

**Planning your funeral**

Funerals are incredibly important. At a funeral we commend a soul into the hands of our God who is full of mercy and love. We give thanks to God for a life, precious in his sight. And we comfort each other in our grief. All this is done in the Christian hope of eternal life, promised us by Jesus Christ, who himself died, was buried, and was raised from the dead by the glory of God the Father.

This form is designed to help you think about and plan your funeral. This is a good thing to do, as it will give you peace of mind about your funeral, as well as helping those who will be making decisions after your death while grieving at the same time.

Use as much or as little of this form as you wish. There may be decisions you would prefer to leave to your next of kin or executor, in which case leave these questions blank. This form envisages a funeral at or taken by clergy from St Paul’s Church. If you are planning for your funeral to be at a different church or chapel, please feel free to adapt and use this form accordingly, but note that different churches may have different policies and ways of doing things.

This form will be used to guide those organising your funeral. It is not legally binding, and, although those organising your funeral will try to carry out your wishes as far as possible, there may be some wishes that can’t be fulfilled.

You can fill this form in electronically or by hand. The boxes will expand as you type, and you can use additional pieces of paper if completing by hand. When you have completed this form, please ensure that hard or electronic copies are given to your next of kin and the Parish Office. If you have opted for a prepaid funeral package, please ensure details have been given to your next of kin. This document will be stored by the church in a secure, confidential file. You can find our GDPR policy on our website.

We suggest that you give yourself time and space to complete this form. You may wish to do it with your spouse/partner, family member, or close friend, or to complete it alone. You may find it helpful to read verses of Psalm 139, reproduced on the final page of this document.

If you have any questions, or wish to discuss this form with Fr Daniel or one of the clergy, please be in touch. Contact details are at the bottom of this form,

If you have access to the internet you will find some helpful resources, including suggested hymn and readings, at: <https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/funerals/funeral-service-step-step>

**Personal details**

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| --- | --- |
| Your name |  |
| Your contact details |  |
| Date |  |
| Your next of kin |  |
| Your next of kin’s contact details |  |

**Some practicalities**

1 I wish to be

* buried
* cremated

2 I would like

* a funeral service in St Paul’s Church followed by committal at crematorium/cemetery
* both funeral service and committal at crematorium/cemetery

3 Please indicate if you have a preference for a particular crematorium/cemetery

* New Southgate
* Enfield
* Other (please specify)
* Committal in church grounds\*

*\* It is possible, at a church funeral, for the committal to take place at the hearse straight after the service, rather than the minister and mourners following the coffin to the crematorium. You may wish to discuss this option with your family or next of kin.*

4 Do you have any preferences regarding the style of your coffin, and how it is transported?

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**The service itself**

5 What hymns would you like sung?

*Normally there are two or three hymns.*

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6 What other music would you like played?

*There will need to be some music as your coffin is brought into the church/chapel, and also at the end of the service as it is taken out. This music can either be played on the organ or piano, or recorded music can be used. It is also possible to have some reflective music played during the service. If you are having a separate committal at the crematorium there will be music at the beginning and end of the committal; you can use the same choices from the church service, or make additional choices.*

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7 Readings

*There must be at least one reading from the Bible at a Christian funeral. It’s also possible to have an appropriate non-Bible reading or poem as well.*

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8 Eulogy/tribute

*It is common for someone – usually a relative or close friend – to give a eulogy or tribute at a funeral. Is there someone you would like to do this? You may wish to discuss this with them first, to make sure they are comfortable taking part in this way. It’s also possible for the officiating minister to read out something prepared by your family. Please indicate if you would prefer for there to be no eulogy/tribute. A short sermon/homily will be preached by a minister; this is normally separate from the eulogy/tribute.*

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9 Prayers

*There are set prayers which are normally used at a funeral, but use this box if there are any appropriate prayers you wish to be used.*

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10 People participating

*Use this box if there are people you would like to participate by reading, leading the prayers, carrying your coffin, or in other ways. You may wish to discuss this with them first, to make sure they are comfortable taking part in this way. A member of the St Paul’s Ministry Team will officiate at a funeral at St Paul’s, but it’s possible for us to invite other clergy or ministers to take part in the service, subject to them having a licence or permission to officiate (or equivalent permissions in other denominations).*

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11 Anything else?

