



Compassionate Funerals Queensland



We're for Compassion, not for profit.

Funeral Planning Guide

Information for planning and conducting a funeral.

About Compassionate Funerals Queensland

Compassionate Funerals Queensland is an independent, Australian not-for-profit funeral business, built on and committed to living out the Christian principles of love, care and compassion. We provide regular, ongoing financial support for Christian mission, humanitarian and community work.

We are not simply donating here or there, our organisation is built around a sustained commitment to giving. We distribute our surplus funds, every quarter of every year, and the aim is to assist others in real and practical ways. Scan the QR code to access our Impact Report and learn more about the projects we support.



Introduction

This guide has been designed to be used as a starting point, assisting families as they begin to prepare and plan a meaningful funeral service.

It is a general guide only and our team are dedicated to working alongside families to create a service that expresses the uniqueness of their loved one.

We will ensure that different cultures, customs and funeral traditions are reflected in the service.





What to do when a death occurs

At home

- Call the ambulance, treating or on-call doctor to confirm death
- They will provide you with a Verification of Death form
- Once the form is completed contact Compassionate Funerals Queensland to arrange for the deceased to be transferred into our care

At a hospital or care facility

- The facility will make the necessary arrangements for a doctor to confirm death
- The facility staff or the family will contact Compassionate Funerals Queensland
- Compassionate Funerals Queensland will arrange for the deceased to be transferred into our care

When the coroner is involved

- Where a death is unexpected the Coroner may become involved

- Contact Compassionate Funerals Queensland and provide the Coroner's case number and details of the deceased so that we can look after you
- Compassionate Funerals Queensland will liaise with the Coroner to arrange transfer once the deceased is ready to be brought into our care
- If the Coroner is involved this may cause a delay in setting a funeral date

If death occurs interstate or overseas

- Contact Compassionate Funerals Queensland with details of the Funeral Director currently looking after them
- Compassionate Funerals Queensland will make the necessary arrangements to have the deceased repatriated into our care
- Repatriation will involve extra transportation costs and may have an impact on the timing of the funeral

Arranging the funeral

The Funeral Director will meet with you, listen to gain understanding and then gently guide you through the funeral process with care and compassion.

They will also walk you through the elements of a meaningful funeral service, ensuring it is personalised, reflecting and honouring your loved one. From selecting a suitable venue, choosing an appropriate casket, floral tributes, photo presentations, funeral stationery, and refreshments – every detail will be tailored to your needs.

Communication is the key to a smoothly run funeral service and it is recommended that the Funeral Director contacts the Minister or Celebrant to coordinate all bookings, dates and times.

Once the funeral arrangements have been made, the Minister or Celebrant will arrange a meeting with the family. This meeting provides an opportunity for the family to contemplate and discuss how they would like their loved one to be remembered, including any specific content they would like to be included in the service.

Based on the details provided by the family, the Minister or Celebrant then creates a personalised service that reflects the life of the person, bringing a sense of comfort to all those in attendance.

What does Compassionate Funerals Queensland look after?

- Providing a Funeral Director and staff to conduct the funeral service
- Liaising with Minister or Celebrant
- Organise 'live streaming' of the funeral service
- Providing a range of caskets and coffins
- Customising funeral stationery
- Completion of legal documentation
- Order and delivery of floral tributes
- Providing a hearse and other vehicles as required
- Booking refreshments
- Booking musicians
- Preparing an online tribute page
- Welcoming and assisting guests on the day of the funeral
- Registration of death with Department of Births, Deaths & Marriages and other Government Departments

What does the Minister or Celebrant look after?

- Structure of the Funeral Service
- Creating a flow in the service, incorporating music, readings, photos and reflections
- Assistance with writing the eulogy if the family require
- Liaising with those participating in the funeral service
- Being available to step in and read tributes if required
- Leading the service on the day of the funeral
- Providing the Funeral Director the content for the any printed materials





Funerals are important

A funeral service offers those who are grieving an opportunity to come together to acknowledge their loss, pay tribute to the life lived, and bid farewell. The service creates space not only for family but for friends and the wider community to share memories, achievements, and stories, both during and after the service.

Gathering together also creates a sense of communal grief, providing a safe and supportive environment for people to express their emotions and offer comfort and encouragement to one another. A funeral service helps us to know that we are not alone, and that others will continue to stand with us in the days ahead.

