



END OF LIFE DECISIONS

ARRANGING A FUNERAL
OR
A MEMORIAL SERVICE
AT
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

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INTRODUCTION

The resurrection is a central doctrine of the Christian faith and shapes Christian attitudes and responses to the event of death. Death brings loss, sorrow and grief to all. In the face of death, Christians do not bear bereavement in isolation, but are sustained by the power of the Spirit and the community of faith. The church offers a ministry of love and hope to all who grieve.

The service on the occasion of death ordinarily should be held in the usual place of worship in order to join this service to the faith community's continuing life and witness to the resurrection. (Directory for Worship) The sanctuary is the place where the church family normally gathers for worship, and that space reminds us that God is the God of all times of our lives.

PLANNING AHEAD

Because planning wisely during time of emotional stress is difficult, all members of the congregation are encouraged to plan in advance the arrangements that must be made at the time of death.

To assist members of the congregation in planning for the service a planning form is available at the back of this booklet. This information should be kept on file in the church office.

A PASTORAL WORD:

Indicate on your planning form your choices of hymns and scriptures, even solo works if you so choose. Give more choices than are likely to be used so that the pastor and musicians who prepare your service can make adjustments for circumstances.

WHEN DEATH IS NEAR

When death is near for a member of your household or a family member, please call the pastor. As a person leaves this mortal life for eternity, it will be helpful to have the strength which comes from prayer and scriptures. This act of comfort will be a blessing to the dying. The bereaved also need this ministry to uphold them. Your pastor is ready to be with you at such a time.

A PASTORAL WORD:

It is a good idea to have a Funeral Home in mind. If the person dies in a hospital, the hospital personnel will ask you which Funeral Home they should call. If the death takes place at home, there will need to be someone called to sign the death certificate. Ask the person's doctor ahead of time who that person should be. After the death certificate is signed, the Funeral Home should be called to remove and prepare the body.

It is helpful to have decided ahead of time whether you wish cremation or casket burial; whether you wish a time of viewing at the Funeral Home; whether you wish a funeral with the casket present (always closed before the service); or a memorial service.

If burial is desired, either casket or urn, a burial plot should be arranged well ahead of the need.

WHEN DEATH COMES

Contact the pastor immediately. The pastor will assist you in making the decisions which are required immediately. If the pastor is not available, the church secretary will have the name of a person on call who will assist you. Call the church phone (505) 982-8544. After office hours, if voice mail answers, dial Extension 13 (Pastoral Care) or 11 (Pastor). A voice message will tell you how to reach someone in an emergency.

Call the person responsible for signing the death certificate.

Call the Funeral Home.

Arrange with the pastor, or the pastor's representative, the date and time of the funeral or memorial service. The pastor will check with the church musician to clear date and time.

If a reception is desired following the service, let the pastor know as soon as possible so that the Deacons may be alerted (more information about receptions on pages 6 and 7).

BURIAL OR CREMATION?

We are often asked if cremation is a theologically acceptable means of disposing of the earthly remains of one who has died. Because both burial and cremation involve the breakdown of the human body and its eventual return to the earth, it makes no theological difference which method is chosen. The choice is usually made on the basis of family tradition. If the family has burial plots where family members return to remember those who have died, burial may be a good choice. If not, cremation is often a better choice. Cremation is considered "final disposition" of the remains so the ashes may be buried, scattered, deposited in a mausoleum or columbarium. Cremated remains require less space and attention than buried remains and cremation is usually less costly.

The church's focus is on the witness to the resurrection. In the resurrection we will be given a "spiritual body." It is only important that earthy remains be treated with respect and honor.

THE SERVICE OF WORSHIP

This service may be observed before or after the committal of the body. The service includes hymns, Scripture, the exposition of the Word, recollections of aspects of the life of one who has died, and prayers of thanksgiving, intercession, and supplication.

When a casket is present, it is ordinarily closed in order that attention in the service focus on the resurrection to eternal life.

Funeral Services at First Presbyterian Church are under the direction of the pastor. The pastor is responsible for the final shape of all worship services.

The seasonal decorations in the sanctuary will remain in place for funerals or memorial services. It is appropriate that worship take place within the context of the liturgical year.

Visiting clergy may participate at the invitation of the pastor. The family may make the request to the pastor and the pastor will issue the invitation as appropriate.

Services are generally not held on Sunday except under unusual circumstances.

If the family chooses to order flowers please choose simple arrangements. Two bouquets placed in the nichos on either side of the chancel are sufficient. Flowers are not placed on the communion table. Additional tokens of esteem may be directed to a memorial fund for the church or another worthy cause.

Funeral, memorial, or committal services provided by the church are Christian services. Please do not ask the pastor or the church for services which "do not mention Christ, or God," or that non-Christian rites or rituals be performed as part of the worship service.

Fraternal, civic, or military rites for the deceased are welcomed at a time other than at the religious service.

