

GUIDE TO FUNERAL PREPARATIONS

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FOR YOU, ABOUT GRIEF

You have just lost a person dear to you. We are sorry for your loss.

You will have to handle many practical matters while the shock is still fresh. This brochure is intended as a checklist for you of all the things you need to do. We hope it will help.

What is important to remember is that you are not alone. You may turn to your family and friends, the acquaintances of the deceased and all the various people who can help you with the funeral arrangements.

Grief is a friend in a difficult time; it is a means for saying goodbye to a person dear to you. Grief and longing can also be addressed through action. Also, grief and remembrance do not end at the funeral. In many cases, that is when the proper grieving starts. The longing may last for months, even years. Some of the pain will never go away, and you will have to learn to live with it. You may rely on family and friends for support and turn to a parish counselling group, read books about loss and grief, go to church and take communion. Do not remain alone with your grief!

God in His love raised Jesus from the dead. With this, he showed that life does not end in the darkness of the grave but that love carries us to a new life. In our moments of grief and pain, we may pray and have faith in our dear departed finding a new home in heaven.

Difficult times may bring us closer to God. He will give you strength to carry out the difficult practical tasks you face and His blessing in your new life situation.

Vantaa Parishes

BEFORE THE FUNERAL

Funeral arrangements are the responsibility of the family of the deceased. Remember that you may handle the arrangements yourself with the parish office or cemetery office, or you may hire a private undertaker to handle some or all of the arrangements.

Farewell at the hospital

If the deceased passed away at Peijas Hospital or Katriina Hospital, you may visit the ward to say goodbye. Later, family members may view the deceased in the hospital chapel, either before or after placement in the coffin.

A 'prayer of departure' may be held at the chapel. The hospital chaplain may participate if the family members so desire. This must be agreed in advance. You may contact the hospital chaplain through the hospital staff or directly by phone.

Booking the funeral and the grave plot

The burial permit, which is issued by a physician, is an essential document for arranging a funeral. This permit must be delivered to the parish, after which the deceased may be buried or cremated. This is the procedure even if the deceased was not a Church member.

Book the following at the parish office of the parish where the deceased was resident:

- place and date of the funeral
- priest and organist
- viewing of the deceased (if desired)
- room for the reception (if held in parish premises)

The following matters may be agreed at a parish cemetery office:

- a funeral without a priest from a Lutheran parish
- viewing of the deceased at the cemetery chapel (if desired)
- depositing the urn
- matters concerning the grave plot
- matters concerning care of the grave

Private undertakers

The following may be arranged with a private undertaker:

- coffin or urn
- dressing the deceased for placement in the coffin
- transport of the deceased

Family members may contract a private undertaker to manage all the other arrangements of the funeral if they so wish.

Burial practice and cemeteries

Vantaa Parishes have four cemeteries of their own:

- St Lawrence Church Cemetery
- Ruskeasanta Cemetery
- Hämeenkylä Church Cemetery
- Korso Church Cemetery

A non-denominational cemetery is jointly maintained with the Helsinki Parish Union and is located at Honkanummi Cemetery. Block 79V in the non-denominational cemetery at Honkanummi is reserved for burials from Vantaa.

A deceased person may be buried in an urn grave plot, a memorial grove or a coffin grave plot. If you wish to deposit the ashes of a cremated person anywhere else than in a cemetery, you must get the permission of the owner or holder of the property.

Urn burial areas

There are urn grave plots at St Lawrence Church, Ruskeasanta and Hämeenkylä Cemeteries. Urn grave plots are assigned for a period of 25 years at a time.

Memorial grove

A memorial grove is a uniform burial area where every deceased person has a burial location. There is a memorial grove in each of the four cemeteries in Vantaa.

A burial in a memorial grove is different from a burial in an urn grave plot in that the ashes or urn of the deceased will be deposited in the memorial grove by parish staff without the presence of the family. The names of deceased persons buried in the memorial grove are marked on standardised name plates on a memorial wall. At Korso Church Cemetery there is also a book of burials. Flowers and candles should be brought to the shrine provided for the purpose.

