



# First Presbyterian Church

New Bern, North Carolina

## Funeral/Memorial Service Planning Guidelines

### *Planning A Funeral or Memorial Service*

#### *A Service of Witness to the Resurrection*

At a time of loss, emotions can often be overwhelming, and it can be difficult to make decisions and to know how to proceed. The following guidelines are intended to be helpful, but they cannot anticipate every scenario, so when you are faced with having to make these decisions, please reach out to the church as early as possible. Not only can the church provide support, but it is also helpful to discuss scheduling and availability before you begin making plans.

Whether a funeral (a service where the body is present) or a memorial service (where a body is not present), the service has the same components. And, as a service of worship, the first step in the actual planning is speaking with the church and the pastor who will be officiating at the service.

Funeral or memorial services are not normally provided for non-members. Exceptions are made at the pastor's discretion.

You might be reading this with the intent of planning in advance. It is always welcome for families or individuals to consider what they would like included at their own service. If you are working in advance, please share your intentions with the church so we can add them to your file.

### *The Service of Worship*

A funeral or memorial service is a service of worship, and as such serves three main purposes:

- to offer an occasion for a gathered community to give thanks to God for the gift of life and for the eternal meaning brought to life by Jesus Christ;
- to offer particular thanks for the life of the one who has died, expressing gratitude for the qualities and characteristics of that person before God;
- to deal compassionately with the grief being experienced by family and friends of the deceased.

The pastors of First Presbyterian Church officiate at all funeral and memorial services at the church and/or in the Memorial Garden.

The Session normally gathers in the vestibule before a funeral service and enter the sanctuary through the front doors after the pastor and before the family as a show of support bearing witness to the larger faith community that is First Presbyterian Church.

For services where a casket is present, the casket will be placed in front of the Lord's Table and will be closed at all times. The church has a funeral pall available to cover the casket during the service. An American flag or a floral casket spray is also appropriate.

The theology of First Presbyterian Church does not normally include the practice of including secular music and testimonials (eulogies) during the worship service. If you would like to include something that falls outside of our normal practice, please speak to the pastor about how best to proceed. All decisions about what will be included in worship are ultimately made by the pastor(s).

### *Readings*

As with any worship service, the heart of the service will be the reading of scripture. While it is normal to have one or more readings from the Old Testament (Hebrew Bible) and the New Testament, there is no set rule about how many or which scriptures are read. A list of frequently read passages is found at the end of this document.

### *Music*

Music can be a wonderful way to remember and claim the faith that walks alongside us throughout our lives. It is normal to sing one or two hymns in a service and we can normally offer other special music (an organ interlude or solo). A list of suggested hymns (those chosen most frequently for funeral services) can be found at the end of this document. The Director of Music must approve all music for the service as well as requests for outside musicians and vocalists.

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### *Proclamation*

At the service the pastor will offer a sermon- a time to proclaim the truth of scripture and how the Word of God is Good News. This proclamation will, most often, include reflections on the one who has died. It is the hope that this time will speak to the different emotions and needs of those who have gathered.

### ***Ushers***

The church will arrange for several ushers to help with the service.

### ***Flowers***

In addition to a funeral spray if there is a casket in the sanctuary, the family may arrange with a florist to deliver or may bring flowers to place on the stand at the front of the sanctuary. If other flowers are sent/given they will be distributed among the narthex, vestibule, and Session House.

### ***Reception***

The Care Commission is often able to provide for a reception after the service. Their availability will be determined when the time and date of the service is decided. There is a small circular table in the Session House that can be used to display photos or other items the family may want to share. Due to the size of the Session House, we do not have a receiving line but rather ask for family members to disperse around the room and allow those in attendance to find the person(s) with whom they would like to speak.

### ***Guest Book***

If the family would like to bring a guest book, it can be placed in the narthex to be signed as worshippers arrive and then moved to the Session House for the reception.

### ***Bulletins***

The church office will produce and print a worship bulletin for the memorial service.

### ***Inurnment of Ashes***

There are spaces available in the First Presbyterian Church Memorial Garden. The fee for one of these spaces is \$1,000 which includes all costs directly associated with inurnment and inscription of names and dates on the stone (two urns can be placed in each space). For more information and to receive the complete set of forms and policies, please contact the church office.

### ***Rites of fraternal orders***

The rites of fraternal orders are limited to the graveside and are to follow the pas-tor's benediction. They are excluded altogether from services at the FPC Memorial Garden.

### ***Memorials***

If you would like to include memorials to the church in the obituary, Memorials to the church are made out to *First Presbyterian Church Foundation, P.O. Box 1069, New Bern, North Carolina 28563-1069.*

### ***Fees***

Because these services are normally for members, there are no fees associated with having the service at the church. The only financial expectation would be for flowers the family chooses to purchase/order or music they request that is beyond what we can normally provide.

