

THE WITNESS TO THE RESURRECTION

AT

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
FAYETTEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA



“I am the resurrection and the life.”

– **John 11:25**

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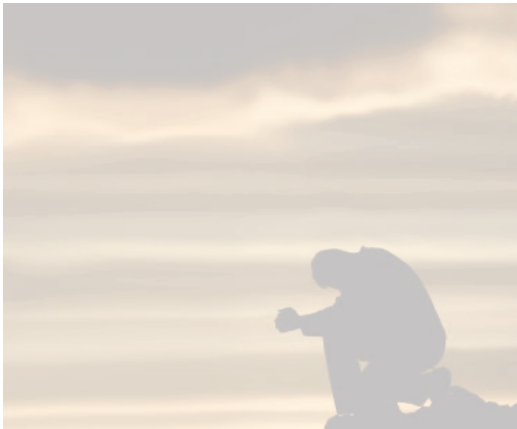
INTRODUCTION

“I am the resurrection and the life...”

– John 11:15

Your pastors and elders encourage members to discuss and plan for arrangements necessary before the time of death.

This brochure offers some practical guidelines to help you in making your plans. As always, you are encouraged to contact your pastors if assistance is needed with these matters (910-483-0121).



BASIC PRINCIPLES CONCERNING A CHRISTIAN FUNERAL

I

The death of a loved one is a painful time for family and friends. The staff, officers, and members of First Presbyterian Church share with you in this difficult time and offer our prayers. As you “walk through the valley of the shadow of death,” be assured that you do not walk alone.

II

The terms “funeral” and “memorial service” are basically the same. A “memorial service” is simply a “funeral” without the presence of bodily remains or cremains (i.e., cremated remains). The term “funeral” will be used in this document to refer to any service for a deceased person.

III

As Presbyterians, the Christian funeral is a “Witness to the Resurrection.” In the service, God’s people are to witness their faith in the hope of the gospel, the communion of saints, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

Then I heard a voice from Heaven saying, “Write this: Happy are those who from now on die in the service of the Lord!” “Yes indeed!” answers the Spirit. “They will enjoy rest from their hard work, because the results of their service go with them.”

– Revelation 14:13

IV

The funeral is, for the Christian, God’s way of bringing comfort to the hearts of those who mourn as Scripture is read and preached, prayer is offered, praises are sung, grief is expressed, and remembrance is cherished. The funeral gives thanks for the life of the one who has died and learns from this life valuable lessons. Though God’s people mourn their loss, remember loved ones, and support bereaved family members and friends, their eyes are fixed firmly on Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith.

ELEMENTS OF A CHRISTIAN FUNERAL FOR THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

- ***The Bible is central***, and every thing that takes place must be consistent with biblical principles of worship.
- ***Prayer is ordinarily a part of Christian worship*** and normally includes thanksgiving for the memory of the deceased and acknowledgment of the triumph of the Resurrection of Christ.
- ***Worshippers are participants in the service***. Therefore, the singing of hymns, confession of faith, prayer, and hearing God’s word are appropriate means of worship.
- ***The great hymns of the church are especially suitable for funerals*** and other worship services. Secular music is NOT appropriate for funerals. ***The pastor is the final authority on music for the funeral service***.
- ***God is the object of worship*** (See the *BO*, W-1.1001 and W-4.10001). A eulogy of a person in worship is discouraged.



HELP IN PLANNING YOUR FUNERAL

1. SCHEDULING THE FUNERAL SERVICE

- **It is preferred that services for deceased church members be held at First Presbyterian Church because the church is the place where faith is nourished, vows are made, and the sacraments are received.**
- Services at First Presbyterian Church: Persons requesting a funeral service are asked to contact the church office (910-483-0121) or the Pastor at the earliest opportunity to schedule the service.
- Whether the service is to be held in the Sanctuary, the Chapel, or at a location other than First Presbyterian Church (*funeral home, gravesite, etc.*), those requesting the service are asked not to confirm a date, time, or location for the service prior to checking with the Pastor to ensure that the Pastor (and the Sanctuary or Chapel) will be available.

2. WHEN THE FUNERAL OCCURS AT A PLACE OTHER THAN FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH BY ONE OF THE PASTORS OF FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Some families choose for a funeral service to be conducted by one of the church's pastors at some place other than First Presbyterian Church. The service remains under the authority of the pastor of the church in conformity with the policy and guidance of the Session (See B.O. W-1.4004 and W-1.4005). Every effort will be made to accommodate the needs and wishes of the family in planning the service.

3. A FUNERAL IS A SERVICE OF WORSHIP AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

Upon the death of a loved one, the pastor will meet with you as soon as possible to plan the service. You will be asked to provide the pastor with preferred Scripture readings, desired hymns, and other materials. All music is to be sacred and consistent with Reformed tradition. A bulletin will be prepared for the service. The pastor will make sure the church's organist is notified and that a vocalist is secured, if requested.

• **Pall Bearers and Honorary Pall Bearers**

Pall bearers (i.e., persons who carry the casket) and honorary pall bearers (i.e., persons who do not carry the casket but are given special honor) may be designated by the family of the deceased and their names given to the Pastor or funeral home personnel. Pall bearers or honorary pall bearers will be given special reserved seating for the funeral.

• **Other Special Groups or Organizations**

The names of special groups or organizations recognized by the family of the deceased may be given to the pastor or funeral home personnel. These groups or organizations may be given special reserved seating for the funeral.