Coffin grave plots

There are coffin grave plots at St Lawrence Church Cemetery and Ruskeasanta Cemetery. Coffin grave plots are assigned for a period of 25 years at a time. New coffin grave plots are only given to Vantaa residents.

If your family already has a family grave, the deceased person may be buried in it if he/she is entitled to be buried in it and if there are free coffin spaces in the grave. Check with the cemetery office. Urns may be deposited in coffin grave plots.

Burial of a deceased resident elsewhere

If the deceased person was not resident in Vantaa, the available burials are an urn grave plot, memorial grove, memorial garden or existing family grave. New coffin grave plots are only given to Vantaa residents.

Burial elsewhere

If the deceased person is to be buried somewhere else than in Vantaa, please contact the local parish or a private undertaker concerning the arrangements.

FUNERAL

Funeral service venue

The funeral service is usually performed within two or three weeks of death. In Vantaa, the service may be performed at the cemetery chapel at St Lawrence Church Cemetery or Ruskeasanta Cemetery, at various churches, at a hospital chapel, at the cemetery or at the burial shelter (*Levähdyspaikka*) at St Lawrence Church Cemetery.

Vantaa parishes usually perform funeral services on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. The use of churches and chapels for a funeral service is free for parish members. For deceased persons who are not members of a Lutheran or Orthodox parish, a fee will be charged for the use of the chapel or church.

Chapels at hospitals and Myyrinkoti

There is a small chapel at Katriina Hospital and Peijas Hospital. The funeral service may be performed at a hospital chapel by the hospital chaplain or a priest from the parish of the deceased.

- The chapel at Peijas Hospital seats about 25. An electric piano and CD player are available. To book the chapel, contact the info desk at Peijas Hospital.
- The chapel at Katriina Hospital seats about 15. A CD player is available. A pall to cover the coffin is also available. To book the chapel, contact the info desk at Katriina Hospital.
- At Myyrinkoti home, there is a quiet room where the funeral service may be performed. The room seats about 8. To book the room, contact the Myyrinkoti staff.

Priest and organist from the parish of residence

Usually, the funeral service is performed by a priest from the parish in which the deceased was last resident. If you wish to have a specific priest perform the service, you may agree on this with the priest yourself.

The organist is also provided by the parish of residence. If the priest performing the service is not from Vantaa, you may request an organist from Tikkurila Parish.

The priest will contact the family of the deceased person before the funeral. You may discuss the deceased person and anything related to his/her death, and also agree on the order of the funeral service.

If you have music requests, you may discuss them with the priest or organist beforehand.

Order of the funeral service

The basic order of the funeral service is the same for both coffin burial and cremation.

The parish provides a flower and candles in the church or chapel. Family members should be seated on the right side of the aisle, on the side of the deceased person's heart. The service includes Bible readings, prayer, a eulogy and music. The burial rites include the priest tracing a cross on the coffin with sand and pronouncing the funeral sentences. The congregation stands for the funeral sentences. The service concludes with a prayer, the Lord's Prayer said together, a blessing and a final hymn.

Flowers may be laid at the beginning or end of the funeral service. You should agree with the priest as to when the flowers will be laid. In a cremation, the flowers should be laid at the chapel. In a coffin burial where the deceased person is taken to the grave for burial, it is recommended that the flowers be laid at the graveside, weather permitting, especially if there is a large congregation and it is likely that laying the flowers will take a long time.

Example of the order of a funeral service:

Prelude

Hymn

Laying of flowers

Funeral sentences

Hymn

Postlude

The coffin may be covered with a cloth known as a pall for the duration of the funeral service. A pall is a festive cloth related to the alb that is worn for baptism and first communion. You may reserve a pall at the cemetery office.

