

AN INTRODUCTION TO FUNERALS

This book is about funerals, so first things first. What is a funeral?

A funeral is . . .



A TIME FOR GOODBYE.

A funeral gives us a chance to say a special goodbye to a person who has died.

How do you say goodbye to someone you'll see again soon?

How do you say goodbye to someone you won't see for a long time?

A TIME FOR FRIENDS.

Friends need each other and help each other at a funeral.

Who are your close friends?

How do your friends support one another during hard times?

How do you see the friends at this funeral helping each other?

A TIME FOR FAMILY.

When someone dies, their whole family is changed. A funeral helps them say goodbye, not just to the person who died, but also to the way their family used to be.

Who is in your family?

How does your family support one another during hard times?

How do you see families at this funeral helping each other?

A TIME FOR GOD'S PROMISE OF NEW LIFE.

God comforts us with the message that Jesus' resurrection means new life.

What or who do you see at the funeral that reminds you of new life?

SANCTUARY SEARCH: PART TWO

This scene shows another funeral in a sanctuary with many stained-glass windows that show Christian symbols of faith. Color the windows and other parts of the sanctuary.

Columbarium: A columbarium is a structure with different compartments. Each one holds someone's ashes.

Ashes: Before they die, some people choose to have their body cremated after they have died. Cremation means turning to ash. A person's ashes can be buried, kept in an urn, placed in a columbarium, or spread in that person's favorite places.

Urn: Sometimes a person arranges to be cremated after they die. The remains of their body are ashes. An urn is a special container that holds the ashes of a person who was cremated.

Fish: Early Christians used the fish symbol as a secret way to identify each other. Why? Taking the first letter of each Greek word for "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior" spelled the word "ICHTHYS," the Greek word for fish.



Anchor: The anchor was used in ancient times as a symbol of safety and a reminder that Jesus is our anchor.

Butterfly: Butterflies are a symbol of new life.

Chi Rho: Chi (X) and Rho (P) are the first two letters of the name "Jesus Christ" in Greek.

Crown: The crown represents Jesus' role as king.

Celtic Knot: Celtic knots are loops without a beginning or end. They represent eternity.

Lily: Lilies are a type of flower that represents rebirth and hope.

Dove: The dove is a symbol of the Holy Spirit.

Shepherd's Staff: Jesus described himself as the Good Shepherd, watching over his flock. The shepherd's staff is a reminder of how Jesus leads and protects us, his sheep.

ONE MORE THING

If you see a symbol that is not listed here, what do you think the symbol might mean? (You could ask one of the church leaders about this after the funeral.)