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“For those Attending” A short statement for practical use about Christian belief and the content of a Christian Funeral. Choosing integrity with care and sensitive evangelism.

The context of the brief statement, “For those Attending.”

1. Many people still contact the Christian Church to conduct Services related to rites of passage. Amid the increasing secularisation of the community, baptism and funerals still provide an opportunity to relate to people at their point of need.
2. With limited knowledge of the Christian faith, sometimes enquirers assume that the church operates a public service, a suitable negotiated event that is based on the desires of the family.
3. Within the context of this significant time for the family that is often overlaid with a full range of expectations and emotions, the church has the privilege of exercising both supportive care and a discreet evangelism.
- 4.

How to use, “For those Attending”**(a) During the initial meeting with a family or relative.**

Reading through the statement at the out-set of negotiations will help to explain Christian belief and provide some direction for content of the service. It may raise the question of what the enquirer really believes about life and death or it may help to clarify how helpful or appropriate a Christian Service may or may not be.

(b) As people enter the church on the day of the funeral a copy of “For those Attending” may be distributed. (See below)

Before the service commences there is usually a quiet moment when people are ready to sit and reflect. This short statement can help to centre people’s thoughts in readiness for the Christian funeral and Thanksgiving

E A (Ted) Curnow : September 2013

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For Those Attending.

People have sensed the mystery of death from the beginning of time. The pain and sadness of losing a loved one or someone we have shared life with is a sacred moment. Every society marks the passage from life through death to pay tribute to the deceased person. Today we do this through this service.

The wounds of grief need time and care to heal. The funeral may help this process, by enabling us to acknowledge our loss as we give thanks for the life of the person who has died, to say our last farewell, and to begin to take up life once more.

Christians believe in God, the Source and Giver of life. They also experience both the pain of separation and an underlying certainty. This quiet assurance arises from Jesus Christ who was described as “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” He laid down his life for us; He knew death yet triumphed over its finality and was raised by God to new life. Christians affirm the presence of the Spirit of Christ who helps them in their weakness. Yet all mortals still face death. Those who put their trust in Christ share the sufferings of their Lord, even in the midst of God’s love and care.

A Christian funeral proclaims Christian assurance in the face of death- The resurrection of Jesus Christ can become the promise of our own resurrection.

The Service in Outline is as follows:

We gather in the presence of God
to remember the person who has died.
We listen and respond to the Word of God.
and proclaim the death and resurrection of Christ.
We recall, pay tribute and give thanks for the life
now ended, and pray for those in need.
We leave the deceased in God’s care
and we continue life’s journey.