



ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

A parish of the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta

FUNERAL PRE-PLANNING

Although most of us are keenly aware of our mortality, we may put off thinking about death and burial, leaving it to loved ones to take care of funeral arrangements. The time surrounding the death of a loved one is full of grief and sorrow. Trying to plan an appropriate funeral service at such times can be difficult, especially if the preferences of the deceased have not been made known. One thoughtful gift you can leave for your loved ones is a plan for your funeral and burial.

There are other important aspects to “getting your affairs in order” about which you should seek legal advice if you have not yet done so. Please be sure to inform a trusted family member or friend as to where your important documents are kept, such as the location of your Will, who is your executor, and who is your Power of Attorney for Health Care matters.

These words from the Book of Common Prayer (p. 507) offer insight into the burial service in our tradition. May they help guide and support you as you consider your planning.

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.

Planning a funeral at St. Paul's Episcopal Church

Please complete the following form and submit to the parish office for filing.

Full Name _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____

Place of Birth: _____

Person(s) responsible for making arrangements:

Family members and others to be contacted:

To begin, there are some practical questions to address.

- Do you wish to be buried in a casket? Yes No OR
- Do you wish to be cremated? Yes No
- Where do you wish your casket or cremated remains to be buried?

Arrangements for the purchase of space in the St. Paul's Memorial Garden may be made through the parish office.

- If you already own a burial site, where is the deed located?

- Is your family aware of the deed's location? Yes No
- Are you entitled to (and do you want military honors? Yes No

Officiant at your service

If held at St. Paul's, the Rector will officiate at your funeral. If you have a friend or relative who is an Episcopal priest, our rector is happy to talk with you about having him or her participate in the service. A member of the clergy from another denomination is also welcome to assist by offering a reading, prayers or reflections.

Please contact the following friend/relative about assisting:

Name _____

Denomination _____

Phone Number _____

The Language of the Service

When thinking about your service, the first decision is about the language of the service. As with our Sunday morning Eucharist, you may choose from Rite I or Rite II for the Burial Rite. Rite I uses the more traditional, Elizabethan language. Rite II uses contemporary language. Please see the Book of Common Prayer for more information (p. 469 for Rite I and p. 491 for Rite II).

- I would like my service to use: Rite I (traditional language) or Rite II

Holy Eucharist

Our Eucharistic celebrations offer our thanks to God for the many blessings of our lives, particularly the presence of God in our lives throughout history and through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Theologically, including the Holy Eucharist at a funeral is particularly appropriate. For many people, it is very important to have the opportunity to receive spiritual nourishment during a time of grief and sorrow. At St. Paul's, all people are welcome to receive communion and we are intentional with instructions so that all guests feel comfortable coming forward to receive. Including communion to the service will add approximately 20 minutes to the length of the service.

- I would like my service to include Holy Communion: Yes No

Readings in the Service

The service of Christian Burial offers the opportunity for three readings from Holy Scripture, interspersed with a psalm or hymn. At a minimum, you must select a Gospel reading and we suggest the inclusion of an additional reading and a psalm.

In addition to readings from Holy Scripture, some people like a piece of poetry or other appropriate reading used. We fully support inclusion of any materials that will support your family and friends in their grief as they celebrate your life with gratitude and faith. Below, we have listed the readings suggested in the Book of Common Prayer, but any appropriate reading that is meaningful to you or your family may be used in consultation with the Rector.

From the Old Testament:

_____ Isaiah 25:6-9 (He will swallow up death for ever)

_____ 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 hands of God)

_____ Job 19:21-27a (I know that my Redeemer lives)

The following Psalms are appropriate (please check one):

- 23
- 27
- 42:1-7
- 46
- 90:1-12
- 106:1-5
- 116
- 121
- 130
- 139:1-11

From the New Testament

- Romans 8:14-19, 34-35, 37-39 (The glory that shall be revealed)
- 1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-44, 53-58 (The imperishable body)
- 2 Corinthians 4:16--5:9 (Things that are unseen are eternal)
- 1 John 3:1-2 (We shall be like him)
- Revelation 7:9-17 (God will wipe away every tear)
- Revelation 21:2-7 (Behold, I make all things new)

From the Gospels

- John 5:24-27 (He who believes has everlasting life)
- John 6:37-40 (All that the Father gives me will come to you)
- 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 rooms)

Family members or friends may be invited to serve as readers. A clergy person will read the Gospel lesson.

- First Reader (Old Testament) _____
- Second Reader (New Testament) _____
- Third Reader (Psalm) _____
- Gospel (Clergy) _____

Homily and Remembrances

Following the reading of the Gospel, the Rector will offer a homily. In consultation with the Rector, family members and friends may offer personal reflections about their loved one who has died. These remembrances should last no longer than 10-12 minutes total, with no more than 3 people speaking. Another option favored by some is to save these remarks for the reception after the service.

- I would like family/friends to speak during the service Yes or No

Name(s) of person/people offering remembrances:

Music

Christian hymns are generally take from *The Hymnal 1982*. If the family wishes to help choose the music, the Rector will be happy to work with the family in choosing appropriate hymns. You may choose to include hymns between readings, during Communion and during the closing procession. Some hymns that are well known cross-denominational songs that are also in *The Hymnal 1982* include:

- 287 For all the Saints
- 335 I am the bread of life
- 362 Holy, holy, holy
- 376 Joyful, joyful we adore thee
- 390 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
- 410 Praise my soul, the king of heaven
- 423 Immortal, invisible
- 482 Lord of all hopefulness
- 488 Be thou my vision
- 608 Eternal Father, strong to save (the Navy Hymn)
- 618 Ye watcher and ye holy ones
- 662 Abide with me
- 671 Amazing grace

Some possible places to include hymns in your service:

Before the Gospel (Sequence Hymn)

Offertory Hymn

During Communion

Closing Hymn

Other music you wish be included in the service, i.e. prelude, postlude, solos, etc.:

Flowers

Flowers are no necessary for the casket or urn, as they will be draped with a beautiful pall. At the end of our lives, we are all children of God and need not worry about any distinctions. Upon request, our flower guild will prepare flowers to be placed in front of the pulpit and/or lectern. Flowers sent by friends and family are normally displayed in the narthex of the church.

My favorite flowers _____

In lieu of flowers, I prefer donations. These donations may be sent to:

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Name of Funeral Home: _____

Address of Funeral Home: _____

Telephone of Funeral Home: _____

Visitation Instructions: _____

___ I do ___ I do not wish to have my casket open at the funeral home.

Casket Specifications: ___ Least Expensive ___ Mid-range ___ Elaborate

Cremation Instructions: _____ Before Funeral _____ After Funeral

Instructions for donation of organs: _____

Names of Ushers and/or Pall Bearers:

Your Signature: _____

Date: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____

A copy of these instructions should be given to the clergy to be kept on file in the church office. A duplicate copy should be placed with your will and kept in an appropriate place.

These instructions are understood to be requests. They do not represent a legal agreement and may be changed at any time.