

Guidance on Funeral and Wedding Fees

Practise across the District is varied.
Practise within some Circuits varies.

It would be wise to have a common policy at least within each Circuit to prevent uncertainty and division.

In 2013 the District Council, in response to a request from the Presbyteral Synod, made the following recommendations:

Funerals

Minister's Fee in common with our Anglican colleagues: £190 (2018 figure)
Church Fee £40 - £120 depending on size of building and set by Church Council/Circuit Meeting
Steward/Caretaker's Fee £30
Organist's Fee £40
Travel Expenses for Minister 45p per mile and total mileage estimated at the initial contact with the Funeral Director

There should be no additional fee for internment or burial/scattering of ashes other than travelling expenses.

No charge shall be made for funerals of those who are 16 years of age and under.

Baptisms

No charge shall be made for baptisms.

Weddings

Methodist Fees are set locally. Total Fee charged by Church of England in 2018 is £441 (this excludes other charges for organist, choir, heating, certificate, steward which are set locally).

Duplicate marriage certificates at the time of the wedding should be charged at £4 each.

Duplicate marriage certificates after the day of the wedding should be charged at £10 each.

Rather than discriminate it is simpler to charge for every funeral and every wedding. In either case the total fees are only a percentage of the total costs incurred by the family.

It is clear that in certain cases of hardship a Minister will not want to benefit financially from officiating at either a wedding or a funeral. It is wise to receive the fee and reimburse the family at a later date; in such circumstances the Minister ought not to suggest to the caretaker and organist that they should waive their fees.

Ministers should be reminded that all income from fees (not travelling expenses) are taxable and should be declared to HMRC.

It is possible for those who wish to donate their fees to the church or circuit and gift aid the sum; but those doing so should be aware of the fact that they will still be taxed on the income. So each person making such a donation ought to bear this in mind and might consider a little less than what they have received to cover their own financial obligations.

Supernumeraries or lay members within the circuit should always consult with the Circuit Superintendent if they are invited to conduct a funeral.