

## **Planning a Funeral at Saint Collen's Church**

At Saint Collen's Church, we understand that arranging a funeral can feel overwhelming, especially at a time of grief. We hope the guidance below will offer reassurance and clarity as you begin to make arrangements for the funeral of your loved one.

### **A Set Service, with Space for Personal Choice**

Many families feel they are expected to plan and write the entire funeral service themselves. We would like to reassure you that this is not the case.

The funeral service in the Church in Wales follows a set liturgy, meaning it has a clear structure and flow that is prepared and led by the clergy. This structure helps ensure that the service is prayerful, dignified, and rooted in the hope and comfort of the Christian faith.

While the overall shape of the service is fixed, families are warmly invited to contribute personal elements within that structure. These contributions help reflect the life, personality, and relationships of the person who has died.

### **How Families Can Contribute**

You are welcome to choose or suggest:

- Music
  - A piece of music as the coffin enters the church
  - A piece of music at the end of the service  
(Our local undertakers provide a sound system, and we also have an organ in the church, offering flexibility in musical choices.)
- Readings
  - A Bible reading (see below for suggestions)
  - Poems or other meaningful readings (see below)
- Tributes / Eulogy
  - A tribute or eulogy, delivered by a family member or friend, or read on their behalf
- Hymns
  - Hymns that were meaningful to your loved one or your family

You do not need to worry about “putting the service together”, the clergy will guide you through what is appropriate and where each element fits within the service.

## **Typical Structure of a Funeral Service**

Below is the usual order of a funeral service at Saint Collen's Church. This is provided to help you understand how the service flows:

- Welcome & Opening Prayer
- Hymn
- Bible Reading
- Poem(s)
- Tributes / Eulogy
- Hymn
- Prayers & The Lord's Prayer
- Commendation (Song of Farewell):  
*May the choirs of angels come to greet you.*  
*May they speed you to paradise.*  
*May the Lord enfold you in His mercy.*  
*May you find eternal life.*
- Hymn
- Final Blessing

## **Practical Arrangements**

In the first instance, you will need to be in touch with an undertaker, who will help you with practical arrangements and will liaise with the church on your behalf.

## **Suggested Bible Readings**

If you are not familiar with the Bible, you may find it helpful to choose from one of the following passages, which are often used at funerals and speak of comfort, hope, and God's presence:

- Psalm 23 – "The Lord is my shepherd"
- Psalm 121 – "I lift up my eyes to the hills"
- John 14: 1–6 – "Do not let your hearts be troubled"
- Romans 8: 31–39 – Nothing can separate us from the love of God
- 1 Corinthians 13: 1–13 – The way of love
- Revelation 21: 1–5 – "He will wipe every tear from their eyes"

The clergy are always happy to help you choose a reading that feels right.

## **Poems Often Chosen for Funerals**

Some poems families frequently find comforting include:

- Do Not Stand at My Grave and Weep – Mary Elizabeth Frye
- She Is Gone (He Is Gone) – David Harkins
- Death Is Nothing at All – Henry Scott Holland
- Funeral Blues – W. H. Auden
- Remember Me – Christina Rossetti

You are also welcome to suggest a poem or reading that has special meaning to your family.

If you have any questions or concerns at any stage, please know that you are not alone. The clergy at Saint Collen's Church are here to support you with care, sensitivity, and compassion as you honour the life of your loved one.

Every blessing,

Fr Lee

Vicar