

A Guide for Funeral Planning
*Born Again Into a
Life Full of Hope*

1 Peter 1:3



COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2070 Ridgecliff Road, Columbus, OH 43221

614-451-6677

www.covenantpcusa.org

Because it is difficult when under emotional stress to plan wisely, it is important to plan in advance the arrangements which will be necessary at the time of death.... (W 4.10002) This information is designed to answer questions you may have and assist you in the funeral planning process.

Quotations taken from the Directory for Worship found in the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

WHY HAVE A FUNERAL OR MEMORIAL SERVICE?

It is appropriate for worshipers to sing hymns, psalms, spirituals, or spiritual songs which affirm God's power over death, a belief in the resurrection to life everlasting, and the assurance of the communion of saints. Scripture shall be read; a meditation or other exposition of the Word may be proclaimed; an affirmation of faith may be made by the people. Aspects of the life of the one who has died may be recalled. Prayers shall be offered giving thanks to God...making intercessions ... lifting supplications ..." The service ends by commending the one who has died to the care of the eternal God and sending the people forth with a benediction. (W-4.10004)

WHERE SHOULD THE SERVICE BE HELD?

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 community's continuing life and witness to the resurrection. The service shall be under the direction of the pastor. (W-4.10003) The service may also be held at the funeral home. Your funeral director will work with you on this.

ARE THERE FEES FOR USE OF THE CHURCH?

We are here to provide comfort and reassurance in the love and power of God. There are no fees for the use of the building. Other fees are listed on page 4.

WHEN SHOULD A SERVICE BE HELD?

Timing should take into consideration the needs of the family. Funerals normally occur within several days of the death. Memorial services can take place at any time. The funeral or memorial ... service may be observed on any day. (W-4.10003). Of course, the time and place is subject to the time commitments of both the church and pastor. It is important to contact the pastor prior to finalizing the plans at the funeral home.

WHAT TYPES OF SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE?

The funeral service is one in which the casket is present. When a casket is present it ordinarily is closed.

(W-4.10005) The funeral service is ordinarily held within a few days following the death.

The memorial service is one in which the body is not present. It may be held days, weeks, or even months after death. Sometimes families prefer that the cremains be present for such a service. The choice between a memorial or funeral service is based solely upon the wishes and desires of the family.

WHAT IS A COMMITTAL SERVICE?

It is appropriate that Members and friends of the family of the one who has died should gather at the graveside or crematorium for a service of farewell... This service is simple and brief. It includes Scripture readings, prayers, words of committal, and a blessing reflecting the reality of death, entrusting the one who has died to the care of God, and bearing witness to the faith in the resurrection from the dead. (W-4.10006)

CAN MY CLUB'S RITUAL BE A PART OF THE SERVICE?

The Directory for Worship states: The service shall be complete in itself, and any fraternal, civic, or military rites should be conducted separately. (W-4.10005)

HOW MUCH DOES A FUNERAL COST?

Funeral costs vary widely according to the wishes and desires of the family. Christian services should not be ostentatious. Families should be careful of attempting to express love, guilt, or sorrow through elaborate funeral plans. Advanced funeral plans can be made with funeral homes, or funds may be set aside in a personal account for such a purpose. Other options which can control costs include: immediate and simple burial, cremation, or donation of the body to a medical school. Other factors which affect the cost include: transportation of the body to a distant location, state laws which govern funeral practices, choice of burial place, choice of vault, mausoleum fees and additional services such as flowers, limousines, etc.

*See Covenant's fees on page 4

WHAT ABOUT DISPOSITION OF THE BODY?

Many people have questions about appropriate and "faithful" disposition of the body after death. This should be done with respect. However, this can be accomplished in many ways. Here are a few options:

BURIAL is the most common. Genesis reminds us that we are created from the dust of the earth. And when we have no more use for an earthly body we return it to the earth from which it came. Burial may be either in the earth directly, in a mausoleum, or in an above-ground crypt. CREMATION is not contrary to Christian belief. The body returns to dust whether by natural means or by an accelerated means such as cremation. The cremains may be disposed of either by burial, placement in a niche at a mortuary, scattered (laws permitting) or be retained by relatives. DONATION of various organs to benefit others, or of the entire body for research is also in keeping with the Christian faith. It is a selfless and generous act which offers one's body for the benefit of others. If you choose to donate your body or various organs, pre-arrangements must be made with a medical school or donor center. To donate parts of your body obtain a uniform donor card or utilize the anatomical gifts card from the BMV which can be attached to your Ohio Driver's License.

SHOULD MY PLANS BE PLACED IN MY WILL?

Do NOT place your funeral plans in your will. Quite often the will is not read until well after the time of death. This means that your plans may not be honored simply because they were not discovered in time. Give copies of your plan to your family or a close friend and discuss it with them. A copy may also be placed with your will, but it should clearly indicate that this document should be read before final plans are made.

