



Funeral Decisions

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, 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. Romans 8:38–39

Paul's words to the church in Rome are a source of profound comfort to Christians in times of loss, grief, and despair. Even though the fear of death may be very real, we hear in this holy text that nothing will be able to separate us from God's love. The funeral service, or the burial office, is intended to be a reminder of this promise. The words, music, and actions of the liturgy reassure us that God's love is stronger than death. Planning this service for yourself is a generous way to help your family honor your life. The following is an outline of what you will need to think about in preparing for a funeral service at Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral.

Contact Our Pastoral Care Ministry and/or Clergy

When it comes to funeral arrangements, there are many decisions to be made. The Pastoral Care Ministry which includes Lay Ministers and clergy of Saint Mark's, would be happy to help you with these decisions. Their experience and concern for you can be very helpful in making decisions and preparations for the service.

Make arrangements with a Funeral Home or Cremation Service

In planning your funeral, you will face decisions regarding the disposition of your earthly remains. These matters are sensitive and can reveal a wide variety of

underlying values. In the Episcopal Church, burial, cremation, and organ donation are all acceptable practices, and decisions regarding these options are best made in consideration of traditions, values, family location, cost, and particular family needs.

The funeral home or cremation service can assist you with arrangements for burial or cremation. They are very helpful and can assist with many details, including pre-payment of services and funeral planning. They can assist with the obituary and securing copies of death certificates. All services of this type by law must provide a price list and breakdown of costs for “goods and services”.

Plan the Funeral Service

Your funeral is an opportunity for you to provide comfort to your friends and loved ones as well as to affirm the Church’s belief in the power of the resurrection. There are many opportunities within the burial office of the Episcopal Church for you to personalize the liturgy and include scripture and hymns that are meaningful to you. To make your funeral the most meaningful to you and your family, you should give some thought to the following:

- Rite: The Book of Common Prayer or BCP offers two options for the burial office. Rite I (which is written in “traditional” language) and Rite II (written in more “contemporary” language).
 - BCP p. 469: For example, the opening anthem for the service appears like this in Rite I (traditional) language: *I am the resurrection and the life, saith the Lord; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.*
 - The BCP p. 491: This is the same text in Rite II (contemporary) language: *I am Resurrection and I am Life, says the Lord. Whoever has faith in me shall have life, even though he dies. And everyone who has life, and has committed himself to me in faith, shall not die forever.*
 - Again, in making this decision, consider which kind of church service you normally prefer. Do you normally attend the 10:30 a.m. Rite II or the 8 a.m. Rite I service? What kind of language would be most comforting to your friends and family as they participate in the liturgy?

- Readings: You will be asked to select several readings from the Bible. The Book of Common Prayer suggests several readings that are particularly appropriate for funeral services. (For a complete selection of the suggested readings, please see the readings in the accompanying document or BCP p. 494) If there will be Holy Eucharist during the service, you must select a reading from the Gospel, which will be read by a Deacon or Priest. Other readings may be done by family members or friends.
- Holy Eucharist: You may decide whether to include Holy Eucharist in the service. The celebration of the Holy Eucharist stands as a powerful reminder of the presence of Christ with us in this world and in the next and can be an important part of the funeral service. However, the presence of Holy Eucharist during your funeral may not feel appropriate in your situation. Ultimately, this is a personal choice based on your wishes as well as what you feel would be most comforting for your family and friends at this time.
- Music: You may choose to request music be played and/or Hymns be sung by a soloist or the congregation during the service. The hymns you select should be ones that are familiar to the congregation that will be assembled. You may also choose to select a particular vocal or instrumental solo to be offered before, during or as a postlude to the course of the service. Because a service of Christian burial is primarily a service of prayer before God, the music selected for the service must be of a religious/spiritual nature. Other music may be discussed with the Canon Musician. Suggested Hymns (not required) are located in the accompanying document).
- Pallbearers. You should consider whether you would like to have pallbearers at your funeral service and who they might be. Pallbearers could be actual (with the presence of a casket) or honorary (with the presence of an urn). Pallbearers may be family or friends and will receive their instructions from the officiating clergy at the time of the service.
- Ushers. The church will happily provide ushers experienced in the special needs of a funeral service. Please let the clergy know if you wish anyone special to serve as an usher.

- Bulletins. Funeral bulletins will be prepared by the church staff. In addition to the order of service, funeral bulletins often include:
 - Full name of the deceased, with dates of birth and death
 - Names of participants in the service
 - The Obituary
 - One or two organizations the family has designated to receive memorial gifts

- Floral arrangements: The church does not provide flowers for a funeral service; however, the family is welcome to order flowers for the chancel or altar if desired. Please keep in mind that a casket spray is not appropriate for the funeral service during which the casket will be covered by a pall.
 - The following nearby florist provides our flower services and are very familiar with our requirements: Flowers by Miss Bertha - 2100 Nicollet Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55404, (612) 871-1542

We do not eulogize the dead; a sermon may be offered based on the scripture texts. If, however, the family desires, the Prayer Book makes provision for one person, a member of the family, or close friend, to offer a remembrance. Multiple memorials are not permitted by the Prayer Book.

