



## Funeral Customary

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*The Liturgy for the dead is an Easter liturgy. It finds all its meaning in the Resurrection. Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we, too shall be raised.... This, 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. The Book of Common Prayer*

The death of a loved one, whether suddenly and unexpectedly, after a long-term illness, or having lived a natural life span is a traumatic time in the lives of those left behind. While still grieving, families and loved ones are called on to make decisions with little time to prepare. The following pages are designed to facilitate the planning of a funeral during a very difficult time, and establish guidelines and policies designed to make it easier for family and friends to prepare for the funeral and interment of their loved one.

There are provisions in the *Book of Common Prayer* for the appropriate readings, psalms, and hymns for a funeral service. Please choose those which will make this service the right one for the departed and a fitting memorial in the hearts and minds of those who mourn.

We at Saint Paul's stand ready to assist you in making decisions for a beautiful and meaningful service. With that in mind, all arrangements for the funeral should be made in consultation with the officiating priest. In the Episcopal Church, a funeral is a celebration of resurrection.

### **The Burial Service**

Subsequent to a death, surviving family members and/or those responsible for making the funeral arrangements should contact the Church and consult the parish priest. This is especially important if no prior planning or contact has been made with a funeral home. Your priest will help guide you toward making appropriate and reasonable decisions regarding the funeral.

Selection of a time for the service should be based on the needs of the family, the expectation or lack thereof of out-of-town mourners, and the availability of the Church. This should be done in consultation with the priest prior to establishing a day and time with the funeral home.

Saint Paul's uses *The Book of Common Prayer* for all services. The Holy Eucharist is customarily celebrated at funerals; however it is not required. All baptized Christians present who are able to receive communion in their own Church will be invited to participate in and receive Holy Communion. The Prayer Book Service of The Burial of the Dead with Communion takes approximately forty-five minutes to an hour, depending upon the number of people receiving communion. A sermon is preached at all funerals at Saint Paul's.

The coffin or urn may be already in place in the Church or may be a part of the opening procession. A coffin is always closed in the church and is covered with a pall, a hanging placed over the casket instead of flowers or a flag.

### **Participating Clergy**

The parish priest who has helped the family members prepare for the funeral is the appropriate priest to preside at the burial rite. If an Episcopal priest other than one from Saint Paul's staff is desired to assist (or officiate), the permission and invitation of the Vicar is required according to The Canon Law (Title III, Canon 21, Section 5a). The location of the funeral other than in the parish church changes nothing; non-parochial priests may only function with the permission and invitation of the Vicar of the parish. Guest clergy (other than Episcopal priests and deacons) are invited from time to time to read the lessons and lead prayers.

### **Readings from Scripture**

During the service, one to three readings from the Bible are read. You can choose a reading from the Old Testament, a psalm (read by the congregation as a whole), a reading from the New Testament, and a reading from the Gospel. The parish priest will assist you in selecting the readings. A deacon, priest, or bishop reads the Gospel. Lectors available from the church can read from the Old Testament and the New Testament. If the family would like a family member or friend to read a lesson, please take into careful consideration the emotional state of that person in respect to the deceased. A friend or family member may also offer some reflections on the life of the deceased. The following readings are those authorized for The Burial of the Dead:

#### **Old Testament:**

Isaiah 25:6-9 (He will swallow up death in victory)

Isaiah 61:1-3 (To comfort all that mourn)

Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33 (The Lord is good unto them that wait for him)

Wisdom 3:1-5, 9 (The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God)

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

#### **Psalms:**

Psalms 23, Psalm 27, Psalm 42, Psalm 46, Psalm 90, Psalm 106,

Psalm 116, Psalm 121, Psalm 130, Psalm 139.