WHAT IS APPROPRIATE MUSIC FOR A SERVICE?

Since a funeral or memorial service is a celebration of the resurrection of Christ and the hope we have in Him, it is appropriate that the service be uplifting and joyous. Appropriate music for the service would include the resurrection hymns, other hymns, songs, spiritual songs, and classical music which reflect the hope and joy we have in Jesus Christ. Since this is a service of worship, care should be taken to avoid music which does not speak to the hope, joy, and comfort we experience through God's love.

WHAT FLOWERS ARE APPROPRIATE FOR A SERVICE?

Since flowers are a gift of beauty from God, the choice of flowers is a personal preference. However, care should be taken to avoid excessive and ostentatious use of flowers. Your wishes regarding flowers should be recorded in your funeral plan and shared with family members.

ARE THERE OTHER EXPRESSIONS BESIDES FLOWERS?

Flowers are the most common form of expression, however, they last for but a brief time. To provide a longer term expression of love, you may encourage friends and family to make a Memorial Gift to the Covenant Presbyterian Church. These gifts are received in the name of the one who has died and the immediate family is notified of these gifts. Memorial gifts are used for mission projects or furnishings needed by the church. Information about this is available from the church office. Other expressions of love can be offered to favorite charities or organizations.

IS IT APPROPRIATE TO SING AT A FUNERAL SERVICE?

Since it is a worship service, it is very appropriate to sing hymns of praise, joy, and thanksgiving to the Lord. The congregation may participate in unison prayers and responses as well.

SHOULD THE FAMILY WEAR DARK CLOTHING?

The liturgical color for a funeral or memorial service is white. It is the same color we use for Easter Sunday. The funeral/memorial service is a celebration of the resurrection of Jesus. Because He lives we have the hope of life eternal. Family and friends need not feel that they should wear dark, somber colors.

WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN A DEATH OCCURS?

If the death occurs in the hospital:

- A representative at the hospital or nursing facility will outline what you need to do.
- Have a nurse contact the mortuary of your choice.
- Contact the church so that we can be of support to you.
- Contact out-of-town family and friends.
- Talk with a pastor before making final plans with the mortuary.
- Look over any documents pertaining to pre-arranged funeral plans.
- Locate important papers (Social Security number, military discharge papers, etc.) which will be needed by the funeral home.
- Don't be afraid to call on friends and the church to be of assistance to you in this time of grief.

If death occurs at home:

- Contact hospice (if you were working with hospice) or emergency services.
- Follow the steps listed above.

HOW LONG IS A NORMAL GRIEVING PERIOD?

Grief recovery differs from person to person. However, it can often take one to two years. Don't be hard on yourself by expecting too much too soon. Heal at your own pace. A good piece of advice for a surviving spouse is **RESIST MAKING ANY MAJOR DECISIONS FOR THE FIRST YEAR**. People who make major decisions too soon (i.e. selling the house or moving away) may later regret that decision.

WHEN SHOULD I BEGIN PLANNING?

It is never too late. Many people try to avoid thinking about death as long as possible. However, it is important to make your wishes and plans known. This is a way of showing love for your family by sparing them some of the many decisions which must be made when a death occurs.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE RESOURCES?

A LIVING WILL - will enable you to record your wishes about the use of life support systems. A WILL - is crucial, especially if you have children. See your lawyer, or some of the do-it-yourself wills available from various document stores. A PERSONAL RECORD - is a document in which you record important information to assist the next of kin at the time of your death. This may include information about funeral services, location of important documents, etc.

Fees for Funeral and Memorial Services at Covenant

Bulletins	No cost
Minister	\$300
Organist	\$300
Covenant Soloist	\$200*
Media Coordinator	\$200^
Ushers	No cost**
Custodian	\$125

*Hymns only, additional charges for special music

^Includes livestream, YouTube, slides, and sound production

**Deacons are available to serve as ushers and may be able to provide a light meal, donations are suggested.

RECEIVING FRIENDS

If there is to be no viewing or reception at a funeral home, consider receiving guests at the church before and/or after the service. Photographs can be displayed and family and friends can offer their condolences.

CATERED MEAL

If a sit-down meal is desired, the family may hire an outside caterer to use our facility. A set up and tear down fee of \$40 for the church custodian is charged for this. Caterers have permission to use supplies (dishes/glasses/silverware) in Covenant's kitchen. Refrigerator, oven and stove are also available (please, no deep fat frying). Caterers are to leave the kitchen clean.

RECEPTIONS

The Deacons will provide for a reception following the service, if desired by the family. The reception will feature cookies, nut breads, punch, coffee, tea and water. This service is free of charge, however, the family may make a donation to the Deacon Fund. We hope our services will be a comfort at this time.