Fraternal rites are not an appropriate part of an Episcopal funeral service. If they are desired, they must occur before the Church's funeral service either at the meeting place of the fraternal organization, or at the funeral home, or a private home.

The Episcopal Church discourages viewing bodies in church. While the coffin is in the church, it is closed and is covered with a funeral pall. Flowers are never placed atop the pall. If appropriate, the national flag might replace the funeral pall.

For I know that my Redeemer lives, and that at the last he will stand upon the earth, and after my skin has been thus destroyed, then in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see on my side, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. Job 19:25-27a

Memorial/Funeral/Burial Office Service Information

Name: First _____ Middle _____

Last _____ Maiden name _____

Name at Birth _____

Preferred Pronouns _____

Date of Birth: _____ Birthplace: _____

Baptized? _____ Confirmed? _____ Communicant? _____

Where were you Baptized and or confirmed?

Present Address:

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Preparation/Burial/Interment Information

Funeral home or Cremation service (if known):

_____ Location: _____

Date prepaid: _____

Contact Person(s): _____ Phone: _____

- I own a cemetery lot and/or I wish to be buried at:

Cemetery: _____

- If interment is at St. Mark's Cathedral, what is the Niche Number? _____

Common niche _____

- Special Instructions for burial: _____

Service Information

I wish to be given the following type of service:

- Funeral Service (casket or urn present), or
- Memorial Service (no casket or urn)

Using

- Burial Office, Rite I (BCP, p. 469)
- Burial Office, Rite II (BCP, p. 491)

I would like

- Office with Holy Eucharist

Scripture preferences:

Old Testament _____

New Testament _____

Psalm _____

Gospel _____

If possible, I would like the following clergy to officiate and/or assist at my service:

If they are needed, I would like the following people to be pallbearers at my service:

I would like my funeral service to include the following hymns or music:

I would be grateful if my family would consider memorial gifts in my name to:

From the Book of Common Prayer "...all persons (are) to make wills, while they are in health, arranging for the disposal of their temporal good, not neglecting, if they are able, to leave bequests for religious and charitable uses." (BCP p. 445)
Please consider a memorial gift to Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral in your will.

Date(s) form is completed and/or updated _____

Blank page for you to write your notes, updates or questions

MY PERSONAL RECORD

There's a land that is fairer than day, and by faith we can see it afar:

For the Father waits over the way - to prepare us a dwelling place there.

In the sweet by and by, we shall meet on that beautiful shore.

Hymn: Sweet by and By, written by Sanford Fillmore Bennett (1868-1898)

Full Legal Name

Street Address, PO Box, and/or Apartment #

City, State, Zip Code

Date/Place of Birth (name at birth)

Marital Status: Single Married Partnered Widowed Divorced

Full Name of Spouse or Partner

Date/Place of Marriage

Date of last executed Will

Location of Will

Executor's name, address, phone

Father's Full Name

Mother's Full Name

Date/Place of Birth

Date/Place of Birth

If living, address, and phone

Name, address, and telephone number of children:

(If deceased, name only)

Name, address, and telephone number of brothers and sisters:

(If deceased, name only)

Educational Background:

Occupation and employment:

Employer, address and telephone number:

Military History:

Membership in churches, clubs and organizations

Name, address, and telephone number of persons to notify upon my death:
(in addition to persons listed above)

Do you want to prewrite your Obituary? Here are some helpful ideas. As you begin crafting an obituary, the following information should be offered:

- Full name as you would like it to be published
- Date of birth
- Place of birth
- Photo
- Date of death, reason for death and Funeral/memorial service information gets to be written by someone else!

- Memorials/donations choices

In addition to announcing your passing, an obituary tells the story of a person's life. The obituary shouldn't be a full biography; instead, it should be highlights, important events, milestones, and achievements in your life.

What would you want to read? Write it down.

Resources for Health Directives and POLST

The Provider Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST) form is a portable medical order that can give patients with advanced serious illness the option to exercise increased control over the treatment they do and do not want to receive at the end of life. The POLST helps to ensure the patient's wishes are conveyed to emergency services and other medical providers. The POLST form is used and recognized by hospital systems, long-term care facilities, medical professionals, and emergency medical services throughout Minnesota.

www.mnmed.org/advocacy/improving-health-of-minnesotans/POLST-Communications