

Guidelines for Planning Funeral and Memorial Services

On behalf of the congregation and staff of First United Methodist Church, we offer you our condolences on the loss of your loved one.

The church building and the Pastors are available to support members of the congregation without charge. A bulletin will be prepared by our office and an usher provided as available.

Please call, or have the funeral home call, to assure the availability of one of our Pastors and sanctuary before finalizing arrangements. We will make every effort to meet your needs; however, some conflicts may be unavoidable.

The Pastor will arrange a 90 minute meeting with the surviving spouse and children, or life companions, to plan a celebration of the deceased's life.

Optional Features:

Organist/Pianist Jeannie Workman	\$150.00
Soloist (if available)	\$100.00

We will also assist you in finding flutists, trumpeters, harpists, or bagpiper, if you desire. Their fees are their own.

The United Methodist Women are glad to serve a simple refreshment of coffee, tea, punch and cookies for members' funerals. A donation to offset their costs is appreciated.

Resurrection Garden on our church campus is available to members for the burial of cremains. The Business Manager can arrange for the purchase of these plots and markers.

Pre-Planning

The church encourages individuals to plan a celebration of their own life while they are healthy and able to engage reflectively. Call one of our Pastors for assistance (847-255-5112).

The United Methodist Book of Worship has suggestions for liturgy as a guideline for your use. The Pastor will assist you in personalizing this ritual.

Funerals

At the Funeral Home: The Funeral Director is in charge and the Pastor will serve at your request and their direction. The Pastor will arrive at least 30 minutes before hand, perform the service, accompany the mourners to a local cemetery and offer a committal service and prayer.

At the Church: The Pastor is in charge. The Funeral Director will deliver the casket or cremains to the church approximately 90 minutes before the service at your request and cooperate with the Pastor's direction.

The family gathers in the Parlor as guests arrive. The Pastor will lead the family, following the casket, into the sanctuary to reserved front seats. At the conclusion of the service, the Funeral Director (and pall bearers if there are any) will lead the casket out, followed by family and Pastor. At this point, the Funeral Director is in charge and the Pastor is there to serve. If burial follows, the Pastor will ride with the Director and casket to the cemetery for committal service.

Memorial Service

Memorial Services are held in the church. The body is not present, though cremains may be. Memorial Services are held within days or weeks of the death of a loved one, but almost always by the first anniversary of the death.

A portrait is often before those gathered. Floral arrangements and candles are often used. Memorabilia may be displayed.

Memorial Services can provide some distance from the shock and grief of a death, and with this recovery, family and friends may take a more active role in both the design and implementation of the celebration of life. They may greet friends in the narthex and thank them for coming. They have read, sung, played, etc. When choosing a Church Memorial Service, however, you have chosen a worship service, thanking God for the gift of life. An appropriate decorum will be maintained.

If a funeral director is not involved, the family is responsible for delivering cremains, if there are any. Reminder: if a guest book is desired, the family will need to provide it.

Memorials

In lieu of flowers, it is common practice to choose a recipient of gifts in memory of the deceased. Church members are encouraged to create a memorial here at the church to honor their Loved one. In moments of grief, we caution the family not to be pressured by persons or organizations who have been a part of their Loved one's life for a few days, weeks or months, to direct contributions to their operations. Research contributions toward accredited, not-for-profits, are appropriate.

A SERVICE OF DEATH AND RESURRECTION

This is a service of Christian worship suitable for funerals and memorial services. It should be held in the church if at all possible, and at a time when members of the congregation can be present.

The pastor should be notified immediately of the death of a member or constituent of the congregation. All arrangements should be made and approved in consultation with the pastor.

This order is intended for use with the body of the deceased present, but it can be adapted for use at memorial services or other occasions. The coffin remains closed throughout the service and thereafter. It may be covered with a pall.

Use of the term "Service of Death and Resurrection" is not intended to discourage use of the more familiar terms "funeral," "burial of the dead," or "memorial service." "Funeral" is appropriate for a service with the body of the deceased present. "Burial of the dead" is appropriate for a service where the remains of the deceased are buried. "Memorial service" is appropriate where the body of the deceased is not present. "Service of Death and Resurrection" was selected as being appropriate to any of the wide variety of situations in which this service might be used. It expresses clearly the twofold nature of what is done: the facts of death and bereavement are honestly faced, and the gospel of resurrection is celebrated in the context of God's baptismal covenant with us in Christ.

ENTRANCE

GATHERING

The pastor may greet the family.

Music for worship may be offered while the people gather.

Hymns and songs of faith may be sung during the gathering.

The pall may be placed on the coffin or urn with these words:

Dying, Christ destroyed our death.

Rising, Christ restored our life.

Christ will come again in glory.

As in baptism *Name* put on Christ,

so in Christ may *Name* be clothed with glory.

Here and now, dear friends, we are God's children.

What we shall be has not yet been revealed;

but we know that when he appears, we shall be like him,

for we shall see him as he is.

Those who have this hope purify themselves

as Christ is pure.

The coffin or urn may be carried into the place of worship in procession, the pastor going before it and saying the word of grace, the congregation standing. Or, if the coffin or urn is already in place, the pastor says the following from in front of the congregation.

THE WORD OF GRACE

Jesus said, I am the resurrection and I am life.
Those who believe in me, even though they die, yet shall they live,
and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die.
I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.
I died, and behold I am alive for evermore,
and I hold the keys of hell and death.
Because I live, you shall live also.

GREETING

Friends, we have gathered here to praise God
and to witness to our faith as we celebrate the life of *Name*.
We come together in grief, acknowledging our human loss.
May God grant us grace, that in pain we may find comfort,
in sorrow hope, in death resurrection.