The singing of hymns which are strong in affirmation of our Christian faith is appropriate when a congregation is present. Other music shall promote Christian doctrine and faith, and be approved by the Director of Music and/or the Pastor.

FEEES

Church Members:

No fees are charged to our members for the use of the sanctuary or chapel, the services of the minister or organist. If additional or alternative personnel are used, the family is responsible for their fees.

If a soloist is desired, the Director of Music will secure such a person and the family will pay the fee.

Non - Members

Fees for non-members are follows:

Sanctuary	\$500
Chapel	\$200
Pastor	\$250
Director of Music	\$200
Dining Room (for Reception)	\$200
Soloist	\$100
Custodian	\$ 80 + 20 for each hour after 4 hrs.

Use of Kitchen \$150

All fees paid to First Presbyterian Church

RECEPTIONS

Church Members:

At the death of church members the Board of Deacons will provide a simple reception following a funeral or memorial service in the church. Refreshments will consist of coffee, tea and/or punch, and cookies.

If family members or friends wish to contribute finger sandwiches, cookies, or other foods (to be eaten with fingers), the Deacons will gladly place them on the tables.

Should more substantial meals be desired, the family may hire caterers to provide them. The church can make suggestions of such persons .

Non - Members

It may be possible to make commercial catering arrangements for a reception to be held at the church. Consult with the Pastor.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT FUNERAL/MEMORIAL SERVICES AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

May the funeral/memorial service be held at a location other than First Presbyterian Church?

For all the reasons listed in the preceding pages, having the funeral/memorial service at First Presbyterian Church is strongly recommended. However, on occasion families choose alternative locations:

A graveside service at the cemetery: Graveside services are very brief in the Presbyterian tradition and, by necessity, exclude the possibility of music. **Be sure to check times and dates with the officiating minister before setting a time with the cemetery.**

A service at the funeral home: The policies in this booklet will apply to such services when appropriate. **Be sure to check times and dates with the officiating minister and/or musicians before setting a time for the service with the funeral home.**

A service in another church: Should you wish to include First Presbyterian Church's minister and/or musicians, professional courtesy requires that invitations must be issued through the Pastor of the host church.

Can I request that the choir sing at my memorial service/funeral?

The Director of Music ultimately has to decide if enough choir members can assemble to make an anthem possible.

May I ask the Pastor or Director of Music to return from vacation or a conference to preside at a funeral/ memorial service ?

The Pastor and/or Director of Music will be informed as soon as possible of the death, wherever they might be.

There will always be a minister and/or musician on call when the Pastor or Director of Music are away.

*The family may choose to schedule the service **either** on the basis of timing **or** on the basis of who is present to preside.*

If it is important for the gathering of family members to hold the service immediately, the back up minister or musician should be employed.

May I have family or friends speak at my funeral/memorial service?

Certainly. Often family and friends are able to add to the picture of the life of the deceased. Just be sure:

No one who is worried about dealing with her/his grief in front of a congregation feels pressured to speak.

That eulogies are reasonably brief.

That no more than two or three persons are invited to speak.

That the minister puts the life and death of the deceased into a Christian perspective.

Is it appropriate to bring photographs of the person who has died?

Yes, often people enjoy remembering the person's life. We have found photographs work best in the reception where people can come close to see them. Photographs in the sanctuary are rarely visible from a couple of pews back. Choose a few representative pictures instead of a large number.

Is it appropriate to give a donation for the service?

The church understands it to be part of its ministry to care for its members by providing a service and care for the bereaved. If you would like to give a donation there are several ways to do it. You might make a contribution to a memorial fund, or the church's "Music Fund", or the

"Pastor's Memorial Fund", or to the work of the Board of Deacons. Staff members who personally receive such gifts usually turn them over to one of those funds in memory of the person who has died.

Should we involve young children in attending viewings, the funeral service, and other activities surrounding the death of a loved one?

It depends upon the ages of the children how this should be handled. Generally speaking, children benefit from being with the rest of the family while death related activities are going on. It is healthy for them to see that death is part of life. They will see people cry, laugh and talk as they begin the process of assimilating the loss into their on-going lives. Very young children can be included with the family at viewings, though it might not be a good idea to insist that they approach the casket. It is best to answer their questions and to let them see "Grandma" or "Uncle Bill" in the casket if they want to. If they are young enough to be restless in the service itself, they might be more comfortable at home, but include them in family meals or receptions around the death. Slightly older children will have many questions but might be reluctant to ask them. Inquire of them if there is anything they would like to ask and answer as candidly as you can. If they ask questions you cannot answer, involve the pastor (with their permission.) Children can handle reality much better than they can handle what they might imagine.

END OF LIFE PLANNING DOCUMENTS

In addition to planning your funeral/memorial service it is a good idea to have other documents prepared:

Advance directives* are documents which state your choices about medical treatment or name someone to make decisions about your medical treatment if you are unable to make these decisions or choices yourself. Through these directives, you can make legally valid decisions about your future medical care. You may direct your health care providers and others involved in your health care to withhold or withdraw treatment in accordance with your choices. End of life decisions include artificial nutrition and hydration, mechanical ventilation, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), and organ and tissue donation.

