

## **Funerals (update 2.4.20)**

Funerals can, and should continue in the name of the Methodist Church as part of our pastoral response to the coronavirus crisis. However, Methodist Church buildings should not be used for funerals at this time. Simple graveside/ crematorium services only please.

The minister or trained local person under the direction of the Superintendent should make the arrangements by remote media (telephone, skype etc).

The number of people attending a funeral should be kept to a minimum - only immediate family members may attend (if the crematorium allows) – that is, spouse or partner, parents and children, keeping social distancing in the prescribed way. Those over the age of 70 and those with an underlying health condition are strongly discouraged from attending any funeral in the present circumstances.

The service may be broadcast via social media or recorded to be shared later. The minister should explain to people what is happening (especially those not physically present).

The service should include prayers and a message of Christian hope.

There is no requirement for a musician to be present.

Do not use communal hymn books or service books.

People should avoid social contact, such as hugging.

There should be no social gathering such as a wake before or after the service.

Consideration should be given to offering a memorial service when the emergency is over.

Local councils will have guidance around what is possible or permissible in crematoria and cemeteries.

We have also provided an at-home service for those who cannot attend a funeral.