If the pall was not placed on the coffin or urn earlier, the sentences used above for that act may be used here instead.

HYMN OR SONG

PRAYER

The following or other prayers may be offered, in unison if desired. Petition for God's help, thanksgiving for the communion of saints, confession of sin, and assurance of pardon are appropriate here.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

O God, who gave us birth,
you are ever more ready to hear
than we are to pray.

You know our needs before we ask,
and our ignorance in asking.

Give to us now your grace,
that as we shrink before the mystery of death,
we may see the light of eternity.

Speak to us once more
your solemn message of life and of death.

Help us to live as those who are prepared to die.
And when our days here are accomplished,
enable us to die as those who go forth to live,
so that living or dying, our life may be in you,
and that nothing in life or in death will be able to separate us
from your great love in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.

and/or

Eternal God,
we praise you for the great company of all those

who have finished their course in faith
and now rest from their labor.
We praise you for those dear to us
whom we name in our hearts before you.
Especially we praise you for *Name*,
whom you have graciously received into your presence.
To all of these, grant your peace.
Let perpetual light shine upon them;
and help us so to believe where we have not seen,
that your presence may lead us through our years,
and bring us at last with them
into the joy of your home
not made with hands but eternal in the heavens;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The following prayer of confession and pardon may also be used.

Holy God, before you our hearts are open,
and from you no secrets are hidden.
We bring to you now
our shame and sorrow for our sins.
We have forgotten
that our life is from you and unto you.
We have neither sought nor done your will
We have not been truthful in our hearts,
in our speech, in our lives.
We have not loved as we ought to love.
Help us and heal us,
raising us from our sins into a better life,
that we may end our days in peace,
trusting in your kindness unto the end;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Who is in a position to condemn?
Only Christ, Christ who died for us, who rose for us,
who reigns at God's right hand and prays for us.
Thanks be to God who gives us the victory
through our Lord Jesus Christ.

PSALM 130*

Out of the depths I cry unto thee, O Lord!
Lord, hear my cry.
Let thine ears be attentive
to the voice of my supplication.
If thou, Lord, should mark iniquities,
Lord, who could stand?
But there is forgiveness with thee,
that thou may be feared.
I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,
and in his word do I hope.
My soul waits for the Lord
more than those who watch for the morning.
O Israel, hope in the Lord!
For with the Lord is great mercy.
With him is plenteous redemption,
and he will redeem Israel from all their sins.

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

PSALM 23**

Sung or said by the people standing.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
he leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul;
he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.
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.
Thou prepares a table before me
in the presence of mine enemies;
thou anointest my head with oil;
my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life;
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

*For other versions, see Nos. 515, 516, and page 848.

**For other versions, see Nos. 136-138, and page 754.

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON

PSALM, CANTICLE OR HYMN

GOSPEL LESSON

SERMON

A sermon may be preached, proclaiming the gospel in the face of death. It may lead into, or include, the following acts of naming and witness.

NAMING

The life and death of the deceased may be gathered up by the reading of a memorial or appropriate statement, or in other ways, by the pastor or others.

WITNESS

Family, friends, and members of the congregation may briefly voice their thankfulness to God for the grace they have received in the life of the deceased and their Christian faith. And joy. Signs of faith, hope, and love may be exchanged.

HYMN OR SONG

CREED or AFFIRMATION OF FAITH (Nos. 880-889)

If the creed has not been preceded by, it may be followed by, a hymn or musical response.

COMMENDATION

PRAYERS

One or more of the following prayers may be offered, or other prayers may be used. They may take the form of a pastoral prayer, a series of shorter prayers, or a litany, intercession, commendation of life, and thanksgiving are appropriate here.

God of us all, your love never ends.
When all else fails, you still are God.
We pray to you for one another in our need,
and for all, anywhere, who mourn with us this day.
To those who doubt, give light;
to those who are weak, strength;
to all who have sinned, mercy;
to all who sorrow, your peace.
Keep true in us
the love with which we hold one another.
In all our ways we trust you.
And to you,
with your church on earth and in heaven,
we offer honor and glory, now and forever.
Amen.

O God, all that you have given us is yours.
As first you gave *Name* to us,
so now we give *Name* back to you.

Here the pastor, with others, standing near the coffin or urn, may lay hands on it, continuing:

Receive *Name* into the arms of your mercy.
Raise *Name* up with all your people.
Receive us also, and raise us into a new life.
Help us so to love and serve you in this world
that we may enter into your joy in the world to come.

Amen.

Into your hands, O merciful Savior,
we commend your servant *Name*.
Acknowledge, we humbly beseech you,
a sheep of your own fold,
a lamb of your own flock,
a sinner of your own redeeming.
Receive *Name* into the arms of your mercy,
into the blessed rest of everlasting peace,
and into the glorious company of the saints of light.

Amen.

The pastor may administer Holy Communion to all present who wish to share at the Lord's table, using A Service of Word and Table III (page 15). Otherwise, the service continues as follows:

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

God of love, we thank you
for all with which you have blessed us
even to this day:
for the gift of joy in days of health and strength,
and for the gifts of your abiding presence and promise
in days of pain and grief.
We praise you for home and friends,
and for our baptism and place in your church
with all who have faithfully lived and died.
Above all else we thank you for Jesus,
who knew our griefs,
who died our death and rose for our sake,
and who lives and prays for us.
And as he taught us, so now we pray.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (Nos. 894-896)

HYMN

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

A service of committal follows at the final resting place.