - Guidance to the Rules](#)
- [Guidance to Families and Next of Kin](#)
- [Churchyard Memorial Application Form](#)

You can view more information on the Diocese of Ely website [here](#).

Memorial Stones

We are only able to accept and process applications for Tablets and Memorial Stones after the burial of ashes or body. This also meets the legal requirement that any memorial stone, whether for ashes or body, should only be introduced six months after burial: *"At least six months must have elapsed since the date of burial before a monument may be introduced. Between a burial and the erection of a permanent memorial, a small temporary wooden cross, not more than 900mm (3ft) in height (measured from the surface of the ground) and in width, may be used to mark a grave, with the prior approval of the Minister"*.

Any application for a memorial for cremated remains will only be accepted and processed two months after the interment; this will be six months for a full burial. This allows time for the period of reflection and for the ground to settle. Occasionally, we may be able to make pastoral exceptions when family members are travelling from overseas for an interment of cremated remains.

Memorial stones occasionally need to be removed from the churchyard for repair or additional work. We ask that where this is necessary, permission is sought from us first. This is to reduce the distress caused to other families and visitors to the churchyard. In addition, it is a legal requirement that *'The owner of a monument or ledger stone which is less than 50 years old may, if authorised to do so by the Minister, remove it from the churchyard for not more than 3 months for the purpose of adding an inscription authorised under Regulation 30 or carrying out repairs authorised under Regulation 31'*.

Contact Details

If you need to arrange a funeral and wish to talk to someone about it, [please contact our Church Office](#) or Pastoral Assistant.

The Church Office,
West Norfolk Priory Group
c/o Home Farm
Lynn Road
Stow Bardolph
PE34 3HT



Tel: 07596 707469

The Church Office is open Monday–Friday, 10am – 1pm



Email: office@westnorfolkpriorygroup.co.uk



Website: www.westnorfolkpriorygroup.co.uk

*There is one thing I ask of the Lord,
for this I long,
to live in the house of the Lord,
all the days of my life,
to savour the sweetness of the Lord,
to behold his temple.
from Psalm 26*

©West Norfolk Priory Group 2026