**Death and Life Matters **

***Ideas for churches to help overcome reluctance to talk about death and dying*.**

**CHRISTIAN RESOURCES**

**\* The Church of England:** The life-events section includes some ideas on planning funerals in advance [**https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/funerals/my-funeral-plans**](https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/funerals/my-funeral-plans) and an introduction to facing mortality [**https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/funerals/after-funeral/facing-death-and-mortality**](https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/funerals/after-funeral/facing-death-and-mortality)

The resource **‘GraveTalk’**  is a simple way to help people in the community to get together and talk about death, dying and funerals in a relaxed way in a cafe-style space. Cards with well-designed questions help to start conversations. [**https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/funerals/after-funeral/what-gravetalk**](https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/funerals/after-funeral/what-gravetalk)

**\*Methodist Church**: [**https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/life-and-faith/death-and-dying/**](https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/life-and-faith/death-and-dying/) This is a comprehensive and wide-ranging collection of resources including spiritual, theological and practical perspectives with extensive links to other sources of information

**\*The Art of Dying well** : [**https://www.artofdyingwell.org/**](https://www.artofdyingwell.org/) Roman Catholic site offering *“practical and spiritual support to those faced with the prospect of death and dying.”* Also focuses on the very end of life

**\*Oxford Diocese:** [**https://www.oxford.anglican.org/mission/deathlife/**](https://www.oxford.anglican.org/mission/deathlife/) *“Christian resources for living well in the light of mortality”,*aiming to *“equip churches to explore issues around death and to change the culture*”.The section ‘living well’ includes resources for sermons, Bible studies, and meditations . [**https://www.oxford.anglican.org/mission/deathlife/living-well/**](https://www.oxford.anglican.org/mission/deathlife/living-well/)

\*The **book** **Befriending Death** byJames Woodward. (SPCK 2005) helpfully addresses both practical and spiritual dimensions of death, it is ‘*addressed to the Christian reader who wants to reflect not only on the place and meaning of death in life, but also the issues that loss or change confront us with.’*

**OTHER RESOUCES**

*These organisations offer useful information and resources. There is an emphasis on palliative care, so many of the ideas focus on death as an imminent prospect, rather than much longer term thinking and planning.*

\* **Hospice UK’s ‘Dying Matters’** campaign is opening up discussions about death and dying with events such as ‘Dying Awareness Week’ and many resources : [**https://www.hospiceuk.org/our-campaigns/dying-matters/dying-matters-resources**](https://www.hospiceuk.org/our-campaigns/dying-matters/dying-matters-resources) (scroll down to page 8 for downloadable booklets)
Also a range of resources, including books for both adults and children raising the issue of death [**https://www.hospiceuk.org/latest-from-hospice-uk/books-help-us-think-about-death-dying-and-grief**](https://www.hospiceuk.org/latest-from-hospice-uk/books-help-us-think-about-death-dying-and-grief)

**\*Cancer Research UK:** [**http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/coping-with-cancer/dying/talking-about-dying**](http://www.cancerresearchuk.org/about-cancer/coping-with-cancer/dying/talking-about-dying)

**\*Marie Curie:** [**https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/help/support**](https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/help/support)

They also have a sheet addressed to health care professionals, which could be of interest to clergy and pastoral workers[**https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/professionals/palliative-care-knowledge-zone/individual-needs/talking-approaching-end-life**](https://www.mariecurie.org.uk/professionals/palliative-care-knowledge-zone/individual-needs/talking-approaching-end-life)

**\*Compassion in Dying:** Also offer information about ‘Advance Decision’ (Living Wills). These can enable people at any stage of life to discuss / express preferences about end of life care. [**https://compassionindying.org.uk/making-decisions-and-planning-your-care/**](https://compassionindying.org.uk/making-decisions-and-planning-your-care/)