

Planning
Your
Funeral

We plan and prepare for most of the events during our lives, however, few of us prepare for our final earthly event - that of our own funeral. An important gift to those we leave behind is to make our wishes known, in writing. Most family members are unprepared to plan a funeral service when the death of a loved one occurs. Therefore everyone is encouraged to write out suggestions for their funeral service for the benefit of those who are left behind.

The Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) states:

Because it is difficult under emotional stress to plan wisely, the session should encourage members to discuss and plan in advance the arrangements which will be necessary at the time of death, including decisions about the Christian options of burial, cremation, or donation for medical purposes. These plans should provide for arrangements which are simple, which bear witness to resurrection hope, and in which the Christian community is central. The session is responsible for establishing general policies concerning the observance of services on the occasion of death.

The purpose of this booklet is to assist members of First Presbyterian Church in Germantown to plan their own service, relieving your family and friends of some difficult decisions by providing your intentions with a service that reflects your faith.

Following are some suggestions to help you in planning a service that will reflect your desires.

Scripture Readings

Old Testament

Job 19:23-27 I know that my redeemer lives
Ps. 16:5-11 The Lord is my chosen portion
Ps. 23 The Lord is my shepherd
Ps. 27:1, 4-9a, 13-14 The Lord is my light and my salvation
Ps. 39: 4-5, 12 Lord, let me know my end
Ps. 42:1-6a As a deer longs for flowing streams
Ps. 43 Give judgment for me, O God
Ps. 46:1-5, 10-11 A very present help in trouble
Ps. 90:1-10, 12 Teach us to number our days
Ps. 91 The one who dwells in the shelter of the Most High
Ps. 103 Bless the Lord, O my soul
Ps. 106:1-5 O give thanks to the Lord
Ps. 116:1-9, 15 The Lord has heard my voice
Ps. 118 Open the gates of righteousness
Ps. 121 I lift up my eyes to the hills

Ps. 130 Out of the depths I cry to the Lord
Ps. 139:1-12 Where shall I go from your spirit?
Ps. 145 I will extol you, O God my King
Ps. 146 Hallelujah! praise the Lord, O my soul
Isa. 25:6-9 God will swallow up death forever
Isa. 26:1-4, 19 God will keep them in peace
Isa. 40:1-11, 28-31 Comfort my people
Isa. 40:28-31 Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength
Isa. 43:1-3a, 18-19, 25 When you pass through the waters, I will
 be with you
Isa. 44:6-8 I am the first and the last
Isa. 55:1-3, 6-13 Ho, everyone who thirsts
Isa. 61:1-4, 10-11 The spirit of the Lord is upon me
Isa. 65:17-25 I create new heavens and a new earth
Lam. 3:19-26, 31b-32 The Lord's steadfast love
Dan. 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

New Testament

Matt. 5:1-12a The Beatitudes
Matt. 11:25-30 Hidden from the wise, revealed to infants
Matt. 25:1-13 Wise and foolish bridesmaids
Matt. 25:31-46 The Last Judgment
Luke 7:11-17 Jesus raises the son of the widow of Nain
Luke 18:15-17 We enter the kingdom only as children
Luke 23:33, 39-43 Today you will be with me in Paradise
John 3:16-21 God so loved the world
John 5:24-29 Whoever hears and believes has eternal life
John 6:37-40 Anyone who comes to me I will never drive away
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 Let not your hearts be troubled
Rom. 5:1-11 Hope does not disappoint
Rom. 6:3-9 Baptized into Christ's death, raised to live with him

Rom. 8:14-23, 31-39 Nothing can separate us from the love of God
Rom. 14:7-9, 10b-12 Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's
1 Cor. 15:3-8, 12-20a Christ raised from the dead
1 Cor. 15:20-24a In Christ shall all be made alive
1 Cor. 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-44, 50, 53-58 Death is swallowed in victory
1 Cor. 15:35-44 The natural body and the spiritual body
1 Cor. 15:50-57 We shall all be changed
2 Cor. 4:16-5:1 Visible things are temporary, invisible things eternal
2 Cor. 5:1-10 From God we have a house not made with hands
Eph. 1:11-2:1, 4-10 Saved by grace through faith
Phil. 3:7-11 Knowing him and the power of his resurrection
Phil. 3:20-21 Our citizenship is in heaven
Col. 3:1-17 Set your minds on the things that are above
1 Thess. 4:13-18 The comfort of Christ's coming
2 Tim. 2:8-13 If we died with him, we shall also live with him
Heb. 2:14-18 Christ was tested in every way
Heb. 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
Rev. 7:2-3, 9-17 These are they who have come out of the great
tribulation
Rev. 14:1-3, 6-7, 12-13 Rest for the saints
Rev. 21:1-4, 22-25; 22:3-5 A new heaven and a new earth
Rev. 22:1-5 The Lord God will be their light

Suggested Hymns

A funeral is a triumphant service because of our Christian faith and hope. Therefore a funeral should include the singing of strong corporate congregational hymns that affirm the resurrection. All hymns of praise, Easter hymns and psalms are appropriate for a funeral service. Hymns that are especially appropriate for a funeral or memorial service are:

Amazing Grace
A Mighty Fortress is Our God
For All the Saints

How Great Thou Art
Lift High the Cross
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
Now Thank We All Our God
Our God, Our Help in Ages Past
The Strife is O'er

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The First Presbyterian Church in Germantown
My Funeral Instructions

Name _____

File this information where it will be found easily upon your death. It is suggested that you file this with the church office. In addition you may give a copy to your family and attorney. Notify your heirs that this form has been completed for their information.

Address _____

Date of Birth _____ Place of Birth _____

Spouse Name _____

Children _____

Date of most recent will: _____ Location of will: _____

Funeral Service

I request that my service be conducted at _____
(Name)

_____ (City) _____ (State)

My preferences for the service include:

Minister(s) _____

Musician(s) _____

Hymns _____

Music _____

Scriptures _____

Speakers (if desired) _____

Readings _____

Flowers _____

Other preferences _____

I prefer to:

Be buried

Be cremated:

Before Funeral

After Funeral

Donate entire body or certain organs

Arrangements have been made

Please make appropriate arrangements

Comments: _____

Place of interment: _____

Full address: _____

Ashes may be placed: _____

I prefer the following funeral home, however my family or attorney may make this decision:

I request that Memorial Gifts be made in my name to: _____ in lieu of flowers

[SPECIFY]

Other information for my survivors:

Signature _____ Date _____

Return a copy of this completed form to the church office and keep a copy for your own records.