



EXTRA: Bishop Andrew's Funeral (23.3.26)

Age range: Primary

Theme: Following the announcement in the last few weeks of the death of our Diocesan Bishop, Bishop Andrew Watson, we wanted to create some materials for schools to use, as we normally would in response to sad events. **This extra resource is designed to be used on the day of his funeral and service of thanksgiving, at Guildford Cathedral, on Monday 23rd March, at 12pm.**

We anticipate that these materials might be more suitable for certain groups of pupils e.g. those who had been confirmed by Bishop Andrew, or had met him, although we leave this up to you to decide for your school's context.

We recognise that it is probably unlikely that you will be able to meet at this exact time, and so the resources could be used at any time on that day. It would help if you were to have a real candle to light during the time – especially if you have one of the Leavers' Candles. We are very mindful that using these resources will depend very much on your context and on circumstances that may be challenging within your school community. And of course it is perfectly OK NOT to use them as well!

This is obviously a very serious and significant moment for Bishop Andrew's family, friends and colleagues and so we want to demonstrate in these resources our gift to them of wanting to stand with them in this moment of grief and goodbyes. And so, we offer the opportunity for you to literally do this – to stand together for a few moments of silence – as part of the script. This resource about Bishop Andrew may trigger memories of grief for children and adults in your school community, so as always, please exercise all the usual precautions before delivering – and adapt for the context of your school family.



How does this link to your school's Christian vision & values?

Please make good use of your school's vision and values to help to give pupils strategies to balance loss with gratitude; to accept that grief is sometimes the price we pay for love, and to appreciate that the gift of being part of a community is that we can help each other through challenging times in life.

Resources:

- There are no extra resources for this collective worship. There is a prayer that we include on slide 14 at the end of the PowerPoint which was written by Bishop Paul; this can also be found on cards next to the book of condolence, which is located in the Cathedral, as pictured within the slides. Anyone is welcome to visit if it helps them, or if they wish to leave messages for Bishop Andrew's family.
- As always, words in **bold** indicate that you need to click to bring up a picture.

Gathering:

Slide 1: Flickering candle stilling exercise

Use the stilling slide if desired, but in silence as you start the collective worship.

Slide 2:

Leader: As we gather together today....

ALL:we bring our thoughts and our hearts into this sacred space.



Engaging:

Slide 3: Today is Bishop Andrew's funeral. And in our very short time together today, we will mark this moment together.

Slide 4: In the cathedral that Bishop Andrew loved, hundreds of people will gather today to give thanks for his life, with many thousands more across the Diocese and across the world, joining the service as it is livestreamed.

It will be a special service of remembering, where people who knew Bishop Andrew and loved him will stand with his family and say goodbye.

Christian funerals are a strange mix of tears and joy, for all sorts of reasons.

Tears because it is very natural that saying goodbye in this way is sad.

But also, joyful, because as a Christian, Bishop Andrew believed that death is not the end; that he is now 'at home' with God. He spoke about this a lot in the letters that he wrote to the churches and schools in the Diocese in his final days.

Before Jesus' death on the cross, he spoke these words to his disciples: **'Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God. And trust in me. There are many rooms in my Father's house.....I am going there to prepare a place for you.'**

Slide 5: The service that Bishop Andrew planned with his family will be full of hymns, music and words that he loved: words which meant a lot to him in the final weeks of his life. All the words speak of his profound trust in God and his gratitude for God's goodness in his life. One of the pieces that will be sung is based on



the words of a very famous Psalm written by David, the Shepherd-King. In this psalm, David talks about his confidence that God will take care of him no matter what happens in life, and ends with these words:

Slide 6: Surely your goodness and love will be with me all the days of my life. And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

....I wonder how these words might bring comfort to those who gather to share in Bishop Andrew's funeral, and to his friends and family?.....

....I wonder what there might be in these words for us today, as we also share in these moments?....

Slide 7: Responding and words of worship

Leavers' Candle *NB this version doesn't flicker! If you don't have your own candle to light, then use the slide at the beginning.*

There are 2 options to choose from here.

You might remember that Bishop Andrew gave schools a candle at last year's Leavers' Services. We're going to light it now and have a few moments of quiet reflection.

Option 1: You might simply want to watch the flame flicker and use the stillness to pray or to think.

Option 2: People often light candles to help them to remember people, and today, we are going to do this here – to show that we are standing with Bishop Andrew's family in their sadness. *[You may also want to invite pupils and adults to stand up for this serious moment]*

Slide 8: An Easter Blessing, as a prayer *select which words are appropriate

The words of this Easter blessing will be / were* spoken over the congregation at the funeral, and we use them now at the end of our time together, as a prayer over us, to send us out in hope. You might want to just listen to the words, or take them into your heart:

Slide 9: God the Father, by whose love Jesus was raised from the dead, open to you who believe the gates of everlasting life.

Slide 10: God the Son, who in bursting the grave has won a glorious victory, give you joy as you share the Easter faith.

Slide 11+: God the Holy Spirit, whom the risen Lord breathed into his disciples, empower you and fill you with Christ's peace.

Slide 12: Amen

+This image shows the dove, one of the symbols of the Holy Spirit, from the Cathedra (the Bishop's Chair) in Guildford Cathedral, which is the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit. Bishop Andrew would have used this chair during services.

Slide 13: Sending

We are going to use some more traditional words from funeral services to end our time together. The words remind us of Bishop Andrew's belief that as a Christian, death is not the end. The words that people often say are: 'May he rest in peace and rise in glory!' So, I invite you to say the words 'and rise in glory' when I say, 'May he rest in peace....'

Leader: As we leave this place & time of remembrance for Bishop Andrew, may he rest in peace...

All:and rise in glory!

[NB If you feel you need to, remind children of who they can talk to in school if they want to.]

To listen to:

Bishop Andrew was a great musician, and music that he loved and music that he wrote will be used during the service – some of it played by his own family. We include some links here to recordings of these, which you might like to play as children arrive and depart.

Edvard Grieg: ['Notturmo' from Lyric Pieces Op.54](#) (Bishop Andrew's daughter Hannah will be playing this in the service)

Franz Schubert: [Psalm 23](#)



Stuart Townend and Keith Getty: [In Christ Alone](#) will be the last hymn in the service
This version of Psalm 23 will not be used in the service, but may provide an alternative, up-beat ending as you leave!: [Surely Goodness Love and Mercy](#) The words specifically emphasise Bishop Andrew's belief in God's goodness throughout his life.



Reflective areas:

If you wish to use some extra reflective ideas to support children with their emotions or questions following this news, then you can find some helpful resources here:

[At A Loss](#) is a website which signposts grieving people to all kinds of support services across the UK.

There are many resources to help support children who are grieving, but At A Loss also provides resources and training for schools and teachers through its [Listening People project](#).



Shine like stars!

EXTRA: Bishop Andrew's Funeral Service

Spring 2026 © Diocese of 
Guildford
TRANSFORMING CHURCH
TRANSFORMING LIVES