Not everyone can present publicly, but there are other ways family can participate.

Before the service

- Provide transport for family members
- Welcoming guests
- Acting as an usher
- Handing out special memorial items (eg. lavender sprigs, bookmarks)
- Assist with car parking

During the service

- Place personal items or flowers on casket
- A musical item
- Grandchildren all standing together while one reads their collected tribute
- Lighting candles

After the service

- Assist with bearing the casket out of the chapel
- During refreshment time gather stories from guests about how they knew the deceased
- Offer to collect memorabilia
- Provide transport

Service Preparation

Some items you may wish to consider to be included as part of the service:

- Songs, hymns or reflective music
- Musicians
- Readings or poems
- Eulogy and Tributes
- Time of reflection
- Photo presentation
- Prayers
- Club involvement and community involvement
- Lighting of candles
- Placing flowers or special items on casket
- Decorating the casket
- Releasing doves
- Bearers to escort the casket

Preparation for a Eulogy

If the eulogy or personal tributes incorporates multiple speakers, try not to cover the same areas. Topics might include a mix of the following:

- Life Story
- Nicknames
- Date and place of birth
- Date and place of death
- Parent's names
- Education
- Occupations
- Church or Community Service
- Life values
- Hobbies and interests
- Likes and dislikes
- Significant relationships
– how and where they met
- Friendships
- Family and children
- Family holidays
- Pets
- Humorous stories
- Their legacy



Example Order of Service

- Entry Music
- Welcome
- Prayers
- Reading, Poem or Musical Item
- Eulogy
- Photo Tribute
- Words of Hope and Comfort
- The Committal
- Blessing
- Final Music

When planning a funeral, it's essential to keep in mind that the average duration of a service is approximately 45 minutes and that funeral venues usually have a one-hour booking limit.



Scripture Readings

Psalms

- 20:1-2 Help is from the Lord
- 34:17-19 The Lord hears and delivers
- 46:1-7 God is our refuge and strength
- 48:14 God is with us always
- 73:23-26 Our strength is in God

Ecclesiastes

- 3:1-15 A time for everything

Isaiah

- 41 :10 Don't be afraid, God is with you
- 43:1-2 Fear not – you are mine

Jeremiah

- 29:12-13 God is there for all who seek Him

Lamentations

- 3:22-26 God's love and faithfulness

Matthew

- 11:28-30 Rest in the Lord

John

- 11:25-26 Resurrection and life
- 14:27 The gift of peace
- 17:24 At home with Jesus

Romans

- 8:28, 35-39 The victory of God's love

2 Corinthians

- 1:3-4 The God of all comfort

Philippians

- 4:4-7, 13 God's peace is beyond understanding

1 Thessalonians

- 4: 13-18 Forever with the Lord

Hebrews

- 2:9 Jesus' death was for us

1 Peter

- 1:3-5 An eternal inheritance
- 5:10 The God of all grace

Revelation

- 21 :1-5 Peace in God's presence

Poems

- *Afterglow* – Helen Lowrie Marshall
- *Footprints* – Anon
- *Funeral Blues* – WH Auden
- *God Looked Around His Garden* – Melissa Shreve
- *I'm Free* – Janice M Fair-Salters
- *Remember Me* – Anthony Dowson
- *The Weaver* – Grant Collax Tullar
- *Until We Meet Again* – Anon
- *God Saw You Getting Tired* – F&K Coelho
- *Weep Not For Me* – Constance Jenkins
- *My Journey's Just Begun* – Ellen Brenneman



Hymns

Abide with me
Amazing Grace
And Can It Be
Be Still My Soul
Be Thou My Vision
Blessed Assurance
God be With you Till We Meet Again
Great is Thy Faithfulness
Guide me O Thou Great Jehovah
His Eye is on the Sparrow
How Great is Our God
How Great Thou Art
In Christ Alone
Just As I Am
Nearer My God to Thee
O Perfect Love
Precious Lord, Take my Hand
The Great Love of God
The Lord's My Shepherd
Thine Be The Glory
Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus
What a Friend We have in Jesus
When Peace Like a River