*Use this box to make a note of any other requests or wishes. These may include:*

*Requiem Eucharist: Some funerals take place in the context of a service of Holy Communion, the service in which we call to mind and celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus.*

*Reception and Vigil: Your coffin can be received into church the evening before your funeral, and rest in church overnight. Note that this may increase the cost of your funeral.*

*Book of Common Prayer: Most funerals at St Paul’s use the rite in Common Worship. It is possible to use the rites in the Book of Common Prayer if requested.*

*Flowers and/or donations in a charity in lieu of flowers*

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**Burial of Cremated Remains**

12 Burying ashes

*Use this box to specify if you would like your ashes to be interred in the Garden of Rest, or in a cemetery. Please note that all the marked plots in the Garden of Rest have either been filled or are reserved. There is space in the adjoining flower beds for unmarked burials of cremated remains. A member of the Ministry Team at St Paul’s will officiate at burials in the Garden of Rest, and are also available to officiate at burials in cemeteries.*

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**Your will**

This may be a good time to update your will, or make a will if you haven’t already. If you would like to include St Paul’s Church, or St Paul’s Trust (a separate charity which makes grants to St Paul’s Church) in your will, please get in touch via the Parish Office.

**What to do next**

If you have completed this form electronically:

* Email it to [office@spwh.org](mailto:office@spwh.org) and your next of kin.
* Print a copy and file it with other related documents.
* You can also send a hard copy to St Paul’s Parish Office, Church Hill, London, N21 1JA.

If you have completed this form by hand:

* Give one copy to your next of kin, and one copy to St Paul’s Parish Office, Church Hill, London, N21 1JA.
* File the original with other related documents.

If necessary, we can make copies for you in the Parish Office.

Please note that wills are often not read until after a person’s funeral, so it’s really important that your funeral plans are stored where they will come to light before the funeral takes place.

Once we have received your form, we will confirm safe receipt. We’ll also review the form, and we’ll be in touch if there’s anything which needs clarification.

It’s a good idea to revisit this form and update it periodically. Perhaps put a date in your diary now to do this. Make sure you give copies of the updated form to your next of kin and the church.

**Big questions**

While we hope completing this form will have been helpful, it may also have given rise to some distress or anxiety, or caused you to think about some of the big questions around life and death.

It may be helpful to talk to someone, and the clergy at St Paul’s are always happy to have a chat about these things. If you have internet access, you may also find the following resources on the Church of England website helpful: <https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/funerals/after-funeral/facing-death-and-mortality>

**Useful contacts**

Parish Office (for submitting this form, and having copies made): 🖂 [office@spwh.org](mailto:office@spwh.org) 🕿 020 8886 4290

Fr Daniel (for further conversations and questions) 🖂 [vicar@spwh.org](mailto:vicar@spwh.org) 🕿 020 8886 3545

OFFICE USE ONLY

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| Date received |  |  | Clarifications required |  |
| Acknowledgement sent |  |  | Clarifications received |  |
| Form checked by clergy |  |  | Filed |  |

**Psalm 139**

*You may find it helpful to pray verses of this psalm when preparing to complete this form.*

O Lord, thou hast searched me out and known me : thou knowest my down-sitting and mine up-rising, thou understandest my thoughts long before.

Thou art about my path, and about my bed : and spiest out all my ways.

For lo, there is not a word in my tongue : but thou, O Lord, knowest it altogether.

Thou hast fashioned me behind and before : and laid thine hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for me : I cannot attain unto it.

Whither shall I go then from thy Spirit : or whither shall I go then from thy presence?

If I climb up into heaven, thou art there : if I go down to hell, thou art there also.

If I take the wings of the morning : and remain in the uttermost parts of the sea;

Even there also shall thy hand lead me : and thy right hand shall hold me.

If I say, Peradventure the darkness shall cover me : then shall my night be turned to day.

Yea, the darkness is no darkness with thee, but the night is as clear as the day : the darkness and light to thee are both alike.

For my reins are thine : thou hast covered me in my mother's womb.

I will give thanks unto thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made : marvellous are thy works, and that my soul knoweth right well.

My bones are not hid from thee : though I be made secretly, and fashioned beneath in the earth.

Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect : and in thy book were all my members written;

Which day by day were fashioned : when as yet there was none of them.

How dear are thy counsels unto me, O God : O how great is the sum of them!

If I tell them, they are more in number than the sand : when I wake up I am present with thee.

Try me, O God, and seek the ground of my heart : prove me, and examine my thoughts.

Look well if there be any way of wickedness in me : and lead me in the way everlasting.

*Psalm 139.1-18,23-24*