

Bereavement can be an emotional time. This leaflet gives some ways in which we may be able to help you as you grieve.

Christians believe that death is not the end – that Jesus offers us the promise of eternity with God in heaven beyond death. This hope, along with God's presence and peace, can bring us some comfort. The prayer below tries to express some of our feelings and longings as we face the death of someone we have loved.

*I come to you saddened by my loss.  
In my tears and grief  
please put your loving arms around me  
and hold me tight.  
Support me at this time and give me  
peace and hope.  
Help me to face the future and give me  
strength to meet the days to come.  
May I always turn to you if grief  
overwhelms me  
and put my trust in your unfailing love.  
In Jesus name. Amen.*

Jesus said "Peace I leave with you,  
my peace I give to you.  
I do not give to you as the world gives.  
Do not let your hearts be troubled and  
do not let them be afraid" *John 14.27*

#### How to contact us:

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Website: [www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org](http://www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org)

#### Other leaflets in this series:

- Welcome to St. Mary's
- Children Welcome!
- Your Child's Baptism
- Getting Married
- The Healing Ministry at St. Mary's
- Lord, Teach Us to Pray
- The Christian Faith
- Planned Giving
- Legacies

## Death and bereavement



The death of someone close is a very sad time and there is always such a lot to do when you least feel able to cope. Whatever your needs, we are here to help at this difficult time. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions regarding death or funerals or bereavement.

## Planning a Funeral

A Church of England funeral service in church is for anyone, whether or not they have been regular churchgoers. It is best to approach your chosen funeral directors first. They will liaise with the clergy initially, and one of the clergy team will then contact you to arrange a visit.

A funeral service may be held in St. Mary's, or at a crematorium, or in a cemetery chapel. Our clergy are available to take the service in whichever setting you choose.

The clergy will help you plan the service, which can be very simple, or more elaborate if you wish. It usually lasts about thirty minutes and always includes prayers, a Bible reading and a short address. Hymns, music, other readings and a tribute to your loved one can also be included. Please let the clergy know if you, or any of your family or friends, would like to contribute to the service.

A funeral service is for everyone who knew the deceased, children as well as adults. Often children can find it very helpful to be present.

## The Committal

The final part of the service is the committal of the person's earthly body to be cremated or buried.

When the service in church is followed by burial in the cemetery, the prayer of committal takes place at the graveside. Where there is a cremation, this prayer of committal can take place at the crematorium or at the end of the service in church. Many people choose to have the complete service in church, including this final act, in the surroundings that would have been familiar to the deceased and with the whole congregation present and able to participate.

St. Mary's Churchyard is not available for burials, but cremated remains may be buried in our Garden of Remembrance, situated in a quiet area of the churchyard.

Further helpful information about the funeral service can be found on:

[www.churchofenglandfunerals.org](http://www.churchofenglandfunerals.org)

and about St Mary's Church on:

[www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org](http://www.stmaryssaffronwalden.org)

## Remembering

Grieving seldom ends with the funeral. It is natural to feel the emptiness for a considerable time afterwards. St Mary's Church may be able to offer you some comfort at this time. Please contact us if you would appreciate a call.

The church is open every day. The Chapel of Remembrance (towards the altar end of the church on the right-hand side) provides a focus for quiet prayer and reflection at any time. Some people find it helpful to write a prayer or light a candle. Flowers may also be placed here after a funeral service, or at any time of special remembrance.

There is a Book of Remembrance in the Chapel, in which the name of your loved one may be entered under whatever date in the year you feel appropriate. Please contact us for more details.

Every autumn (on the Sunday nearest to All Souls' Day, either at the end of October or the beginning of November) we hold a service of remembrance to give thanks for all those whom we have loved.