Songs

A Thousand Years – Christina Perri
Angel – Sarah McLachlan
Angels – Robbie Williams
Ave Maria – Sarah Brightman
Because You Loved Me – Celine Dion
Bridge Over Troubled Water – Simon & Garfunkle
Dear Darlin' – Olly Murs
Forever Young – Alphaville
Goodbye My Lover – James Blunt
Hallelujah – Leonard Cohen
I Will Always Love You – Whitney Houston
Just Give Me A Reason – Pink
Just The Way You Are – Bruno Mars
Lullaby (Goodnight My Angel) – Billy Joel
Memories – Barbra Streisand
My Heart Will Go On – Celine Dion
My Way – Frank Sinatra
Simply the Best – Tina Turner
Somewhere Over The Rainbow – Israel Kamakawiwo 'ale
Stay With Me – Sam Smith
Supermarket Flowers – Ed Sheeran
The Prayer – Andrea Bocelli & Celine Dion
Time to Say Goodbye – Andrea Bocelli & Sarah Brightman
To Where You Are – Josh Groban
Unforgettable – Nat 'King' Cole
We'll Meet Again – Vera Lynn
What a Wonderful World – Louis Armstrong
You'll be in My Heart – Phil Collins
You Raise Me Up – Josh Groban



Prayers and Blessings

Christian prayers

Loving God, we come to You in our time of need. You have given us birth and now we face the mystery of death. Help us to find You in the whole of life, its beginning and its ending. Help us to discover You in our pain as well as our joy, in our doubts as well as our believing, that we might find comfort in Your Word and light in our darkness. In the name of Jesus we pray.

Heavenly Father, in Your Son, Jesus Christ You have given us true faith and a sure hope. Strengthen this faith and hope in us all our days. That we may live as those who believe in the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins and the resurrection to eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Eternal God, the Lord of life, the conqueror of death, our help in every time of trouble, comfort us who mourn. Give us grace, in the presence of death, to worship You and enable us to put our whole trust in Your goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A grieving prayer

Dear God,

We struggle, we grow weary, we grow tired.
We are exhausted, we are distressed and we despair. We give up. We fall down. We let go.
We cry. We are empty. We grow calm. We are ready.
We wait quietly.

A small, shy truth arrives. Arrives from without and within. Arrives and is born. Simple, steady, clear.
Like a mirror, like a bell, like a flame. Like rain in summer. A precious truth arrives and is born within us. Within our emptiness.

We accept it, we observe it, we absorb it.
We surrender to our bare truth. We are nourished, we are changed. We are blessed. We rise up.
For this we give thanks. Amen.

– Michael Leunig

I said a prayer for you today

I said a prayer for you today
and I know God must have heard.
I felt the answer in my heart,
although He said no word.
I did not ask for wealth or fame,
I knew you would not mind.
I asked Him to send treasures
of a far more lasting kind.
I asked that He be near you
at the start of each new day.
To grant you health and blessings
and friends to share your way.
I asked for happiness for you
in all things great and small.
But it was for His loving care,
I prayed the most of all.

Blessing

Deep peace of the running wave to you
Deep peace of the flowing air to you.
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you,
Deep peace of the shining stars to you.
Deep peace of the gentle night to you.
Moon and stars pour their healing light
on you.
Deep peace of Christ,
of Christ the light of the world to you.
Deep peace of Christ to you.

Tender Memories Blessings

May tender memories soften your grief,
May fond recollection bring you relief,
And may you find comfort and peace in
the thought
Of the joy that knowing your loved one
brought –
For time and space can never divide
Or keep your loved one from your side
When memory paints in colours true
The happy hours that belonged to you.

After The Funeral

Who to notify?

There are a number of people and organisations that need to be notified when someone dies. Use this checklist to help identify those you may need to contact.

- Solicitor / Public Trustee / Executor of Will
- Superannuation Company
- Bank / Other Financial Institutions
- Home Care Services / Meals on Wheels
- Insurance Companies
- Drivers Licence
- Phone / Internet services
- Online Subscriptions
- Australian Taxation Office / Australian Electoral Commission
- Gas / Electricity
- Medicare / Health Funds / Health Benefits Card
- Local Council
- Clubs and Social Organisations
- Doctor / Dentist / Chemist / Other Health Providers
- Landlord / Real Estate Agent

The Australian Death Notification Service is a free government initiative to help people get in touch with multiple organisations using a single online notification.

<https://deathnotification.gov.au/>





What to Expect on The Day

We understand that planning a funeral can be difficult, we are here to help every step of the way. To learn more about what happens on the day of the funeral service, scan the QR Code.

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