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Why every Christian should have a will

CHURCH LEGACY
A lasting gift to your church

 **THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND**

For nearly 500 years the Church of England has encouraged people to make a will. Making a will and updating it regularly is the only way to ensure your wishes are fulfilled, giving you peace of mind that you can continue to support the family, friends and causes you love.

What is a will?

A will is something that we hope won't be needed for a very long time. Nevertheless, it's a vital document which looks after the people and causes you care about after you're gone.

Why now?

Everyone knows it's a good idea to make a will. But for many of us, it's one of those things we never quite get around to doing, and there's always a reason for putting it off.

Making a will

It really isn't difficult or complicated to make a will – or update an existing one.

1

Use the 'Preparing to visit your solicitor' form to help plan the meeting. Visit www.churchlegacy.org.uk/preparing

2

Find a Solicitor – ask your family/friends for local recommendations or try searching on www.lawsociety.org.uk

3

Make an appointment to see your solicitor.

Here are some of the reasons why you really should make a will, sooner rather than later.

You choose what happens

If you do not make a will, the law will decide who receives all your assets in accordance with pre-ordained rules. These unfortunately may not coincide with your own wishes.

You can take care of the children

If you have any children under the age of 18, you should appoint guardians to look after them in the event of both parents' death. If you don't name guardians for your children in your will, the courts will decide who will be given custody.

Your property is protected

If you and your partner are not married, he or she will not benefit from your estate unless you have specifically written it into a will.

You can reflect modern family life

Have you got married or divorced since you made a will? If so, your existing will may not be valid.

Remarriages can also complicate matters of inheritance and provision for children.

To reduce your inheritance tax bill

Even with recent changes in inheritance tax law, there may be large tax savings to be made by proper planning through your will.

To include a charitable gift

Once you have made provision for your loved ones, you may wish to include a gift in your will to your local church. How might your gift help meet the needs of future generations?

For peace of mind

Once you've made a will, you'll know that if the unthinkable were to happen, your estate would be in order for your family – a weight off your mind.

How much does a will cost?

A simple will costs around £199 + VAT and a set of mirrored wills around £250 + VAT.

If your affairs are complicated, it may cost more.

After you've made a will

Keep it somewhere safe and make sure your executors know where it is. It is recommended that you review your will every 5 years or whenever your personal circumstances change.

Thinking about life after death should not be difficult for Christians. Make sure you are prepared practically and spiritually, whatever your age; write a will and keep it up to date.

If you have any questions about making or reviewing your will, please contact the National Legacy Officer at www.churchlegacy.org.uk/contact-us