

Funeral and Memorial Service Planning Guide

Christ Episcopal Church, Clarksburg, WV

St. Barnabas Chapel, Bridgeport, WV

This is a guide to planning a funeral or memorial service, either for yourself or in the time of need. These forms can be completed and kept on file in the church office for future reference and use. Having a Book of Common Prayer, The Hymnal 1982, and the Bible available when planning the liturgy is quite helpful.

General Guidelines

From the Book of Common Prayer:

-When a person is near death, the minister of the congregation should be notified, in order that the ministrations of the Church may be provided. Page 462

-It is appropriate that the family and friends come together for prayers prior to the funeral. Page 465

-The death of a member of the Church should be reported as soon as possible to, and arrangements for the funeral should be made in consultation with, the minister of the congregation. Pages 468 and 490.

-Baptized Christians are properly buried from the church. The services should be held at a time when the congregation has opportunity to be present. Pages 468 and 490

-The liturgy for the dead is an Easter liturgy. It finds all its meaning in the resurrection. Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we, too, shall be raised.

The liturgy, therefore, is characterized by joy, in the certainty that : 'neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.'

This joy, however, does not make human grief unchristian. The very love we have for each other in Christ brings deep sorrow when we are parted by death. Jesus himself wept at the grave of his friend. So, while we rejoice that the one we love has entered into the nearer presence of our Lord, we sorrow in sympathy with those who mourn. Page 507

Other things to consider when planning a service:

- As practices continue to change around the days after someone's death, the family of the deceased may wish to arrange visiting times at the church sometime prior to the funeral service.

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Family members or friends may participate in reading lessons or serving as pall bearers, if needed.

- All music should be sacred music, in keeping with Episcopal Church canon.
- Flowers are placed near the altar as they are on ordinary Sunday mornings; other flower arrangements are unnecessary.
- When a casket is used, the pall or flag covers the casket. When cremated remains are present, the urn or casket containing them is covered with a small pall, and placed on a table near the altar.
- Reserved seating for family members is recommended.
- The family is encouraged to arrive at the church no later than 15 minutes prior to the beginning of the service.
- A reception in the parish hall following the service is offered for family and friends.
- Funeral costs: Families often wonder about the cost of having a church funeral. Christ Church provides a funeral at no cost to communicants in good standing. For those who are not communicants in good standing, a fee schedule is available in the parish office.
- Memorial contributions to the church are always appreciated.

A Checklist and Planning Guide:

Full Name _____

Date of Birth: _____

Military Honors: yes no Masonic Honors: yes no

Rite I _____ Rite II _____ with Holy Communion? yes no

Requested Pallbearers _____

In selecting hymns to be sung at the service, favorites and Easter hymns are particularly appropriate. Some suggestions are attached in Appendix I, and referring to The Hymnal 1982 is beneficial.

Hymns: _____

Most funerals contain a processional hymn, a sequence hymn, and a recessional hymn. Hymns during the administration of Communion may be sung, and the Prayer Book allows for Psalms and other musical selections to be sung within the liturgy.

One to three lessons are used: one from the Old Testament or Apocrypha, one from the Epistles, and one from the Gospels. If only one lesson is used, it always comes from the Gospels. Below are the suggested lessons from the Prayer Book.

First Lesson

- _____ Isaiah 25:6-9 *The Lord will swallow up death forever*
- _____ Isaiah 61:1-3 *To comfort those who mourn*
- _____ Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33 *The Lord is good to those who wait for him.*
- _____ Wisdom 3:1-5,9 *The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God*
- _____ Job 19:21-27a *I know that my Redeemer lives*

A Psalm, hymn or anthem is to come between the lessons. The Prayer Book offers particularly appropriate Psalm choices.

Second Lesson

- _____ Romans 8:14-19, 34-35, 37-39 *Nothing can separate us from the love of God*
- _____ I Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-45, 53-58 *The body raised in glory*
- _____ II Corinthians 4:16 - 5:9 *Things unseen are eternal*
- _____ Revelation 7:9-17 *God will wipe away every tear*
- _____ Revelation 21:2-7 *Behold, I make all things new*

Again a Psalm, hymn, or anthem is to come between the lessons. Appropriate Psalm choices are offered in the Prayer Book. In mirroring the Sunday service, often a hymn is sung here.

Gospel Lesson

- _____ John 5:24-27 *He who believes has everlasting life*
- _____ John 6:37-40 *All that the Father gives me will come to me*
- _____ John 10:11-16 *I am the good shepherd*
- _____ John 11:21-27 *I am the resurrection and the life*
- _____ John 14:1-6 *In my Father's house are many mansions*

A homily is preached, following the Gospel lesson.

The Apostles Creed may be said following the homily.

The Prayers of the People take the form as stated in the Book of Common Prayer on pages 480 (Rite I) and 497 (Rite II).

The Commendation typically takes place within the church at the end of the burial rite. The Committal is that part of the liturgy that takes place at the burial site. It may precede a funeral or memorial service or take place at a later date.

What Funeral Home will you be using? _____

Have pre-arrangements been made with the Funeral Home? Yes No

Do you prefer (earthen burial) or (cremation)? _____

Do you own a Cemetery Plot? Yes No Location _____

What type of marker would you prefer on your burial plot?

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Minimal or none _____ | Bronze flat marker _____ |
| Marble flat marker _____ | Marble raised marker _____ |
| Military marker _____ | Marble with bronze marker _____ |

If cremated, what are your wishes for your ashes?

- Placed in the Church Memorial Garden Columbarium _____
- Scattered in the Memorial Garden _____
- Other plans _____

Any special requests that you may have for the clergy?

Any special requests you would like the Funeral Home to know?

What would you prefer for Burial clothes for an earthen burial?

Obituary Notice in the paper Yes No

(There is often a cost to this which can be included in the Funeral Homes Cost)

Appendix I – Hymns for Funeral Liturgies

The following are suggestions for the funeral liturgy. Most sacred music is appropriate, and care should be used when selecting "favorite" hymns that their themes are fitting for a funeral.

Metrical Versions of the Psalms

- 645/646 The King of love my shepherd is (Psalm 23)
- 658 As long as the deer for cooling streams (Psalm 42)
- 680 O God our help in ages past (Psalm 90)
- 687/688 A mighty fortress is our God (Psalm 46)

Easter Hymns

- 178 Alleluia, alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord
- 180 He is risen, he is risen
- 194 Jesus live, thy terrors now
- 208 Alleluia! The strife is o'er

All Saints Hymns

- 287 For all the saint, who from their labors rest
- 526 Let saints on earth in concert sing
- 618 Ye watchers, and ye holy ones
- 620 Jerusalem, my happy home
- 625 Ye holy angels bright

Communion Hymns

- 303 I come with joy to meet my Lord
- 335 I am the bread of life
- 339 Deck thyself, my soul, with gladness
- 357 Jesus, Son of Mary, fount of life alone

General Hymns

- 382 King of glory, King of peace
- 390 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation
- 397 Now thank we all our God
- 447 The Christ who died and rose again
- 482 Lord of all hopefulness
- 487 Come my Way, my Truth, my Life
- 488 Be thou my vision
- 490 I want to walk as a child of the light
- 517 How lovely is thy dwelling place
- 522 Glorious things of thee are spoken
- 623 O what their joy and their glory must be
- 636/637 How firm a foundation
- 671 Amazing grace!
- 686 Come, thou fount of every blessing
- 690 Guide me, O thou great Jehovah
- 692 I heard the voice of Jesus say