

# Funeral Planning Guide

Information for planning and  
conducting a funeral.



## Bethel Funerals

Compassion . Peace . Hope



## About Bethel

Bethel Funerals is a not-for-profit Funeral Company. We actively invest back into community, mission and humanitarian work. So when you use Bethel, not only will your loved one be honoured by our service, they will also be honoured with a legacy that can make a real contribution. A legacy that leaves behind more than memories.

## Introduction

This guide is designed to assist with the preparation and planning of a funeral service. The information provided is intended as a general guide only. We understand that different families, cultures, faiths and denominations will have their own customs and funeral traditions.

The Lord is close to  
the brokenhearted; he  
rescues those whose  
spirits are crushed.”

*Psalm 34:18*

# What To Do When A Death Occurs

## At Home

- Call the ambulance or family doctor (locum if doctor unavailable) to attend
- They will provide you with a Verification of Death form [VIC] or Extinction of Life Certificate [QLD]
- Once the form is complete you should then contact Bethel Funerals to arrange for the deceased to be transferred into our care

## At A Hospital Or Care Facility

- The facility concerned will make the necessary arrangements for a Doctor to attend
- Bethel Funerals will contact the facility to arrange for the deceased to be transferred into our care

## When The Coroner Is Involved

- Due to an accidental or sudden death the Coroner will become involved
- You should contact Bethel Funerals to provide the case number and details of the deceased so that we can look after you
- Bethel Funerals will liaise with the Coroner to arrange transfer once the deceased is ready to be brought into our care

## If Death Occurs Interstate Or Overseas

- Contact Bethel Funerals with details of where the deceased is located and the Funeral Director currently looking after them
- Bethel Funerals will make the necessary arrangements to have the deceased repatriated back to Australia and into our care



## Arranging The Funeral

The initial responsibility of the Funeral Director is to help each family navigate through the funeral process. At the funeral arrangement meeting you will be taken through various options such as: location of cemetery or crematorium, casket or coffin selection, floral tributes, visual presentations, funeral stationery and refreshments. You will also complete personal information about the deceased to provide to the Department of Births, Deaths and Marriages for preparation of the final Death Certificate.

Communication at a very early stage between the Funeral Director and the Minister or Celebrant to confirm time and place suitable for all is of paramount importance. Please speak with the Funeral Director about time and date availabilities before speaking with the Minister or Celebrant.

After those funeral details are in place, you will be better positioned to meet with the Minister or Celebrant. You can then focus your attention on the details of the service and how you would like your loved one to be remembered.

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### What Does Bethel Funerals Look After?

- Providing a Funeral Director and staff to conduct the Funeral Service
- Liaising with Minister or Celebrant
- Providing a range of Caskets and Coffins
- Providing a selection of 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 memorial site for your loved one
- Preparing and inserting notices into newspapers
- Maintain the memorial book register for those attending the service
- Registration of death with Department of Births, Deaths & Marriages
- Notification of death to Centrelink or Department of Veterans' Affairs

### What Does The Minister Or Celebrant Look After?

- Structure of the Funeral Service
- Hymns, Songs, Music, Readings, Prayers, Music, Participants
- Eulogy
- Church facilities and staffing
- Providing the Funeral Director the content for the Order of Service booklet



## Caring For Families

It is important that the Funeral Director and Minister or Celebrant work together and communicate with each other the family's feelings and wishes. Communication is the key to a smoothly run funeral service that honours your loved one.

When an untimely or unexpected death occurs - such as a baby, child or young person or a death in tragic circumstances, the family will possibly be more traumatised and may require extra care. There may be more people surrounding the family, which can make communication and planning more difficult. More time may need to be set aside to look after the family.

The death of any loved one is, in itself, a traumatic event and is felt through the wider community. This should not be underestimated and all who are involved in the care of the family at this time should also ensure they look after themselves. Care of the Carer is essential to ensure your own personal wellbeing.