- **The use or display of flowers, photos, or personal memorabilia**

A maximum of one large-size or two medium-size floral arrangements may be displayed in the worship facility during a funeral. A floral covering or spray over the casket may also be used. Other floral arrangements, photos, or other personal memorabilia may be displayed in the Church Parlor.

- **Other persons sharing in the service**

A funeral is a worship service. Sharing in the service by speakers other than the pastor, or church musicians, or by family members is discouraged. The pastor's decision is final in these matters.

- **Use of a funeral pall**

A funeral “pall” may be used in lieu of a floral covering or spray over the casket. A pall is a covering for a casket that symbolizes our equality in death. The use of the church’s pall should be requested when the funeral service is planned.

- **Viewing of the deceased**

Viewing of the deceased will not take place at First Presbyterian Church.

4. **rites performed by fraternal or other organizations**

Because fraternal or civil rites are not part of a worship service, these rites should be performed at a time or location other than the funeral service, or, in the case of a grave side service, at the conclusion of worship after the pastor pronounces the Blessing or Benediction. (See *B.O. W-4.10005*)

5. **BURIAL OR INURNMENT OF REMAINS**

Burial or inurnment of remains may take place before or after worship.

6. **CREMATION VERSES BURIAL OF BODILY REMAINS**

Either the cremation or the burial of bodily remains in a casket is appropriate. There is no scriptural reason to prefer burial to cremation.



First Church's Columbarium



First Church's Memorial Wall

*“And death shall have
no dominion.”*

**– Tombstone –
General Maxwell Taylor,
Arlington National
Cemetery,**

**Commander 101st
Airborne Division
World War II,
Church Elder**

*“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of
death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod
and thy staff they comfort me.”*

7. THE COLUMBARIUM

First Presbyterian Church has a Columbarium (i.e. a repository for cremated remains) for use by church members who desire cremation. Persons may contact the church administrator regarding the purchase and use of a columbarium niche.

8. THE MEMORIAL WALL

First Presbyterian Church has a Memorial Wall (i.e., a wall on which plaques with the names of deceased members, not inurned in the Columbarium, are displayed). Persons may contact the church administrator for details regarding the purchase and use of a plaque honoring the deceased.

9. MEALS OR OTHER SERVICES FOR FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF THE DECEASED

Presbyterian Women wish to assist the family and friends of the deceased by providing a meal or other appropriate form of assistance at the home of the deceased or other suitable location for family members. A member of Presbyterian Women will contact the family of the deceased to determine the most appropriate form of assistance.

10. MEMORIALS

Memorials or monetary donations in memory of the deceased may be designated to First Presbyterian Church, Fayetteville, North Carolina. Acknowledgements will be made to both the donors and the family of the deceased by the church.

11. FEES

Fees are not required for funeral services at First Presbyterian church. However, gifts or “honoraria” may be offered to the pastor, organist, pianist, soloist, custodial staff as tokens of appreciation.

EXPRESSION OF MY PERSONAL WISHES FOR PROCEDURES AT THE TIME OF MY DEATH

NAME _____ DATE _____

I wish to outline my preference regarding procedures to be followed at the time of my death. I understand that this form is not legally binding, and that the ultimate decisions are to be made by my next of kin, _____ in consultation with _____ I hope that my wishes will be taken seriously.

I. CLERGY:

- I request that the minister of First Presbyterian Church of Fayetteville be contacted to assist my family.
- If my church is without a minister at the time, I would like for _____ and/or _____ to conduct the service. However, contact should be made with the church and the ministers before the setting time for the service.

II. FUNERAL HOME:

I prefer that _____ Funeral Home of be asked to take care of the requested arrangements as itemized herein.

III. MEDICAL RESEARCH AND HUMANITARIAN PURPOSES:

- a. I have no objections to a post-mortem examination (autopsy) if there is reason for one to be made.
- b. If possible, I would like the following organs to be donated for another person: _____

IV. DISPOSITION OF THE BODY:

I prefer that my body be: (Please check one)

- Buried in _____ Cemetery

Located at _____

Block: _____

Section: _____

Lot: _____

Lot owner: _____

Location of deed: _____

Cremated, and my ashes be _____

Donated to _____

Medical School for anatomical science studies.

Other _____

V. RELIGIOUS SERVICE:

I prefer there be a funeral memorial service (without a body) at _____
_____ Church.

VI. MEMORIAL DONATION FOR FLOWERS:

I prefer that there be:

No flowers

Flowers

I prefer that there be donations in lieu of flowers to:

Memorial fund of _____

_____ Church

Other _____

VII. WILL:

- I have made a will.
- I have not made out a will.
- A copy of the will is attached:

VIII. OTHER CHOICES OR WISHES:

* Favorite hymns to be played while people are gathering:

* Processional: _____

* Recessional: _____

* Congregational Hymns: _____

* Soloists: _____

* Favorite Scripture Requested: _____

IX. INFORMATION NEEDED FOR DEATH CERTIFICATE AND/OR NEWSPAPER NOTICES:

Full Name: _____

Full Address: _____

Social Security Number: _____

Birth Date: _____

Birth Place: _____

Father's Full Name: _____

Birth Place: _____

Mother's Full Name: _____

Birth Place: _____

Last Occupation: _____

Since (year): _____

Last Employer: _____

Business: _____

Married: _____

Widowed : _____

Divorced: _____

Never Married: _____

Name of Surviving Spouse: _____

Survivors:

Daughters: _____

Sons: _____

Grandchildren: _____

Step Grandchildren: _____

Great Grandchildren: _____

Sisters: _____

Brothers: _____

Memberships:

Church: _____

Other: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

NOTES



“I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, ‘Look, God’s home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.’”

– Revelation 21: 2-3



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