#### **New Testament**

Romans 8:14-19, 34-35, 37-39 (The glory that shall be revealed)

I Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-44, 53-58 (Raised in incorruption)

II Corinthians 4:16-5:9 (Things which are not seen are eternal)

I John 3:1-2 (We shall be like him)

Revelation 7:9-17 (God shall wipe away all tears)

Revelation 21:2-7 (Behold, I make all things new)

## **Gospel:**

John 5:24-27 (He that believeth hath everlasting life)

John 6:37-40 (All that the Father giveth me shall come to me)

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 mansions)

## **Music at the Funeral Ceremony**

There is a wealth of beautiful and appropriate sacred music that is suitable for use in the context of the Burial of the Dead. We recommend that three or four hymns from the Episcopal Hymnal 1982 be sung. Suitable times for hymns are at the opening procession; before the Gospel reading; as the altar is prepared during the offertory; and at the end of the service. The organist of Saint Paul's will charge a base fee of \$200 (\$250 if special music, not found in the Hymnal, is requested). If musicians (soloists or instrumentalists) other than the church organist are used, the organist will coordinate the hiring of such persons and charge a finder's fee. The musicians' fees will be paid directly to them by the family.

## **Some hymns appropriate for the Burial of the Dead:**

208 The strife is o'er

293 I sing a song of the saints of God

620 Jerusalem, my happy home

637 How firm a foundation

662 Abide with me

680 O God, our help in ages past

690 Guide me, O thou great Jehovah

707 Take my life and let it be

287 For all the saints

473 Lift high the cross

625 Ye holy angels bright

646 The King of love my shepherd is

671 Amazing grace!

688 A mighty fortress is our God

691 My faith looks up to thee

708 Savior, like a shepherd lead us

## **Reserved Seating**

Seating will be reserved at the front of the church for the family and for pall bearers. Please let the priest know ahead of time how many pallbearers there will be and how many family members will be seated in the reserved area.

## **Flowers at the Service**

Saint Paul's is blessed with a competent and talented flower guild, which will provide flowers at the altar during the funeral. Floral sprays and decorations sent by family and friends will not be displayed in the church. These should, more appropriately, be sent to a family member's home or to the funeral home. When the funeral is on a Friday or Saturday, the altar flowers will be used on Sunday morning.

## **Visitations**

Visitation is appropriately done at the funeral home, where the casket may be open and family and friends can have a time of goodbyes. The casket is never open during the church service.

## **During the Service Itself**

Members of the family will be seated prior to the beginning of the service (or can gather at the back of the church as the body is received at the church door). This will be explained and discussed by the officiating priest in the course of preparations for the funeral. The congregation will be invited to stand, sit, and kneel as full participants in the service following the rubrics of the Prayer Book, and will be invited to receive communion at the appropriate time and place.

## **Service Leaflets**

It is our policy that service leaflets for the funeral be produced in-house, by the staff of Saint Paul's.

## **Guest Book**

The funeral home (or family) normally provides a guest book for congregants to sign.

## **Ushers**

Ushers at the funeral fulfill two important responsibilities: seating of guests, and ushering of the congregation to the Altar Rail to receive Holy Communion. We will provide ushers at all funerals that include Holy Communion.

## **Memorial Gifts**

Gifts to the church may be made by individuals or by the family of the deceased.

## **At the Graveside**

The committal service is brief. It is normally held after the church service. Family and friends may choose for this to be a private service or may open the service to all. Extra-liturgical ceremonies, such as military honors or those conducted by fraternal organizations, may be held subsequent to the church's Committal Service.

## **Receptions in the Parish Hall**

It is our gift to the family to offer a simple reception following the funeral. The church will provide the drinks. (Alcoholic beverages will not be served.) The family is responsible for any food to be served. It is desirable that the reception following a funeral be before the grave-side service in consideration of the people who are unable to attend the grave-site. This reception should be kept brief. Another option is to hold the graveside committal before the service at the church. Displays of pictures of the deceased and other memorabilia may be displayed on a table in the Parish Hall, along with any flowers that are in addition to the altar flowers.

## **Cremation**

Cremation is an acceptable practice within the Episcopal Church. If the ashes are to be present at the burial service, please coordinate the delivery of ashes to the church with the officiating priest. It is custom that following the service, ashes are either interred in a committal service, or returned to the family for a later committal.