Family members may copy or print a programme for the service, showing the name of the deceased, his/her dates of birth and death, the order of service and the lyrics of the hymns to be sung in the chapel and at the graveside. Churches and chapels have hymnals available. We recommend that if photographs are taken, there should only be one photographer. You may agree with the priest to have a separate moment for photographs at the beginning or end of the service.

If the deceased is to be buried in a coffin grave plot, the coffin is to be carried out of the chapel at the end of the funeral service. There should be 6 or 8 coffin bearers, who may be family members, friends or colleagues. Private undertakers can supply coffin bearers. Both men and women may carry the coffin.

The coffin bearers should take their places around the coffin at the end of the funeral service and spend a moment in silence facing the coffin, then carry the coffin out during the postlude. Outside, the coffin is to be placed on a trolley. The parish caretaker and the priest who performed the service walk at the head of the cortège, followed by the coffin and its bearers. Immediate family members follow the coffin, and they in turn are followed by other family members and friends. After the coffin bearers have lowered the coffin into the grave, they stand still for a moment of silence as a sign of respect for the deceased person and the family. Men should remove their headwear for the moment of silence, women should not.

Once the coffin has been lowered into the grave and sand and flowers sprinkled into the grave (if any), a cover is placed over the grave. If flowers are laid at this point, family members should do so first. Flowers may have attached a card or a ribbon with the name of the person(s) laying the flowers and a brief memorial message such as a Bible or hymnal quote. You do not have to read the memorial message out loud if it is difficult for you. A hymn or spiritual song may be sung at the graveside.

If you want flowers to be laid at the chapel or church, you should mention this at the cemetery office or parish office when you are booking the venue for the service. Sufficient time must be allowed for the laying of flowers at a church or chapel. Often these venues are in high demand, and it is unfortunate if a service is disrupted by the arrival of the next funeral.

If the deceased is to be cremated, the coffin is usually left at the chapel after the service. Family members should take their flowers to the future grave plot or to the memorial grove. Family members may collect the ashes of the deceased (or request a private undertaker to collect them) at the Honkanummi Crematorium about one week after the service. The urn may then be buried at the cemetery at a time agreed in advance. The ashes may also be buried without the urn, in which case a temporary urn provided by the Honkanummi Crematorium may be used. You may agree on the burial at the same time as you book the venue for the service.

At a funeral service for **a deceased person who has already been cremated**, the service and burial are performed on the same occasion. The service follows the same order of service as described above. After the service, the ashes of the deceased are conveyed to the grave plot. The grave is then covered and the flowers laid. The funeral service for a deceased person who has already been cremated may be performed at the graveside.

Reception

The reception after the funeral is usually held at home or at a parish venue. To inquire about rents for parish venues and to book the venues, contact the parish office. Catering at the reception is the responsibility of family members.

There is usually a memorial table at the reception, with a photo of the deceased person surrounded with flowers and candles. In addition to the catering, the reception usually includes the reading of messages of condolence sent to the family, hymn singing, brief reminiscences by attendees and/or performances of poetry or music. If you wish to have the priest or organist attend the reception, please agree on this with them beforehand.

Burial of non-members

If a church service is desired for a deceased person who was not a member of the Church, family members may contact the parish office of the parish within the area of which the deceased person was resident. If the deceased person had expressed as his/her desire while living that he/she did not wish to have a Christian burial, then no funeral service will be provided.

A funeral for a non-member that does not involve the presence of a Lutheran priest and organist may be held at the chapel at Ruskeasanta Cemetery or St Lawrence Church Cemetery, at the graveside, or at the burial shelter (*LevähdySPAikka*) at St Lawrence Church Cemetery. Contact the cemetery office to book the venue.

For deceased persons who were not members of a Lutheran or Orthodox parish, a fee is charged according to the current tariff.

Deceased persons who were not members of the Church but who were resident in Vantaa at the time of death are entitled to a grave at a cemetery of the Vantaa Parishes.

