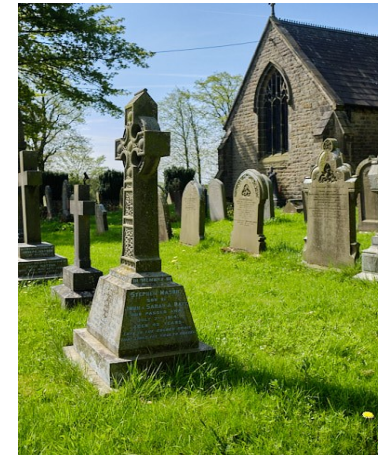




St Mary's Church, Embsay with Eastby

Vicar: The Revd Canon Marion Russell



Guidelines for Churchyard Burials

This leaflet is designed to answer questions you may have regarding the burials in the churchyard.

Churchyards are sacred ground and very special places of peace, tranquillity and beauty.

For these and other reasons, people continue to want a churchyard burial or interment of ashes, either for themselves or for their loved ones.

We are very pleased that you are considering this churchyard and we hope this leaflet will guide you through the questions you may have.

Is the Churchyard Open?

St Mary's churchyard is open, which means that there are plots available for burials or the interment of ashes. However, please do not make the assumption that if there is no memorial stone then a plot is vacant as it is possible that this is an unmarked grave. Do check where the available plots are with the Vicar, Canon Marion, before setting your heart on a particular space.

Can anybody be buried in the Churchyard?

The following all have a legal right to be buried in the churchyard:

- a) Anybody who lives within the parish boundary
- b) Those named on the church electoral roll
- c) Those who die in the parish

Where there is still space available, relatives may be buried in an existing family grave. If you are not sure if you or your relative may be buried here, please ask Canon Marion.

Who is Responsible for the Care of the Grave?

The churchyard is cared for by members of the Parochial Church Council who may instruct professional gardeners or form a gardening team of volunteers to ensure its upkeep. If at any time you would like to join the gardeners, please speak to Canon Marion to arrange this.

It is possible to dedicate Sunday church flowers in memory of a loved one to commemorate an anniversary or a special family occasion.

For more information on any of these, please do speak to Canon Marion.

A Prayer

O God of times and seasons,
of beginnings and endings,
of life and hope,

mend the shards of this broken heart.

I thank you for those whose life has touched my life for good;
for their love and their unique way of being;
for the way my life is changed because of them.

As they pass through this fleeting life,
hold them in your love
and keep them in eternal life.

And may the day come when we shall be reunited
in the place You have shaped for all who love you.

Amen.

For further questions or enquiries, or for support in any aspect of your grieving, please contact our vicar

The Revd Canon Marion Russell

marion.russell@leeds.anglican.org Tel: 01756 795625

The Chancellor's Churchyard Regulations are available in full at <https://www.leeds.anglican.org/how-we-can-help/dac/consistory-court2/>

The Chancellor, The Diocesan Registry: Yorkshire House, East Parade, Leeds, LS1 5BD. Telephone: 0113 280 2241.

St Mary' the Virgin, Embsay with Eastby, June 2025

Can I reserve a Burial Plot?

This has particular regulations and required permissions first from the Vicar and Church Council with an subsequent application to the Diocesan Chancellor, which is quite time consuming and involves some cost. **First step is to speak to Canon Marion.**

How soon after the funeral can there be a headstone?

You should wait at least six months for the ground to settle. This will also allow time to think about what sort of memorial and inscription you would like.

What kinds of Memorial Stones are allowed?

The type of stone, its design and memorial inscription is regulated by the Diocese. To avoid any disappointment, please first find out what is permissible (see the following pages) and get this approved in principal by the vicar. The stonemason will then work with you on the detail and will submit a final draft for approval by the vicar.

Please be aware that only memorials meeting the current regulations are permitted, and so it may not be possible to have memorials similar to existing memorials, which were permitted under previous regulations. Once your application has been formally approved and signed, the stonemason is authorised to put the memorial in place.

Types of headstones, which may be permitted by parish clergy

The Vicar is given authority by the Diocese to allow the introduction of a headstone which complies with the following requirements:

Memorial plate (the upright stone)

Height (from base) 2ft 3 ins (min) to 4ft (max)

Width 1ft 8 ins (min) to 3ft (max)

Thickness 3 ins (min)* to 6 ins (max)

**except when slate is used, in which case 1.5 ins (min) is permitted*

Memorial base (if included)

Height (from ground) 3 ins (min) to 6 ins (max)

Width 2ft (min) to 3ft (max)

Depth 10 ins (min) to 1ft (max)

The base may incorporate up to 2 integral sockets for flower vases.

Materials

The following stone is permitted, with one type of stone being used consistently throughout the monument.

Sandstone, including Yorkshire stone.

Slate

Granite – honed light to dark grey only

The Final Resting Place

The nature of the rite of burial is to say 'farewell' to those who have died and to commend them to the mercy and love of God and to await the transformation of resurrection. This means that there is a theological finality to all interments in ground consecrated according to the rites of the Church of England including those of cremated remains. It is important, therefore, that the grave is understood as the final resting place.

In Memoriam

We do our utmost to ensure that the churchyard is a peaceful place where people can feel near to their loved ones. The church is open most days for you to come inside and pray and bring your joys, your hopes and your sorrows to God. There is a prayer table inside the church where you can light a candle in memory of your loved one and write a prayer of any kind.

Every year in November there is a special memorial service which you and your family and friends are invited to attend: you can find the date on our Facebook page, website, and on Village notices boards and the Embsay and Eastby Post website



Are Flowers allowed on the burial place?

We recognise the importance of placing fresh flowers on the graves and memorial stones of people we have loved. In order to keep the graveside and cremation area beautiful, they need to be removed from wrappings or bows and we ask that flowers are removed before they decay.

We also welcome the planting of small bulbs in or near graves.

Poppies for Remembrance Sunday and Christmas wreaths may be placed on graves but they will be removed if they are still there more than 6 weeks later.

Graveside Flowers and Ornamentation

We are happy to say that graveside fresh flowers are permissible. In order to keep the graveside beautiful, they need to be removed from wrappings or bows and we kindly ask that flowers are removed before they decay. We also welcome the planting of small spring bulbs. We regret that free-standing vases, artificial flowers, balloons, lights and ornamentation are not permitted under the Chancellor's Directions and will be removed. Poppies for Remembrance Sunday are permissible.

Is Other Ornamentation allowed?

We regret that artificial flowers, kerbs, free-standing vases, additional stones or pebbles, artificial flowers, balloons, lights and ornamentation, are not permitted under the Chancellor's Directions and will be removed. This applies to both the graves and the places for cremated remains.

Who owns the Grave?

Legally, every grave is the property of the incumbent (i.e. the vicar as office holder). However, any memorial belongs to the person who paid for its erection. After their lifetime it then belongs to the heir-at-law of the person commemorated. **That person has a duty to maintain it and has a legal liability for its safety.**

Appearance

Polished stone or mirror finish is not permitted, nor is black, red, blue, green, white or multi-coloured granite.

Inscriptions

Badges, crests or emblems may be used provided they are seemly and appropriate for the deceased. Any representation will need to be designed so that it may be accurately cut by a skilled craftsman.

Bronze or ceramic inserts are not to be used.

Incised lettering may be painted in gold, silver, matt white, matt black or matt grey.

Plastic inserted lettering is not permitted.

Authorisation

Please do check with the vicar for clarification and further information.

Authorisation must be formally granted before any stonework is altered, or commissioned, or introduced, and the relevant statutory fee paid. This applies for all headstones and memorial plaques.