## Service Preparation

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

- Hymns, Songs or Music
- Organist, Musicians or Piper
- Readings or Poems
- Eulogy
- Time of Reflection
- Visual Presentation
- Prayers
- Club Involvement such as RSL, Lions, Probus etc.
- 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 Of A Standard Order Of Service

- 1- ENTRY HYMN OR MUSIC
- 2- WELCOME
- 3- PRAYERS
- 4- HYMN OR MUSIC
- 5- READING OR POEM
- 6- EULOGY
- 7- QUIET REFLECTION OR PRAYER
- 8- WORDS OF HOPE & COMFORT
- 9- PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING
- 10- HYMN OR MUSIC
- 11- THE COMMITTAL
- 12- BLESSING
- 13- FINAL HYMN OR MUSIC

## Scripture Readings

### Psalms

20:1-2 Help is from the Lord  
22:24 God knows our needs  
30:5 There is a future  
34:17-19 The Lord hears & delivers  
46:1-7 God is our refuge & strength  
48:14 God is with us always  
55:22 Share your burdens with God  
73:23-26 Our strength is in God  
84:11-12 God is our protector

### 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

29:11 God's plan for His people  
29:12-13 God is there for all who seek him

### Lamentations

3:22-26 God's love & faithfulness

### Matthew

11:28-30 Rest in the Lord

### John

10:27-29 Safety & security  
11:25-26 Resurrection & life  
14:27 The gift of peace  
16:22 Grief followed by joy  
17:24 At home with Jesus

### Romans

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

### 1 Corinthians

15:55, 57-58 Victory over death

### 2 Corinthians

1:3-4 The God of all comfort  
4:16-18 Focus on the eternal  
5:1-9 At home with the Lord

### Philipans

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  
4:15-16 Receiving grace & mercy in our time of need

### 1 Peter

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

### 1 John

3:1-3 We are God's children

### Revelation

21:1-5 Peace in God's presence

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## Poems

- Afterglow – *Helen Lowrie Marshall*
- Death is a Gateway – *John Hugo Cullen*
- Footprints – *Unknown*
- Funeral Blues – *WH Auden*
- God's Garden – *Anonymous*
- I'm Free – *Janice M. Fair-Salters*
- I've Earned My Wings – *Justice*
- Remember Me – *Anthony Dowson*
- The Weaver – *Unknown*
- Until We Meet Again – *Unknown*

## Hymns

Abide with me  
Amazing Grace  
And Can It Be  
Be Still My Soul  
Be Thou My Vision  
Beyond the Sunset  
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  
Holy Holy Holy  
How Great is our God  
How Great Thou Art  
I'd Rather have Jesus  
In Christ Alone  
Just As I Am  
Loved with Everlasting Love  
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*  
Chasing Cars – *Snow Patrol*  
Circle of Life – *Elton John*  
Dear Darlin' – *Olly Murs*  
Feels Like Home – *Chantal Kreviazuk*  
Forever Young – *Alphaville*  
Gone too soon – *Michael Jackson*  
Goodbye my lover – *James Blunt*  
Hallelujah – *Leonard Cohen*  
I Don't Want to Miss a Thing – *Aerosmith*  
I will always love you – *Whitney Houston*  
Just Give Me A Reason – *Pink*  
Just The Way You Are – *Bruno Mars*  
Kiss From a Rose – *Seal*  
Lullaby (Goodnight My Angel) – *Billy Joel*  
Memories – *Barbra Streisand*  
My heart will go on – *Celine Dion*  
My Love – *Sia*  
My Way – *Frank Sinatra*  
Simply the Best – *Tina Turner*  
Somewhere over the rainbow – *Israel Kamakawiwo'ole*  
Stay – *Rhianna*  
Stay With Me – *Sam Smith*  
Tears in Heaven – *Eric Clapton*  
The Prayer – *Andrea Bocelli & Celine Dion*  
The way we were – *Barbra Streisand*  
Time to say Goodbye – *Andrea Bocelli & Sarah Brightman*  
To where you are – *Josh Groban*  
Unforgettable – *Nat "King" Cole*  
We'll Meet Again – *Vera Lynn*  
We're In Heaven – *DJ Sammy*  
What a Wonderful World – *Louis Armstrong*  
You'll be in my heart – *Phil Collins*  
You Raise Me Up – *Josh Groban*





# Prayers

## Christian Prayers

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.

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.

## 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.

## Celtic Prayer

I weave a silence onto my lips  
I weave a silence into my mind  
I weave a silence into my heart  
I close my ears to distractions  
I close my eyes to attractions  
I close my heart to temptations  
Calm me Lord as You stilled the storm  
Still me Lord, keep me from harm  
Let all the tumult within me cease  
Enfold me Lord in your peace.



## Prayers Of Comfort For The Family

*May be offered before the Committal*

Father God, we praise and thank You for the world in which we live and for the lives You have given us. We thank You for the new life offered to us in Jesus Christ, through His death on the cross and Your raising Him to life again.

We thank You for the life of \_\_\_\_\_ and all that they meant to us; for those things in their life which gave us glimpses of Your goodness and love. Especially we thank You for \_\_\_\_\_.

Thank you that their sins are forgiven, all suffering is past and that same love which now surrounds us also welcomes \_\_\_\_\_ into Your care.

Help us to be content to release \_\_\_\_\_ to You, that our grief may neither be overwhelming nor unending. Assure us of Your love, strengthen our trust in Your grace and grant us Your peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord

Almighty God, Father of all mercies and giver of all comfort; deal graciously, we pray, with those who mourn, that casting all their care on You, they may know the consolation of Your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Committals

We now commit the body of \_\_\_\_\_ to return to the earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

In the cycle of life and death the earth is replenished and life is eternally renewed.

\_\_\_\_\_ we entrust you to a God of love and grace, may your spirit be safe on your journey and may you find a resting place in peace in His care.

Tenderly, lovingly and reverently, we commit the body of \_\_\_\_\_ to nature's keeping.

We give thanks for their life, we remember with gratitude their deep love for their family, their sense of fun and their generous heart.

May we leave this place in the quietness of \_\_\_\_\_ memory, offering our love and support of their family.

We come now to a time when we will lay \_\_\_\_\_'s earthly body to rest. They have no further need of this bodily shell that has housed them for \_\_\_\_\_ years. We know their spirit is not here and that their body will be changed. \_\_\_\_\_ has not passed from life to death, but has passed to another life, through death.

We are assured in 1 Corinthians 15: 42- 44 & 52b – 53;

“So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, but what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body.

For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For this perishable body will put on immortality”.



## Farewells

We now say farewell to \_\_\_\_\_ knowing they are at last at peace and free from the discomfort and pain of their illness. Together we are thankful for the gift of the life \_\_\_\_\_ shared with us.

Even as we grieve \_\_\_\_\_ loss, let us surround each other with love and care. Let us go into the world, glad that we have loved, free to weep for the one we have lost, free to hold each other in our human frailty, empowered to live to the full as \_\_\_\_\_ has done, and to affirm the hope of human existence.

May you find comfort, richness and example through your memories of \_\_\_\_\_. May you find strength and support in your love for one another and may you find peace in your hearts.

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## Benedictions And Blessings

### Benedictions

Numbers 6:24-26  
1 Corinthians 1:3  
Galatians 6:18  
Ephesians 6:23-24  
Philippians 4:7  
Philippians 4:20  
Hebrews 13:20-21  
2 Peter 1:2  
2 John 1:3  
Jude 1:24-25

### An Irish Blessing

May the road rise to meet you,  
May the wind be always at your back.  
May the sun shine warm against your face.  
May the rain fall gently on your fields  
And until we meet again,  
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.

### A Gaelic 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.

## Funeral Director Details

Funeral Company  Phone

Funeral Director in charge  Mobile

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## Service Details

Date    Time

Venue  Viewing

Interment - Burial  Cremation  Not-Attended

Date    Time

Venue

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## Deceased Person Information

Full Name

Known As  Date of Birth

Place of Birth  Occupation

Name of Partner

Living  Deceased  Date of Death

Date of Marriage    Place of Marriage

Children  Names

Grandchildren  Names

Other Information

## Funeral Service Information

Minister / Celebrant

Reading / Poems

Eulogy

Tributes

Hymns / Music

Visual Tribute

Club Involvements

Cultural / Religious Observations

Other Items

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## Information From Family & Friends

As you reflect over the life of your loved one, is there anything you would like to share to help others appreciate them? Favourite memories or humorous anecdotes?

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## Personal & Social Information

Education

Profession / Trade

Church / Social / Community Involvements

Hobbies / Interests / Sports

Football Code & Team

Awards / Recognitions

Other Notes

# Notes



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# 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 / Building Society / other Financial Institutions
- Employer(s)
- Home Care Nursing Services / Meals on Wheels
- Insurance Companies
- Drivers Licence
- Hire Purchase Companies
- Australian Taxation Office / Australian Electoral Commission
- Gas / Electricity / Phone
- Medicare / Health Funds / Health Benefits Card
- Local Council
- Clubs and Social Organisations
- Doctor / Dentist / Chemist / other health providers
- Landlord / Real Estate Agent


The Australian Bereavement Register is a free service which can help to clear a deceased person's name from various mailing lists. You can register details with them online at [www.tabr.com.au](http://www.tabr.com.au)

## Grief care

For more details on coping with grief please visit our website.

You will find material on coping with and processing your grief, links to other resources that may be of help and contacts for various support services.

[www.bethelfunerals.com.au](http://www.bethelfunerals.com.au)



Our vision is to provide Christ like care for grieving families, and to financially support Australian missionaries.

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