AFTER THE FUNERAL

Notice in church

The name of the deceased person is usually read out at the regular service in the parish where he/she was resident on the Sunday following the funeral. A prayer is also said for the deceased person and his/her family. However, the name of a deceased person may only be read out if a family member has given consent in writing. This consent may be given at the parish office when booking the funeral venue.

Fees and estate inventory

The parish charges fees for the grave plot, burial, cremation and care for the grave. The services of the priest and organist and the use of the church are free of charge for parish members. However, if a priest from another parish is invited to perform the funeral service, you should be prepared to compensate the priest for travel costs. For deceased persons who were not members of a Lutheran or Orthodox parish, a fee is charged for the use of the church or chapel.

Burial in a memorial grove or garden costs less than a coffin grave plot. The current tariff is available at cemetery offices.

A funeral also involves the costs of the coffin, urn, transport and death notices, and possibly rent and catering for the reception.

You may apply to the city social services for a funeral allowance. Advice regarding pensions and allowances are available from offices of the Social Insurance Institution (KELA).

The estate inventory must be carried out within three months of the death. This requires official certificates (*virkatodistus*) and family histories, which should be ordered in good time.

Care for the grave

Care for the grave is the responsibility of the family.

You may sign a floral care agreement for the grave at the cemetery office, for one or five years at a time.

Memorial

There is no hurry in acquiring a memorial for the grave. It is not even necessary. However, if you do wish to have a gravestone or memorial on the grave, it must conform to regulations. The plans for the memorial, with dimensions, must be submitted to the cemetery supervisor for approval before you purchase the memorial. For further information, contact the cemetery office.

Grave possession

A grave plot, whether a coffin grave plot or an urn grave plot, is assigned for a period of 25 years, after which the term of possession may be extended by agreement.

CUSTOMS

Death notice

Often a death is announced by placing a death notice in a newspaper. Such a notice should include the name of the deceased person, information on family relations, date and place of birth and date and place of death; it may also include rank, title or occupation. Family members are usually listed next, followed by a Bible quote, a stanza from a hymn, a poem or other memorial message.

The death notice may double as the invitation to the funeral service and/or reception, or alternatively the death notice may be placed after a funeral as a thank-you for participation.

Flag at half-staff

It is customary to fly the national flag at half-staff at the deceased person's home and at the reception venue on the day of the funeral. The flag should be raised and then lowered to half-staff at 08.00, and raised back up after the funeral service. The flag may be flown at half-staff even on national flag days.

COPING WITH GRIEF

Dealing with grief is often a heavy process. In addition to your family members, you may turn to parish social workers and priests if you want to talk about your thoughts and feelings about death.

Support groups

Vantaa parishes regularly arrange meetings for support groups, where you can discuss your loss with people who have had the same experience. There are dedicated support groups for instance for parents who have lost a child and for family members of persons who have committed suicide. Support groups are announced in parish newsletter and at the Vantaa Parishes website, www.vantaanseurakunnat.fi.

Other help

There is a national helpline maintained by the Church and staffed by trained volunteers. Helpline staff are bound by confidentiality.

The helpline is open

- in Finnish at 01019 0071 Sun to Thu 18.00–01.00, Fri and Sat 18.00–03.00

- in Swedish at 01019 0072 every night 20.00–00.00

There is a Church chat on Facebook set up as a secure chat that is not saved on Facebook. You may talk to Church staff in confidence; they are bound to confidentiality by their office.

People to talk to in confidence are also available online at www.verkkoauttaminen.fi/palvelevanetti

Books about grief

Alex Ben: Voimia suruun - Tie toipumiseen, 2015

Bendt Ingela: Kun pieni lapsi kuolee, 2000

Castren Helena: Surukodin kirja 2011

Järveläinen Matti: Elämä jatkuu. Surukodin kirja, 2004

Kanerva Marjaana, Kostamo Ritva: Läheinen on poissa, 2015

Korpela Salla: Hän on poissa. Opas hautajaisten järjestäjälle, 2005

KÄPY ry: Kun lapsi kuolee, 2011

Lempiäinen Pentti: Pyhät toimitukset, 2004

Lindqvist Martti: Kuolemaa väkevämpi, 1994

Lindqvist Martti: Surun tie, 1999

Nieminen Taru: Sydämessä muisto, 2015

Olkinuora Hilikka, Vuorenmaa Jaakko: Surun vuosi, 2009

Pojjula Soili: Suru, sydämen matka, 2004

Raittila Anna-Maija, Kaskinen Anna-Mari: Ota hänet vastaan, 2008

Ranssi-Matikainen Hanna, Juvonen Riikka: Jospa ukki nukkuukin.

