

Types of Funeral Service – Lastingpost.com

Introduction

There is no legal requirement as to the form the funeral service should take or indeed to have a funeral ceremony at all. Once the death certificate has been signed and registration of the death has taken place, it is up to the family to decide how to mark the committal.

Most people still opt for a traditional religious ceremony. The Church of England estimate that they conduct about 80% of funeral services. Increasingly, however, families want a more personalised funeral with music and readings that reflects more closely the individual and the life they led. This may be in the context of either a religious service or another type of ceremony.

The main types of funeral are set out below.

Traditional Funeral Service

The traditional funeral service is taken from the Book of Common Prayer of 1662 which remains the foundational prayer book in the Church of England. It is loved for both the beauty and simplicity of its language.

The service takes place in two parts. Firstly, the service itself in church followed by the committal at the graveside, or in the case of a cremation, in the crematorium chapel.

Modern Funeral Service

The modern funeral service is taken from Common Worship released in 2000. This service is in modern language but owes much to the Book of Common Prayer. It is an attempt to bring together the best of both the classic and the contemporary.

Non Religious Funerals

Over 30,000 funerals in Britain last year were non-religious ceremonies. These celebrations of life are becoming increasingly common as people become more willing to admit they are non believers.

Humanist funerals acknowledge loss and celebrate life without a religious context. This can be a dignified alternative to a traditional funeral service for people without religious beliefs.

The British Humanist Association will arrange a local secular officiant (sometimes called a celebrant) if a non-religious or civil funeral is wanted. There are a growing number of trained Humanist officiants. Six years ago there were 120 in England and Wales. This number has now increased to 220.

DIY Funerals

A family can make all the arrangements themselves including the style and content of the ceremony to bid farewell to the deceased. This can be a religious or non religious service but with much more participation by family and friends.

Some people find this a rewarding experience. That said it is important that anyone considering this option realises the complexity and the responsibility of ensuring that everything is done correctly.

The best solution may be a compromise whereby the family arrange some aspects of the funeral and the committal but employ a Funeral Director to look after the other more complex aspects such as storing the body before the day of the funeral.

Useful Links

The Prayer Book Society

The Prayer Book Society exists to promote and preserve the use of the Book of Common Prayer (1662). This is the traditional service book of the Church of England and contains the Church's historic beliefs.

www.pbs.org.uk

British Humanist Association

www.humanism.org.uk

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