



Advanced Planning for Burial

For use by a member of Grace or family or friend of a member

The liturgy for the dead is an Easter liturgy. It finds all 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 one we love has entered into the nearer presence of our Lord, we sorrow in sympathy with those who mourn. (Book of Common Prayer, p. 507)

The death of a loved one is difficult for family and friends. Making plans for your funeral and burial in advance of your death is a gift that will help your loved ones understand your wishes and preferences and decrease the number of decisions they will have to make in a time of great stress.

Planning your own funeral is also a spiritual discipline that can help you acknowledge your mortality and thus live more fully in the present moment.

In the Episcopal tradition, church members are normally buried when the congregation is able to gather. The body or ashes can be brought to the church in advance of the funeral and visitation for family and friends can be scheduled at the church.

An important part of grieving the death of a loved one is remembering the life of one who has died. A visitation before the service and/or a reception afterwards are good opportunities to tell stories. During the service, a homily (brief sermon) is preached after the Scripture is read. This homily is intended to proclaim our hope in the resurrection, rather than serve as a eulogy for the one who has died. At Grace, we do offer a brief time for one or two reflections from family members (limited to about 3 minutes each) at the beginning of the service before the Scripture is read.

The Church assumes the burial service will include Holy Eucharist (Communion). The sacrament unites us with the communion of saints, past and present, and can be a powerful expression of our continuing communion with one who has died. And it can be a source of great comfort in a time of loss.

As you plan your funeral, keep in mind that this is a service for the living to celebrate and give thanks to God for your life.

There are many options available for shaping a funeral liturgy – from Scripture choices, to hymns, to more or less formal language in the liturgy. These choices can be overwhelming. In thinking through this, you don't have to complete this entire worksheet, but you may. Clergy will meet with your family or designee after you die to work out any remaining details.

We encourage you to leave a copy of this document with the church, and let your loved ones know that you have made these choices by sharing this information with them.



Guide for the Christian funeral of

Full name as you would like to have it appear on the bulletin

Date of Birth _____ Date of Death _____

Name of person completing the form _____

Name of main contact person or persons representing the Family or Friends:

Contact phone number(s)/ email:

Worship Bulletin: Grace offers a standard bulletin cover. We can modify it to include a picture, an obituary, or suitable poem or prayer (on the front or in the back).

I prefer the standard bulletin _____

I would like additional information in the bulletin _____

(Please attach any additional content for the bulletin as it is available.)

Service

Type of service desired:

Funeral with Casket _____ Funeral with Cremains _____ Memorial (No casket/cremains) _____

Communion: Yes ___ No ___ Rite 1 or Rite 2 _____ Preferred date/time _____

Location of Service: Church _____ Graveside _____ Other _____

How many people expected _____ How many family members _____

Interment: Grace Memorial Garden _____ Cemetery _____ Other _____

Is the person a Veteran? _____ Flag present? _____ Military honors? _____

Funeral Home _____ Address _____

Funeral Director _____ Phone _____

Visitation: Yes ___ No ___ If yes, where _____

Service Order

Grace Church typically uses the *Book of Common Prayer* and the office of the Burial of the Dead. You may choose to have Eucharist (Communion) or not, and you can choose Rite 1 or Rite 2. If you are unsure which you would prefer, please consult the clergy who will be happy to help. There is provision for an Order for Burial follows the general structure of the Burial Rites, which offers even more flexibility. See page 506 in the *Book of Common Prayer* for more information. Most Episcopalians prefer the beauty and familiarity of the Burial Services as outlined in the Prayer Book.

You may choose others to assist the clergy in the service in roles such as crucifer, acolyte and chalice bearer, however the person or persons selected must be trained in the Episcopal Church. If you do not know anyone who is trained or if no one is available, please remember that Grace Church members consider it a privilege to serve. The number of requested servers is usually determined by the anticipated size of the congregation.

Individuals to ask to assist in the liturgy

The family may request that certain members or friends act as Pallbearers. We request that _____ serve as Pallbearers.

Music

Music is usually an important part of our liturgy. We have included a list of suitable hymns, as an appendix. If you are having a difficult time choosing hymns our Music Director or Clergy will be happy to help. The Director of Music typically receives an honorarium of at least \$250. Additional fees may be necessary for solo musicians.

Those assembled join in the singing of hymns as an expression of their common faith. Hymns should be chosen which affirm the Christian faith, celebrate the life of the loved one and offer consolation to those who grieve. A list of suitable hymns is attached. We can have as many as four hymns at a service.

Hymn Preferences: _____

Additionally, Grace's Director of Music will try to accommodate preferences for prelude music (usually on the organ or piano). If you would like additional musicians present, please indicate who and what kind of music if available. We will do our best to accommodate this request.

