

'We surround you with our love and with our prayers..' These beautiful and poignant words are often spoken by the minister as we all gather around a departed loved one and commend them to God and his eternal love and care.

They are also words that are important to us at St Andrew's as we walk with you at this sad time of loss. We feel very privileged to be welcomed into your lives and especially as we help in creating the right kind of service through which to remember and give thanks for your loved one.

All funerals are personal and reflect the life of a unique individual. Your loved one may have left instructions as to the details of the service and this will be an invaluable framework as we plan the service with you. If not, then we will work with you to create the right kind of service.

Whether you hold the service in church with committal elsewhere afterwards or wholly at a local crematorium, we will remember God's presence with us and God's love for each one of us. The hymns, readings and prayers that are chosen will remind us of God's care and also the hope of eternal life through the death and resurrection of His Son Jesus Christ.

We hope that the information included in this leaflet will be a source of hope and encouragement to you over the days to come.

Words of Comfort

God of all life,
when all there is in our lives
is the empty space where the beloved was
and nothing can fill it
and we want nothing to fill it
because nothing, and no one can take the
place of the beloved,
and we walk drearily through the days,
dragging one foot after the other
and there is no joy in anything,
give us your strength in our sorrow,
your presence in the absence we feel,
your rest that we may rise again to new life,
and your hope, that in death
we are not divided. Amen.

Kathy Galloway

' O God who brought us to birth,
and in whose arms we die;
in our grief and shock
contain and comfort us;
embrace us with your love,
give us hope in our confusion,
and grace to let go into new life,
through Jesus Christ. Amen.'

Janet Morley

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.
I do not give as the world gives. Do not let
your hearts be troubled, and do not let them
be afraid....
John 14 v 27

Continuing Care after the Funeral

You may find yourself so busy with practical details and arrangements between the death and the funeral that you do not experience the full sense of your loss until later.

Grieving is a natural and important part of coming to terms with and healing this loss and it may continue for several months. As a Church community we will try to help.

One of our bereavement team will contact you about six weeks after the funeral to see how you are getting on. This is often a difficult time when the cards and messages of sympathy have stopped coming, and you are just beginning to adjust to life without your loved one.

You will also be invited to attend a Service to Remember Lost Loved Ones which is held at the beginning of December each year.

There is a weekly informal support group which meets every Wednesday from 2.00 pm to 3.30 pm in the Rainbow Shop (1 Main Street) when you can enjoy the company of friends over a cup of coffee or tea. You are very welcome to attend - just come along.

In addition, we warmly invite you to join with us Sunday by Sunday as we worship God and celebrate our faith. True comfort is to be found in the promises of Jesus Christ, in the hope that he gives us, and in the belief that your loved one is safe in the hands of God.

The Book of Remembrance

Some families find it a comfort to mark the anniversary of a loved one's death, and so we maintain a Book of Remembrance so that the name of your loved one can be recorded.

The pages of the books are turned for each day of the year, so you can come to Church on the anniversary of your loved one's death to see their name, to say a prayer, perhaps to bring flowers, and to find comfort in the peace of God's presence.

Please contact the church office if you wish to visit on a particular day.

Worship at St Andrew's

We offer a warm and caring welcome to anyone who wishes to join us, especially for our times of Worship together.

At 9.00 am we gather for a reflective service of Holy Communion with more traditional music and hymns.

At 11.00 am we have a less formal worship gathering with more modern music. On the second, fourth and fifth Sundays we have All Age Services. On the first and third Sundays there are age specific groups for the children and young people whilst the adults meet in church.

At all services members of our Wholeness and Healing Team are always available to offer a listening ear and a safe place to talk and to share if you are struggling in any way. They are also available to come to your home if you feel that you would prefer this.

On Thursdays at 9.30 am we hold a quiet reflective service of Holy Communion. Again, there is always someone there to spend personal time with you.

How to contact us

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**St Andrew's Church
Countesthorpe**

*'A worshipping, praying, witnessing,
discipling, caring and serving
community of faith.'*

