



FUNERALS IN BIGGAR KIRK

This Leaflet has been designed to give practical help to family members or friends who have the responsibility of planning the Christian funeral of a loved one.

For some, this will be the first time you have had to perform such a duty. This booklet tries to answer some of the questions you are likely to ask. We hope that we can alleviate some of the potential anxiety surrounding the situation you find yourself in.

At Biggar Kirk we are here to help you as much as we can. If having read this leaflet, you have any other questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

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There are many options for funeral services these days. If you would like a Christian funeral for your loved one whether that is because it would have been their wish or because it is what will give you the most comfort, then we would like to help you in organising the service either in the kirk, at the crematorium or simply at the graveside. If you would prefer a non-religious or Humanist funeral, your undertaker can put you in touch with the right people to help you with that type of service.

Arranging the Funeral

After the death of a loved one the usual first port of call would be the undertaker or funeral director. The undertaker will guide you through the process of registering the death and organising the crematorium or burial plot. If you wish to have a Christian funeral the undertakers will consult with and put you in touch with the minister. The minister will normally pay a visit to your home to talk about the arrangements for the funeral and anything else you would like to discuss.

Normally the funeral will be conducted by the incumbent minister. If, however, you or your loved one have a special relationship with another minister, consideration may be given to allow him or her to play a part in the the service. This needs to be discussed with the incumbent minister.

The Typical Running Order

The usual order of service for a funeral in Biggar Kirk is as below. This, of course, can be tailored to your own particular needs or desires, to be worked out together with the minister.

The shape of the service will usually look like this:

Welcome

Scripture Sentences

These are words of scripture to give comfort- usually chosen by the minister

Prayer of Approach to God

Hymn

Eulogy (sometimes called a Tribute)

This is where the loved one's story is told either chronologically or as a collection of memories or a combination of both. This can be delivered by one or

more members of the family, a family friend or the minister.

Address

The minister will briefly direct our thoughts to a passage of scripture that will encourage and comfort the congregation.

Prayers of Thanksgiving *for the life of the deceased and for the comfort of family and friends + optional Lord's Prayer*

Hymn

Commendation

This is where the minister commends the deceased and ourselves to God's merciful keeping.

Final Blessing

Photos, live-streaming and recorded music

We can organise for photos to be projected onto the screens in the kirk before or during the service.

We can also live-stream and video record the service for friends and family who are not able to attend in person.

If you would like special recorded music to be played either as people are assembling before the service or as the coffin is leaving after the service we would be happy to arrange that too.

Other services – The crematorium and the graveside

After the service in the Kirk or sometimes before there is usually a brief service of interment in a graveyard or crematorium. Sometimes the family will choose to have the whole service in the chapel of the crematorium or at the graveside. The minister is happy to conduct services in any of those places for you.

Printed Orders of Service

The undertaker will usually accommodate the printing of the orders of service. A printed order of service does not need to include all the details of the running order. Usually, the order of service will include the words of the hymns, photographs, and a vote of thanks to those who have joined you at the service.

Suggested Donations

These suggested donations apply only to a service in the kirk building. We would gladly receive any donation you might make for a crematorium or graveside service.

Use of Church premises (heat and light)	£150
Use of audio/visual equipment (E.g. Sound system, Slide show of photographs, videos and Livestreaming of the service for remoter viewers)	£50
Minister	There is no charge for the minister's service to you. You may, however, want to contribute to the over-all ministry of the church.
Organist Fee – this is paid directly to the organist and is not a donation. If in your service only recorded music is used. This fee does not apply.	£50-£70

Some Questions People Ask:

Cremation or burial?

This is an important question to consider. This may not be difficult if the deceased has let his or her wishes be known.

From a Christian point of view whether one is buried or cremated does not matter. We believe that the Lord raised us from the dust of the earth and he will in the fullness of time refashion the dust of our mortal bodies into his own likeness (*see Philippians 3:21*)

What should happen to my wife's ashes after the cremation?

Ashes can be scattered in a place that was special to you and your loved one or they may be interred (buried) in a church yard or memorial garden. The Council will help you make provision for a burial of ashes in the church yard or cemetery. Please see the minister if you would like a special service of interment for the ashes of your loved one.

The death in our family was the result of suicide. Is it possible to have a Christian funeral in such circumstances?

Absolutely. We will take great care to minister to the family and friends, who may be particularly traumatised because of the circumstances. (Please note, at the back of this leaflet is the address of an agency that can be contacted by relatives and friends after suicide.)

My sister did not attend church although she did believe. Can she still have a Christian funeral?

A Christian funeral is not the 'right' of members of the church only. As a Church we are here to serve our whole community with the goodnews of Jesus and that includes the goodnews that when we trust in the Lord, he will raise our mortal bodies to eternal life in his coming kingdom. We are happy to conduct a Christian funeral for anyone. We make no judgement about a person's eternal destiny. It is not our place to do so. We will honour every human being as made in the image of God. God alone is the judge of all the earth, and we are told in scripture that he is both compassionate and just.

My husband was not a Christian, but I am. Can we still have a Christian funeral?

A Christian funeral is not just for the deceased, but it also gives great comfort for the bereaved. Just as we said above in the answer to the previous question, our place is not to judge. We know that God is loving and compassionate towards all he has made and that includes your husband even in his unbelief. It may be that your husband, having heard and seen something of God's goodness through your witness in the end made his peace with God. That is in God's hands. Even in our uncertainty about such things, as believers, we can and should still celebrate God's goodness and put our hope in him. A Christian funeral is therefore fitting in such circumstances.

Should my young child attend the funeral?

This is one of those questions to which there is no simple answer. Parents should be able to judge what is best from their knowledge of their children and after discussing it with them. Explain what is going to happen and that people may be upset. Generally, children are more resilient than we imagine. They will have to face the reality of death in their lives, and this may be a real opportunity to deepen their understanding and their faith. If you would like some advice or if you would like the minister to speak with your child about these matters, he or she will be happy to do so. The agency **Child Bereavement** has some excellent resources to help support grieving children.

Is there disabled access into the church?

Yes. There is also a loop system for the hard of hearing. Please ask the minister about the best place to park for disabled access and seating instructions

Agencies That You May Find Helpful:

CRUSE Bereavement Support

Helpline 08088081677

Website: <https://www.cruse.org.uk/get-support/>

Child Bereavement UK

Helpline 08000288840

Website: <https://www.childbereavementuk.org/>

Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide

Helpline 0300 111 5065 Monday & Tuesday 9am – 5pm

Website: <https://uksobs.org/contact/>

Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society (SANDS)

Helpline 08081643332

Website: <https://www.sands.org.uk/>

Support After Murder and Manslaughter

Helpline: 01214722912

Website: <https://samm.org.uk/>

SSAFA Forces Help

Helpline: 08002606767

Website: <https://www.ssafa.org.uk/get-help/military-families/bereavement-support-groups>

Biggar Parish Church of Scotland, also known as 'Biggar Kirk', is a charity registered in Scotland: SC 000333