Other music requests: _____

Scripture and Readings

The Holy Scriptures are a rich resource for the funeral service. Passages which have special meaning to the family or which were special to the deceased may be chosen in consultation with the clergy. Typically, there is an Old Testament Reading, a Psalm, a New Testament Reading and a Gospel Reading. However, there may be fewer Scripture readings or two passages from the New Testament or Old Testament. A Gospel passage (from Matthew, Mark, Luke or John) must be read at a service that includes Holy Communion.

Please consult the appendix for ideas about appropriate Scripture passages and write down your preferences here:

First Lesson (traditionally from the Old Testament)

The Psalm

Second Lesson (traditionally from the New Testament, excluding the Gospels)

The Gospel (always read by clergy)

Other Readings

There is provision for non-Scriptural readings in this service, such as a song or a brief passage from an essay. Because these are non-Scriptural readings at a worship service, the priest will need to approve them.

Please attach or reference other readings:

Please list family & friends who may be asked to offer a reading from Scripture or other reading, or lead the congregation in the Prayers of the People:

Family Remembrances

Sometimes family members or friends want to offer remembrances of their loved one. It is appropriate to have one or two people offer memories about the loved one that had particular significance for them. Please ask those who are sharing a remembrance to write their thoughts down and limit them to two or three minutes. Remembrances should be limited to a total of minutes.

Remembrance: _____ Cell phone _____

Remembrance: _____ Cell Phone _____

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

Grace's Memorial Garden

Grace offers a columbarium and commonbarium in our Memorial Garden directly behind the Church, where cremains can be interred into a niche (columbarium) or directly into the ground (commonbarium). There is no need to purchase an urn if your cremains will go into the Grace Garden. See the parish administrator or clergy for additional information about the Grace Memorial Garden.

Reception

The Daughters of the King have in the past provided a reception in Thatcher Hall. We fund this from our Memorial Fund, to which the family may make a donation; however, this is not expected. You may wish to consider a donation to help cover the cost of the reception. Occasionally families will choose to have a reception at another location.

Will you request a reception? _____ Will it be in Thatcher Hall at the Church? _____

Memorial Books

Will you want a Memorial Book for guests to sign? _____

We encourage families to purchase them and bring them to the church in advance of the service.

Pictures / Display

Our receptions often include a table with pictures and mementos of the one who has died. We ask family and friends to bring these a day prior to the service so they can be arranged beautifully.

Flowers

The Episcopal Church discourages lavish expenditures on flowers. Modest flower arrangements are appropriate on the altar, in the Narthex or in Thatcher Hall. Usually, flowers for the altar remain there for the following Sunday service. We encourage the family to order any flowers. If they are unable to do so, Grace can order them and ask the family for reimbursement.

We typically work with Colonial Florist in Waynesville: 828-452-2891

Would you like flowers? _____ Would you like Grace to order? _____ Will you order? _____

Memorial Donations

Some families will request that donations in lieu of flowers be made to certain charitable causes. It is entirely appropriate that donations be made to the Grace Memorial Fund or Episcopal Relief and Development in the name of the deceased. Of course, donations may also

be made to some other favored charity. Typically, we notify attendees by noting this on the service bulletin.

We also encourage all Christians as part of their stewardship to consider legacy giving to ministries and causes that are important to you. At Grace, a Vestry member or clergy can give you information about Grace Church's Endowment. This kind of giving should be addressed in your will or estate planning process.

Biography / Obituary

Many families want to include a biography of their loved one. This is often included on the back page of the funeral bulletin. Occasionally a poem is included. We are able to include a picture on the front of the cover as well. Please indicate below (or attach) any biographical information you deem important to share.

We encourage you to consider thoughtfully these choices that we offer. You may wish to discuss them with other family members as well. And remember, these choices may be changed at a later date should you desire.

These are the wishes for me or my family member.

Signature _____ Date _____

FAQ's:

Is alcohol allowed at the reception? *We do not allow alcohol at funeral receptions.*

Is it okay to have Communion even if all my relatives are Baptist? Or Catholic? *Yes. We explain and invite that all are welcome to Holy Communion and respect the choice of all who attend.*

Honoraria: *Clergy may receive, but do not expect, an honorarium for officiating at a funeral service.*

Fees: *We do ask that the family pay the Director of Music a fee of \$250 prior to the service. Grace's Director of Music has first right of refusal for funeral services. If the family wishes for someone else to play the organ, the Director of Music is still paid a "bench fee" of \$250. The fee should be paid directly to the Director of Music. In case of financial hardship, speak to a clergy as money is available from the church to cover this expense.*

Local Funeral Homes: *Grace typically works with the following funeral homes/ cremation providers:*

Smoky Mountain Cremations [\(828\) 565-3024](tel:8285653024)

Garrett Funeral Home [828-456-8656](tel:8284568656)

Wells Funeral Home [828-456-3535](tel:8284563535)