

# CHRISTIAN FUNERALS



# FUNERALS



# Scoping Christian funerals

1. Christianity has many forms
2. Christianity adapts to culture
3. Christianity is historically diverse



## The current picture

- ▣ In 2012 around 500,000 deaths in England/Wales
- ▣ The CofE conducted 160,000 funerals
- ▣ 3,300 funerals per week
- ▣ Over a 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of all deaths are CofE,  
1/3 other Christian

## Key themes

- Belief in life after death
- The importance of story
- Care for the living



## Life after death

*“turn the darkness of death  
into the dawn of new life”*

- ▣ Framing the service
- ▣ Beginnings – sentences, letting go
- ▣ Endings – commendation/committal



*“ we now commit his/her body  
to the ground: earth to earth,  
ashes to ashes, dust to dust, in  
sure and certain hope of the  
resurrection to eternal life.... ”*

## Importance of story

- ▣ The life that has been lived:
  - eulogy
  - prayers and thanks
- ▣ God's love and promises – scriptures
  - talk/sermon



*Jesus said: "Do not let your hearts be troubled... in my Father's house there are many dwelling places..."*  
John 14: 1-2

*"We thank you for xx. The years we shared, the good we saw, the love we received..."*

# Care for the living

- ▣ Prayers and reflection
- ▣ Blessing
- ▣ Pastoral support  
whenever, wherever

*“May God give you his comfort  
and his peace, his light and his  
joy....”*



*“Father, the death of xxx  
brings emptiness into our  
lives... When grief seems  
never-ending take us one  
step at a time along your  
road of death and  
resurrection”*



# Making choices

- ▣ Shape of the day
  - ▣ Where it happens
  - ▣ Who leads
  - ▣ Who takes part
  - ▣ Coffin
  - ▣ Flowers
  - ▣ Music
  - ▣ Readings
  - ▣ Eulogy
- and more...



# Church of England funerals

- ▣ What we do
- ▣ Where it can happen
- ▣ Who is eligible

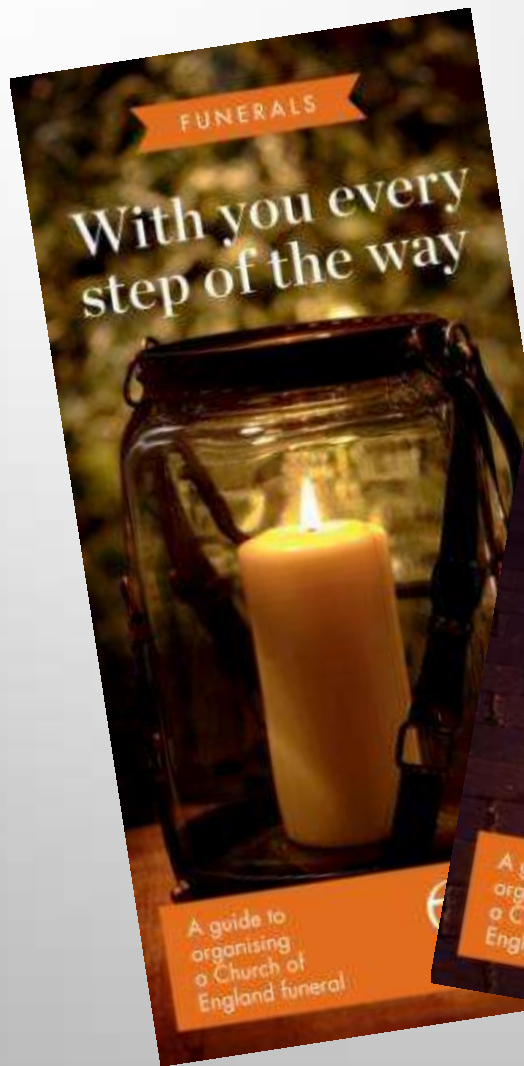


*"We didn't have a church service because she didn't want one. But we did have the local vicar come to the crem and talk about her."*

*"Are you allowed to do that?"*

*"Woodland burial sites were spoken of as 'a perfect way to go', but there was uncertainty about the church's willingness to be at such ceremonies"*

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*“I can show that to people when they come in, because that's just reminded me of the breadth of the welcome, the hospitality that you give people, they don't have to come to Church, you're there for everybody. ...”*

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# The website

Visit [ChurchOfEnglandFunerals.org](http://ChurchOfEnglandFunerals.org)



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Thank you