## **Order of Worship: A Service of Witness To The Resurrection**

Prelude

Entrance of the Session and Family

Words of Grace and Welcome

Opening Prayer

† Hymn

Prayer for Illumination

Hebrew Bible Readings (often including one unison reading)

New Testament Readings

Meditation

Anthem

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

† Hymn

† Commendation

† Benediction

† Recessional

### **The Committal: Outline**

Sentences from Scripture

Prayer

Committal

Prayers

Benediction/Blessing

## **Frequently Requested Bible Readings**

### **Hebrew Bible Reading**

Job 19:23-27 I know that my redeemer lives

Isaiah 25:6-9 God will swallow up death forever

Isaiah 26:1-4, 19 God will keep them in peace

Isaiah 40:1-11, 28-31 Comfort my people

Isaiah 40:28-31 Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength

Isaiah 43:1-3a, 18-19, 25 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you

Isaiah 44:6-8 I am the first and the last

Isaiah 55:1-3, 6-13 Ho, everyone who thirsts

Isaiah 61:1-4, 10-11 The spirit of the Lord is upon me

Isaiah 65:17-25 I create new heavens and a new earth

Lamentations 3:19-26, 31b-32 The Lord's steadfast love

Daniel 12:1-3 Many of those who sleep in the dust shall awake

Joel 2:12-13, 23-24, 26-29 Return to the Lord with all your heart

**Some have found this passage from an Apocryphal book useful in certain circumstances:**

Wisdom of Solomon

3:1-7, 9; 5:15-16 The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God

**At the loss of a child:**

Zechariah 8:1-8 Children playing in the streets of the city

Isaiah 65:17-25 I create new heavens and a new earth

**For those whose faith is unknown:**

Ecclesiastes 3:1-15 For everything there is a season (some stop verse 8 or 11)

Lamentations 3:1-9, 19-23 The Lord's steadfast love

**Psalms**

Psalms 16:5-11 The Lord is my chosen portion

Psalms 23 The Lord is my shepherd

Psalms 27:1, 4-9a, 13-14 The Lord is my light and my salvation

Psalms 39: 4-5, 12 Lord, let me know my end

Psalms 42:1-6a As a deer longs for flowing streams

Psalms 43 Give judgment for me, O God

Psalms 46:1-5, 10-11 A very present help in trouble

Psalms 90:1-10, 12 Teach us to number our days

Psalms 91 The one who dwells in the shelter of the Most High

Psalms 103 Bless the Lord, O my soul

Psalms 106:1-5 O give thanks to the Lord

Psalms 116:1-9, 15 The Lord has heard my voice

Psalms 118 Open the gates of righteousness

Psalms 121 I lift up my eyes to the hills

Psalms 130 Out of the depths I cry to the Lord

Psalms 139:1-12 Where shall I go from your spirit?

Psalms 145 I will extol you, O God my King

Psalms 146 Hallelujah! praise the Lord, O my soul

**New Testament Epistles**

Romans 5:1-11 Hope does not disappoint

Romans 6:3-9 Baptized into Christ's death, raised to live with him

Romans 8:14-23, 31-39 Nothing can separate us from the love of God

Romans 14:7-9, 10b-12 Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's

1 Corinthians 15:3-8, 12-20a Christ raised from the dead

1 Corinthians 15:20-24a In Christ shall all be made alive

1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, Death is swallowed in victory  
1 Corinthians 15:35-44 The natural body and the spiritual body  
1 Corinthians 15:50-57 We shall all be changed  
2 Corinthians 4:16-5:1 Visible things are temporary, invisible things eternal (or to vs 5)  
2 Corinthians 5:1-10 From God we have a house not made with hands  
Ephesians 1:11-2:1, 4-10 Saved by grace through faith  
Philippians 3:7-11 Knowing him and the power of his resurrection  
Philippians 3:20-21 Our citizenship is in heaven  
Colossians 3:1-17 Set your minds on the things that are above  
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 The comfort of Christ's coming  
2 Timothy 2:8-13 If we died with him, we shall also live with him  
Hebrews 2:14-18 Christ was tested in every way  
Hebrews 11:1-3, 13-16; 12:1-2 Faith, the pilgrimage, the cloud of witnesses  
1 Peter 1:3-9 Without seeing Christ, you love him  
1 Peter 3:18-22; 4:6 Christ's ministry to the spirits in prison  
1 John 3:1-3 We are children of God  
Revelation 7:2-3, 9-17 These are they who have come out of the great tribulation  
Revelation 14:1-3, 6-7, 12-13 Rest for the saints  
Revelation 21:1-4, 22-25; 22:3-5 A new heaven and a new earth  
Revelation 22:1-5 The Lord God will be their light

### **New Testament (Gospels)**

Matthew 5:1-12a The Beatitudes  
Matthew 25:1-13 The last judgment  
John 3:16-21 God so loved the world  
John 6:37-40 Whoever comes to me I will not cast out  
John 6:47-58 Whoever believes in me has eternal life  
John 11:17-27 I am the resurrection and the life  
John 11:38-44 Lazarus raised from the dead  
John 14:1-6, 25-27 In my Father's house... let not your hearts be troubled

**Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal** (Louisville: W/JKP, 2013).

While any hymn selected from our denomination's hymnbook would be acceptable in a worship service, not all are work best in a Service of Witness to the Resurrection. For that reason, listed below are hymns and solos most frequently selected from Christian hymnody in the historic Christian and Reformed/ Presbyterian traditions for use in Christian Funerals. Other sacred music and hymns are also possibilities. Please speak with the Pastor(s) about any requests of music outside of our current hymnal (solos or hymns from older hymnals) and we will do our best to include them when possible.

