



The Vicarage
Cae Ffwrnes
Burry Port
Carmarthenshire
SA16 0FW

From the Vicar of Burry Port...

On behalf of all in the parish of Burry Port with Pwll, I offer you our sincerest sympathy at this sad time for you, along with the assurance of our prayers at the Parish Eucharist next Sunday. As you have chosen to have a funeral with us, we will do all we can to help you with both the arrangements and the service itself.

The church funeral is unique and combines many elements. Whilst it acknowledges the pain and sadness of bereavement, it also celebrates the life of the deceased and the Christian hope, at the heart of the Church's life and belief, that nothing... even death... can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

This simple leaflet just sets out the structure of the funeral service and some helpful suggestions. We attempt to make the service as personal as possible whilst retaining the liturgy which has been used for many centuries and which proclaims that everyone... from King to pauper... is equal in the sight of Almighty God.

Alongside the Funeral Director, we are here to help you. Please do not hesitate to contact me or any of my colleagues at any time.

R Paul Davies

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The Funeral Service / Liturgy

In our tradition, the priest always meets the family at the church door and leads them into their seats. The organist plays some music whilst we enter and seats are reserved for the family at the front.

1 Introduction

The priest welcomes everyone and begins the service with some words giving thanks for the gift of the person whom we are commending to God and also for the gift of the eternal life. He then reads the traditional exhortation from the Prayer Book.

2 Psalm & Reading

Usually the congregation join in the words of a Psalm. The most common ones used at a funeral are Psalm 23 (The Lord's my Shepherd) or Psalm 121 (I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills). This is followed by a Scripture reading. We very much encourage families to choose their own psalms or readings but appreciate that they often like to ask the priest to choose something appropriate.

3 Hymn 1

If families choose to sing a hymn, we usually sing the first one at this point. There are many that you can choose from in myriad different hymn books. Some suggestions of appropriate and favourite hymns are given on the page overleaf.

4 Prayers

Following the Lord's Prayer, we give thanks for the life of the deceased, for the Gospel and we pray for the family and all who mourn and ask God to give us strength and hope.

5 Commendation

This is the sacred part of the service where we commend the soul of the deceased to Almighty God. The priest will stand or kneel near the coffin to do this. Sometimes, according to ancient tradition, the coffin is sprinkled with holy water as a reminder of the promise of eternal life given in baptism.

6 Hymn 2

If a second hymn is chosen, this will be sung at this point, just before the blessing.

7 The Blessing

On leaving Church

Following the blessing, and usually during the playing of the organ, the Priest and Funeral Director will lead the bearers and the family out of the church and the service will conclude with the short act of committal either at the graveside or at the crematorium.

During the service...

Whilst the priest will ask the congregation to sit and stand and kneel at appropriate parts of the service, it is often the custom for family to remain seated throughout the whole service.

The Clergy

If the priest presiding did not know the deceased it is helpful for the family to reflect upon the elements of his/her life that they would like to celebrate in the funeral. Sometimes key words will suffice. This will help to make the service personal and fitting. The priest will talk to you about this.

Eve of Burial

There is an ancient tradition of bringing the coffin into church on the eve of the funeral. Usually, this is accompanied by some prayers with close family members present. If you would like to observe this ancient and meaningful tradition, please mention it to the Funeral Director or the Priest.

Burial / Burial of Ashes

The Churchyard in Pwll is still open and, at the discretion of the Incumbent, parishioners may be buried there. There is, however, no provision for burials in Burry Port Churchyard (Most burials take place in the municipal cemetery). The Funeral Director will help you with this.

Some suggestions of Hymns

Abide with me
All things bright and beautiful
Be still for the presence of the Lord
Guide me O thou Great Redeemer
How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
Lord of all Hopefulness, Lord of all Joy
Love divine all loves excelling
The King of Love my Shepherd is
The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want
The day thou gavest Lord is ended
Thine be the Glory, risen conquering Son

Dyma gariad fel y moroedd
Nid wyn gofyn bywyd moethus
Mi glywer dyner lais
O! Iesu mawr, rho d'anian bur
Tydi a wnaeth y wyrth o Grist Fab Duw

Nothing can fill the gap when we are away from those we love and it would be wrong to find anything. We must simply hold out and win through. That sounds very hard at first but at the same time it is a great consolation, since leaving the gap unfilled preserves the bonds between us. It is nonsense to say God fills the gap; he does not fill it but keeps it empty so that our communion with another may be kept alive even at the cost of pain.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer 1906-45

Useful Contacts

Vicar: The Revd R Paul Davies BA MTh
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Associate Priest: The Revd Eldon Phillips MEd
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Burry Port Organist: Roland Jones ☎ 834213
Pwll Organist: Elaine Unsted ☎ 750209

The Church

Over the centuries, the church has been terribly confusing in its teaching about death. Much of it has been in an attempt to grapple with one of the greatest mysteries that faces each one of us.

Despite this, it has certain beliefs that remain core to Christian heritage and contemporary Christianity. Almighty God, in Jesus Christ, offers each one of us the gift of abundant life (John 10:10). This is a life which is eternal and therefore continues beyond physical death. We are not certain what form life takes beyond death – it is perhaps for God to know and for us, in time, to discover – but the death and resurrection of God, in Jesus Christ, is the hope and the light in the mystery.

The Bible teaches that the bodily resurrection is still in the future for everyone except Jesus. St Paul is clear in 1 Corinthians 15:23: Christ has been raised as the first fruits, then, at his coming, those who belong to Christ will be raised as he has been raised. In the history of the Church, there have been various states of holiness but in the New Testament every single Christian is referred to as a saint, even the muddled and sinful Christians whom St Paul addresses; so the dead all await resurrection.

When on the cross, Jesus said to the dying brigand beside him “Today, you will be with me in Paradise” (Luke 23:43). Paradise is the resting place en route to the resurrection. It is the reason that central to the prayers at the Church funeral are the words ‘may he/she rest in peace and rise in glory’.

Bring us. O Lord, at our last awakening, into the house and gate of heaven: to enter into that gate and dwell in that house, where there shall be no more darkness or dazzling, but one equal light; no noise nor silence but one equal music; no fears nor hopes but one equal possession; no ends nor beginnings but one equal eternity in the habitation of thy glory and dominion

John Donne 1572-1631



Christian Funerals



*in the Parish
of Burry Port
& Pwll*

*May they rest in peace
And rise in glory*