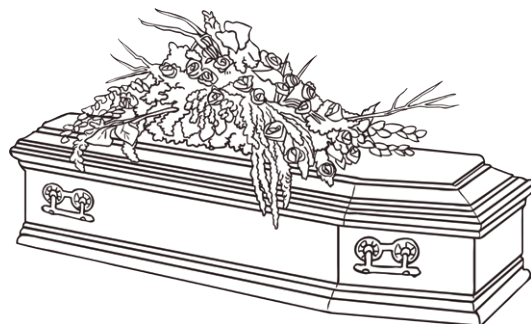


# What happens at a Christian funeral?

When a Christian dies, a funeral service will be held for them. This is a chance for family and friends to remember them and celebrate their lives.

Christian funeral services often differ greatly from one another. This can be because of the culture or denomination (type of Christianity) a person belongs to. It can also be down to the deceased's personal choice if they have had the opportunity to plan their own funeral. There are, however, some common elements that the vast majority of Christian funerals will share:



- The service will usually begin with a church service. This may be a small family gathering or a huge event with hundreds of mourners. The service will be led by a priest or minister. Once he has welcomed people to the service, the minister will usually remind people of the Christian belief that all those who die will be brought before God in the afterlife.
- The service will contain a series of readings and speeches. A large number of these will consist of readings from the Bible. The Bible is the holy book of Christianity and can provide comfort to believers in difficult times. These readings will again remind people that Christians believe the person who has died will live on in the afterlife.
- After readings from the Bible, other speeches will be given. It is common for the priest or a close family member to give a eulogy. This is a tribute to the person who has died and recounts the things they have accomplished. Family members may also select poems, hymns or songs that have a special meaning to them to be read or sung.
- Once the priest or minister ends the service, the dead person will be buried or cremated. Traditionally, Christians did not agree with cremation but this has changed and is now considered acceptable. If the person is being buried, mourners will gather around the grave for a final prayer. When the coffin is lowered into the ground, family members will throw soil onto the grave. This is known as the committal. If the person is cremated, their ashes will be kept in an urn. Many people then scatter their relative's ashes in a place that was special to them.