## **Fees**

Normally, there are no fees for burial from Saint Paul's Church, aside from the organist's fee (\$200 when music is requested). However, if a burial occurs on a Friday or Saturday, our sexton (custodian) will have to work overtime. Thus, we request that this person be paid by the family for his services. Donations made to the church are deeply appreciated. Unless otherwise specified, donations will be placed in the vicar's discretionary fund.

*“All we go down to the dust;  
yet even at the grave we make our song  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia*

## **My Funeral Instructions: Guidance for the Parish and Family**

The liturgy for the dead is an Easter liturgy. It finds all its 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 (*The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 507).

Baptized Christians are properly buried from the church. The service should be held at a time when the congregation has opportunity to be present. The coffin is to be closed before the service, and it remains closed thereafter. It is appropriate that it be covered with a pall or other suitable covering (*The Book of Common Prayer*, p. 490).

**Services are to be conducted at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Wesley Chapel, Florida or:**

\_\_\_\_\_ (Parish Church),  
(City or Town).

*If in another location, the Funeral Director will be told: "The parish priest will be in charge of the services and all related arrangements. It is my desire that the services be conducted as instructed by the parish priest and as provided in the Book of Common Prayer. The priest will make selections when no preference is expressed below."*

**1. Full Name** \_\_\_\_\_

In the course of the service the name of the one who died is used often. What name would you like used? \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Please use**

\_\_\_\_\_The Burial of the Dead: Rite One (BCP p. 469) \_\_\_\_\_The Burial of the Dead: Rite Two (BCP, p. 491)

I would like The Holy Eucharist to be celebrated as a part of the service. \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_ No

**3. I would like a Visitation before the Service \_\_ Yes \_\_ No**

Location: Funeral Home\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**4. If the Holy Eucharist is celebrated:**

I would like the following people to serve as Eucharistic Ministers (Chalice Bearers):

1)\_\_\_\_\_

2)\_\_\_\_\_

**5. Music** Please list any hymns you would like sung:

Other music:

**The Liturgy of the Word (Please choose one from each of the following categories)**

**a. Old Testament**

_____ Isaiah 25: 6-9	He will swallow up death forever
_____ 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

Choice of Reader: \_\_\_\_\_

**b. Psalm after the lesson**

_____ Psalm 23	The Lord is my Shepherd
_____ Psalm 27	The Lord is my light and my salvation
_____ Psalm 42: 1-7	As the deer longs for the water brooks
_____ Psalm 46	God is our refuge and strength
_____ Psalm 90: 1-12	Lord, you have been our refuge
_____ Psalm 106: 1-5	Hallelujah!_ Give thanks to the Lord
_____ Psalm 116	I love the Lord, because he has heard my the voice of my supplication
_____ Psalm 121	I lift my eyes to the hills
_____ Psalm 130	Out of the depths have I called
_____ Psalm 139: 1-11	Lord, you have search me out

**c. New Testament**

_____ Romans 8: 14-19,34-35, 37-39	The glory that shall be revealed
_____ I Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-44,53-58	The imperishable body
_____ II Corinthians 4:16-5:9	Things that are unseen are eternal
_____ I 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

Choice of Reader \_\_\_\_\_

**d. The Gospel**

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

**6. Additional requests for the service. Will someone offer any reflections about deceased?**

7. I would like my remains \_\_\_\_\_ 1) buried in a casket,  
\_\_\_\_\_ 2) cremated,  
\_\_\_\_\_ 3) donated for research

If cremated, where do you wish for the ashes to be interred?

\_\_\_\_\_

If buried, name of cemetery where burial is to occur:

\_\_\_\_\_

When would you prefer the committal of ashes/body to occur:

\_\_\_ Before the Burial Service      \_\_\_ After the burial Service      \_\_\_ At a separate time

8. Do you have any requests regarding military honors? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Do you have any preference with regard to memorial gifts?

\_\_\_\_\_

10. Have you made arrangements previously with a mortuary or burial society? \_\_\_ Y \_\_\_ N

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

11. My next of kin is (name, address, phone)

Name

Address

Phone #

12. Who do you want to be present when final arrangements are made with the church?

Name[s]: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name[s]: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**13. Information about you**

Date of birth \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*These instructions should be placed on file at the church and a copy given to a close friend or relative.*