Organ and tissue donation* wishes can be indicated on your driver's license, but that may not be adequate to ensure your wishes will be honored. It is important to make sure your family members and physicians are aware of your wishes.

Last Will and Testament is a document, which should be prepared by an attorney, allows you to assist with the continuation of work you consider significant beyond your death. Whether a particular program of the church which you value (Music, Pastoral Care, Mission, etc.) or a program of the community, it will never be easier to make a gift than it will to make this one. It is also an important way of demonstrating your values to those you leave behind.

The Anatomical Gift Program is the Donor Program in which individuals can donate their body for medical science after death. The donation of one's body after death is a unique gift that provides the source of knowledge that is the foundation of medical education and research.

* The first two paragraphs are excerpted from a St. Vincent Hospital (Santa Fe) publication entitled *Your Right to Decide*. This publication is free and contains a form to use for end of life decisions.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SCRIPTURE

Old Testament

Job 19:23-27
Isaiah 40:1-11, 28-31
Isaiah 40:28-31
Isaiah 65:17-25
Ecclesiastics 3:1-15

Psalms

Psalms 23
Psalms 46:1-5, 10-11
Psalms 90:1-10, 12
Psalms 103
Psalms 121
Psalms 130
Psalms 139:1-12

Epistles

Romans 8:14-23, 31-39
Romans 14:7-9, 10b-12
I Corinthians 15:20-26: 35-38,
42-44, 50, 53-58
II Corinthians 4:16-5:1
I Thessalonians 4:13-18
Revelation 21:1-4, 22-25; 22:3-5
Romans 14:7-9, 10c-12

Gospels

Luke 23:33, 39-43
John 11:17-27
John 14:1-6, 25-27
Matthew 18:1-5, 10
Mark 10:13-16

SUGGESTIONS FOR MUSIC

First Presbyterian Church does not use recorded music.

Hymns

(Page numbers are from *the Presbyterian Hymnal*)

260 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God
543 Abide With Me
339 Be Thou My Vision
526 For All the Saints
473 For the Beauty of the Earth
528 Give Thanks for Life
261 God of Compassion
275 God of Our Life
460 Holy God, We Praise Your Name
138 Holy, Holy, Holy
457 I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art
263 Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise
447 Lead On, O King Eternal
529 Lord of the Living
555 Now Thank We all Our God
270 O God, in a Mysterious Way
384 O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go
210 Our God, Our Help in Ages Past
478 Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven
171 The King of Love My Shepherd Is
175 The Lord's My Shepherd
119 The Strife Is O'er, the Battle Done

Organ Music

Bach, J.S.

- "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring"
- "Sheep May Safely Graze"
- "When We Are In Deepest Need"
- "Jesus, My Joy"
- "Deck My Soul With Gladness"
- "Wachet Auf"

- "Adagio for Strings" by Samuel Barber
- "11 Chorale Preludes" by Brahms
- "Prelude, Fugue and Variation" by Franck
- "Prelude on Rhosymedre" by Vaughan Williams

Other possibilities include the playing of hymns or, where the family has a special musical interest, major organ works such as Prelude and Fugue in c minor, e minor or a minor by J. S. Bach or other composers.

- Postludes: "Toccata" from the Fifth Symphony by Widor
"Fugue in E \flat major, S. 552" by J. S. Bach
"Final" from the First Symphony by Vierne
"Carillon-Sortie" by Mulet

Solos

From *Messiah*, by G.F. Handel:

- "I Know That My Redeemer Liveth"
 - "He Shall Feed His Flock"-mezzo soprano
 - "Come Unto Him"-soprano
 - "Brother James's Air," (Psalm 23), by Gordon Jacobs
 - "I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes," by Leo Sowerby- mezzo, bass
 - Psalm 23 by Mary Winton
 - "God, my Shepherd " by J. S. Bach-soprano, tenor
 - "I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes" by Leo Sowerby
- From *Elijah* by Mendelssohn
- "If With All Your Hearts"-tenor
 - "Rest in the Lord"-mezzo
 - "O Divine Redeemer" by Gounod-soprano, tenor
 - "Day and Night I Call to Thee" by C. P. E. Bach- tenor, soprano
 - "O Lord, Whose Mercies Numberless" by Handel-soprano, tenor
 - "Litany" by Schubert
 - "At Parting" by Mendelssohn

Approved by Session: January 18, 2006

FUNERAL PLANNING GUIDE

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Person responsible for making funeral arrangements at my death _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Choice of Funeral Home _____

Location of Service:

Sanctuary _____ Chapel _____ Graveside _____

Type of Service:

Funeral _____ Memorial _____

Choice of Hymns _____

Choice of Scriptures _____

Special Requests _____

Things you would like the Minister to know in planning the service: