



If someone you love dies in the next few days, of whatever cause, it will still be possible to have a small funeral held at a church or a crematorium led by a Church of England minister.

What happens at a funeral

During a funeral there are five things that happen:

1. You give thanks for all that the person meant to you
2. You find hope for tomorrow, drawing strength from the presence of friends and from God
3. The person is commended into God's care
4. The body is committed to be buried or cremated.
5. You say your last farewell to a person's physical body.

If you are unable to go to a funeral which is still happening with others attending

- If the funeral is live-streamed then you could watch online.
- Why not take a few moments to think, write, or draw some of your memories of the person? Later you may be able to share that with others at a special memorial service.
- You can still pray at home – [see here for some ideas](#).
- You could also read a poem or look at Psalm 23, which is read at every church funeral.
- [You can light a candle online by following this link](#).
- You could write a card to others who are missing the person you are grieving.
- Remember that when this crisis is over [and it will pass] there will always be services for remembering organised by the church and anyone can go to these services.
- It may also be possible for the local church to help you organise a formal or informal service to remember afterwards.

If you were unable to say goodbye

- This is particularly hard, and the best thing to do is to talk to someone about your feelings. Many of the things above will also help, [and there are prayers that might help here](#).

Again, [lighting a candle online](#) might help, and if you can go out, then pop into an open church to pray and think.

Holding important conversations

This might be a moment when you begin to think about funerals and about death. It could be a time to think about what you would want at a funeral, so do take time to talk about these issues with your own family and friends. [There are ways to do this which you can find here.](#)

And, if appropriate, make a note of your thoughts and ideas – even if there is no funeral service at the moment, you will be able to use these ideas to shape a special service in the future to give thanks for your special person.

A prayer for when you can't go to a funeral

Dear God,

Thank you for xxxx, for all that they meant to me and others.

I so wanted to say goodbye, to be alongside my friends and family.

Help me to know you are there,

Holding all my hopes,

Holding all those I Love, especially xxxx,

And holding me this day.

Be close this day with your peace and hope.

Amen.

Loving God,

Life is so strange just now – I don't know what to do.

Comfort me with your presence,

Be with all who grieve

And give us strength and courage to face this and all the days ahead.

Amen.

Impact on bereavement

Not being present when someone dies, and not being able to be at a funeral can have a big impact on grief and bereavement. Grief is a long and painful journey, and you may need additional support. [There are lots of good websites and some information here.](#)

Source URL: <https://www.churchofengland.org/sadness-grief-and-being-there>