

SPC MEMORIAL/FUNERAL SERVICE

Presbyterian Understanding of the Service of Worship

As God's people, called into relationship with God through Jesus Christ, we believe and affirm that God is eternal Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of our lives. We confess that in life and death we belong to God. We affirm the resurrection as a central belief of the Christian faith that shapes our attitudes and responses to the event of death. Death brings loss, sorrow, and grief to all. In the face of death, Christians affirm with tears and joy the hope of the gospel. Christians do not bear bereavement in isolation but are sustained by the power of the Holy Spirit and the community of faith. In that spirit, the church offers a ministry of love and hope to all who grieve.

With this understanding, the funeral should be planned to remember and show respect and honor to the deceased, to encourage the community of believers to gather to console the bereaved, and to witness to our Christian faith in the assurance of God's love and promise of our resurrection to eternal life.

The Christian funeral or memorial service is a service of worship. While it is a celebration of the gift of life of the one who has died and thankfulness to God for that gift, the worship service is first and foremost a "Service of Witness to the Resurrection." Accordingly, the Pastor shall be involved in making appropriate arrangements for worship. The funeral service should ordinarily be held in the sanctuary of the church where people customarily gather for worship in order to join this service to the church's continuing life and witness to the resurrection. However, other options are available and are discussed below.

The service may be observed on any day. A request to observe such a service as a part of the Lord's Day service or to celebrate the Lord's Supper as a part of the service requires the approval of Session, the governing body of the church. The Pastor can make appropriate arrangements to secure approval. The Service shall be complete in itself, and any fraternal, civic, or military rites should be conducted separately. It is suggested these rites be conducted at the place of committal.

In all cases, in keeping with the Reformed tradition of the Presbyterian Church, God is sovereign Lord. It is to God that our attention in worship is to be focused. Consequently, flower and altar arrangements should be simple and should not include items that draw attention to the deceased and redirect the focus of the worshipping community. See below for further information on flowers and music, in keeping with this theological position.

Types of Worship Services

A Funeral Service is held in the church with a casket present. The casket is ordinarily closed.

A Memorial Service is also held in the church without a casket present.

A Committal Service may be held after either of the above or may be the only service the family chooses to have. The Committal Service may take place at the graveside in the cemetery or in our Memorial Garden upon the interment of ashes.

Each of these services should be planned in conjunction with the pastor. A family may request that a guest minister be invited to participate. In that case, the pastor issues the invitation and coordinates the officiating. All three types of services are worship services which should reflect the Reformed tradition and conform to the guidelines in the *Book of Common Worship* of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. The service should celebrate the Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ and our new life in him as well as give thanks for the life of the deceased. The service may include the following elements:

- Scriptural opening sentences
- Hymns, songs and/or psalms which affirm God's power over death, our belief in the Resurrection, and the assurance of the Communion of Saints.
- Readings from Scripture, both Old and New Testament.
- A meditation by the minister

- Brief remarks by friends or family giving thanks for the life of the deceased and paying tribute to his/her witness to the faith.
- Affirmation of Faith
- Prayers
- The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, if the family wishes and with the approval of the Session.
- Benediction

Music

Music should be appropriate for a service of worship, and shall be provided by the Director of Music in consultation with the Pastor. The family may request favorite hymns that are suitable for the occasion. The family may also request additional musicians, but they must be approved and arranged for by the Director of Music.

Flowers

The flowers at the front of sanctuary should be limited to one or two arrangements. There may be an optional casket spray if the casket is present. Floral arrangements from the funeral home should not be brought to the sanctuary. The church office can recommend the florist who usually provides flowers, or the family may select a florist of their own choosing.

Photography, etc.

There will be no photography or videotaping during the service. No photography or mementos of the deceased should be present in the sanctuary or narthex. If the family desires, such mementos may be displayed in Fellowship Hall after the service.

Memorial Garden

Church members and their family members who choose cremation may have their ashes interred in our Memorial Garden. A brochure prepared by the Memorial Garden Committee details the regulations and costs and is available to those with interest. See the Memorial Garden policy for information.

Reception

The family may choose to receive family and friends at a reception in the Fellowship Hall after the service. The Presbyterian Women may provide the reception for the family and friends.

Costs

There are no charges to church members and their family members for the use of our church or the services of our pastor. There is a fee of \$200.00 for the services of the Music Director; \$250.00 if rehearsal with other musicians is necessary. The family is responsible for the cost of floral arrangements and any additional musicians. Internment in the Memorial Garden has a \$500.00 cost (see brochure).

Memorial Gifts

The family may designate the church and/or its building fund for monetary gifts in honor of the deceased.

Southport Presbyterian Church Memorial/Funeral Service

Full Name of the Deceased _____ Nickname _____

Date of Birth _____ Date of Death _____

Place of Birth _____

Next of Kin _____ Relationship _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Children or other Close Relatives	Relationship	Contact Information
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Funeral Home _____

Service: Memorial ____ Funeral ____ Graveside ____

Day & Date _____ Time _____

Scriptures: Old Testament _____ New Testament _____

Hymns _____

Will the choir participate? Yes ____ No ____

Anthem _____

Musician Fees: Director of Music (\$200) _____ Additional rehearsal (\$50) _____

Interment: Cemetery _____

If you prefer cremation, do you wish interment in the church's memorial garden?

Yes ____ No ____

Was the deceased a Military Veteran? Yes ____ No ____

Reception: Is a Reception in the Fellowship Hall Desired? Yes ____ No ____

Memorial Donations: Southport Presbyterian Church: Yes ____ No ____