Suomen hautaustoimistojen liitto r.y. 2002

Teinilä Mari: Lopun elämää, 2006. (Itsemurhan tehneiden omaisille)

Psalm 23

*The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.
He makes me lie down in green pastures,
he leads me beside quiet waters,
he refreshes my soul.
He guides me along the right paths
for his name's sake.
Even though I walk
through the darkest valley,
I will fear no evil,
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff,
they comfort me.
You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.
You anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely your goodness and love will follow me
all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord
forever.*

CHECKLIST

Matters to be agreed with the parish

- book the venue and date for the funeral service
- book the priest and organist, book a time for discussion
- funeral bells and notice of death in church
- book the venue for the reception (if any)
- order the family history document and official certificate (*virkatodistus*) for the estate inventory
- select the grave plot and obtain information
- use of the pall to cover the coffin
- coffin bearers in case of a coffin burial (6 or 8)
- urn burial time and meeting place
- grave care agreement (if any)
- support and crisis help (if any)

Matters to be agreed with a private undertaker

- coffin, urn
- dressing the deceased
- transport

Matters that you need to take care of or agree with a private undertaker

- announcement and invitations
- flowers
- music at the funeral service
- catering for the reception
- programme at the reception
- death notices
- programme leaflets
- photography
- flag at half-staff
- transporting the ashes from the crematory to the cemetery
- persons to be present when the ashes are buried
- memorial
- estate inventory
- thank-you notes or notice

St Lawrence Church Cemetery
Hämeenkylä Church Cemetery

Korso Church Cemetery
Ruskeasanta Cemetery

VANTAA PARISHES

Cemetery office

St Lawrence Church Cemetery
Pappilankuja 5
tel. 09 8306 220
weekdays 09.00–15.00
vantaa.hautausoimi@evl.fi

PARISH OFFICES

Hakunila parish

Hakunilantie 48, tel. 09 8306 500

Hämeenkylä parish

Auratie 3, tel. 09 8306 450

Korso parish

Merikotkantie 4, tel. 09 8306 550

Rekola parish

Kustaantie 22, tel. 09 8306 700

Tikkurila parish

Unikkotie 5 B, tel. 09 8306 717
venue bookings tel. 09 8306 226

Vantaa Swedish parish

Stationsvägen 12 B,
tel. 09 8306 294, 09 8306 262

Vantaankoski parish

Uomatie 1, tel. 09 8306 440

CEMETERIES

St Lawrence Church Cemetery

Pappilankuja 5, tel. 050 573 6342

Ruskeasanta Cemetery

Ruskeasannantie 2, tel. 0500 514 941

Hämeenkylä Church Cemetery

Auratie 3, caretaker tel. 050 382 3400

Korso Church Cemetery

Merikotkantie 4, caretaker tel. 050 590 3496

Honkanummi Non-denominational Cemetery

Vanha Porvoontie 225, office tel. 09 2340 2900

HOSPITAL INFO DESKS

Peijas Hospital tel. 09 471 67371

Katriina Hospital tel. 09 839 331

Hospital chaplains

Peijas hospital chaplains

tel. 050 3568 144 and 050 3055 307

Katriina hospital chaplain

tel. 050 3818 779

Further information: www.vantaanseurakunnat.fi

Request contact: www.vantaanseurakunnat.fi/perhejuhlal

Vantaa Parishes communications 2016

www.vantaanseurakunnat.fi