- 236 The Strife is O'er
- 267 Come, Christians, Join to Sing
- 363 Rejoice, the Lord is King
- 801 The Lord's My Shepherd
- 802 The King of Love My Shepherd Is
- 803 My Shepherd Will Supply My Need
- 687 Our God, Our Help in Ages Past
- 385 All People That on Earth Do Dwell
- 327 From All That Dwell Below the Skies
- 45 I to the Hills Will Lift My Eyes
- 275 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God
- 436 God of Compassion, in Mercy Befriend Us
- 12 Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise
- 20 All Things Bright and Beautiful
- 22 God of the Sparrow
- 39 Great Is Thy Faithfulness
- 649 Amazing Grace
- 65 Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah
- 816 If Thou but Trust in God to Guide Thee
- 32 I Sing the Mighty Power of God
- 370 This Is My Father's World
- 435 There's a Wideness in God's Mercy
- 630 Fairest Lord Jesus
- 846 Fight the Good Fight
- 175 Seek Ye First the Kingdom of God
- 693 Though I May Speak
- 450 Be Thou My Vision
- 839 Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine!
- 826 Lift High the Cross
- 366 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
- 817 We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight
- 307 God of Grace and God of Glory

624 I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art  
611 Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee  
625 How Great Thou Art  
664 Morning Has Broken  
14 For the Beauty of the Earth  
41 O Worship the King, All Glorious Above!  
620 Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven  
35 Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty  
645 Sing Praise to God, Who Reigns Above  
634 To God Be the Glory  
667 When Morning Gilds the Skies  
403 Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty  
836 Abide With Me  
326 For All the Saints  
824 Near to the Heart of God  
8 Eternal Father, Strong to Save

#### **Suggestions for Solos:**

A Time for All Good Things by Douglas Wagner (Scottish tune)

Amazing Grace

Be Still My Soul, By Jean Sibelius

Dona Nobis Pacem

Eternal Life

God So Loved the World, by John Stainer, or by John Horman

Hymn of Promise, by Natalie Sleeth

I Know that My Redeemer Liveth, by Handel (From "Messiah")

Let Not Your Hearts be Troubled, by Bernard Lepley

The Lord's Prayer, by Malotte

O Lord, Support Us, by Allen Pote

On Eagles' Wings, by Michael Joncas

Prayer of St. Francis, by Allen Pote

*Requests Regarding my Funeral*

1. Name: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Preferred Funeral Home: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Location of Burial Plot: \_\_\_\_\_

or

Location of Niche for Ashes: \_\_\_\_\_

(Urn dimensions for FPC Memorial Garden:

**no more than 10" in height and 5-7/8" x 5-7/8" square)**

4. Please check one of the following:

\_\_\_\_\_ It is my request that my body be available for viewing at the funeral home.

\_\_\_\_\_ It is my request my body not be available for viewing at the funeral home.

\_\_\_\_\_ It is my request that my body be available for viewing by family only.

5. Please check one of the following regarding flowers:

\_\_\_\_\_ I request to have no flowers.

6. Memorial gifts to the congregation of First Presbyterian are to be cited as follows:

**First Presbyterian Church Foundation**

P.O. Box 1069, New Bern, North Carolina 28563-1069

Others: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_ I request to have my body buried.

\_\_\_\_\_ I request to have my body cremated.

\_\_\_\_\_ If possible, I wish to have my body donated to science.

\_\_\_\_\_ I request my usable organs to be donated as follows: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_ If my physician feels it would be beneficial to perform an autopsy, it is my desire that permission be granted.

9. The presence of my body or ashes at a service of worship:  
 \_\_\_\_\_ I request a service with my remains present, followed by the committal.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ I request a service following the committal of my remains.
10. Location of my funeral.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ I request a service at First Presbyterian Church Sanctuary  
 \_\_\_\_\_ I request a service at the funeral home.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ I request a service in the Memorial Garden  
 \_\_\_\_\_ I request a service at the place of committal only.
11. \_\_\_\_\_ I request only family and close friends at the committal.  
 \_\_\_\_\_ I request only publication of invitation for church and community to attend the committal.
12. \_\_\_\_\_ Following cremation, I request disposal of my ashes as follows: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
13. I request the following verses of Scripture: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
14. I am attaching other writings or references or materials I would like the minister to include in some way
15. \_\_\_\_\_ I would like congregational singing at my service.  
 Specific hymns desired: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
18. My desires for vocalists, additional musicians are: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

19. For the Prelude and/or Postlude, I would like the organist to play: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

20. Other requests subject to the approval of the minister are: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

21. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_