

THE CHRISTIAN FUNERAL
and
OUR WITNESS TO
THE RESURRECTION FAITH

A GUIDE FOR PLANNING



Orchard Park
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
close to home

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WHEN WE CONSIDER DEATH AND ITS AFTERMATH

1. A Christian funeral should reflect Christian conviction and bear Christian witness. Therefore, those responsible for decisions in arranging it should be less concerned about social custom and more concerned about the meaning and intent of our Christian faith in what we do at this time.
2. In the days and weeks following death, friends of the bereaved family may comfort them by making their Christian love felt in simple ways of kindness and concern. A brief call, a note of sympathetic understanding, and a thoughtful and helpful act of service can mean much in sharing the burden of sorrow.
3. Christians face the fact of death with neither sentimental nor morbid attitude. We prepare for it both in the world of daily affairs and in the realm of the spirit. We live in the hope that belongs to those who are members of the community of the resurrection of faith.

Considerations for Stewardship

As stewards of God, we are responsible to God for using all that God gives us. This responsibility applies not only to the years of our life, but also at the time of our death. Good stewardship includes informed decisions about living wills, power of attorney for health care, and organ donation. Therefore, a properly drawn will is a way by which we fulfill our stewardship. In this way, we adequately provide for our families and for strengthening the service of the Church of Jesus Christ in which we continue as members through the communion of the saints. The OPPC Memorial Support Endowment Committee can provide information and resources for such preparation.

If you prefer not to have all expressions of sympathy and respect in the form of flowers, you should immediately designate a memorial fund to which friends may give. Gifts to the OPPC Memorial Fund will be acknowledged through the pastor to both donors and families of those remembered.

WHEN THE NATURE OF THE FUNERAL SERVICE IS CONSIDERED

1. Remember the funeral service is an act of worship and a celebration of the resurrection. Its purpose is to glorify God, who is Lord of life and death, to commend the dead to God's love and mercy, to mark with our love and respect the completed mortal life of the deceased, to comfort the sorrowing with the Word of God, and to witness to our faith in Jesus Christ who is the resurrection and the life.
2. The appropriate place for the funeral service of a Christian is in the church of which he or she has been a member. The significant moments of a Christian's life from baptism to burial should take place where the setting, symbols, and associations are directed toward the God who created us, loves us, and receives us.
3. The content of the funeral or memorial service is guided by our Directory of Worship and our Book of Common Worship, and is the responsibility of the officiating minister. The general order includes the reading of appropriate passages of scripture, the offering of prayers, the singing of hymns, and the benediction.
4. The singing of hymns and contemporary Christian music, which are strong affirmations of our Christian faith, is appropriate and helpful in the service when enough worshipers are present. All music shall be consistent with the biblical affirmations of God's power over death.
5. During Christian services, conducted by the pastoral staff of OPPC, in the church or elsewhere, the casket is to remain closed and covered by a pall or simple spray of flowers. "We look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal" (*II Corinthians 4:18*).
6. If it is desired that a minister of another church conduct or assist in conducting the service, it is necessary to consult with the Orchard Park Presbyterian Church officiating minister immediately so that he/she may consider the request and, if appropriate, extend the invitation on behalf of OPPC.
7. The Christian service of witness to the resurrection should be considered complete in itself, and another hour and place beforehand should be appointed for any fraternal or civic rite.
8. Some families may prefer that committal of the body be prior to the congregational service of worship, in order that worshipers may center their thoughts on God, our refuge and strength, rather than on the physical remains of the deceased. First, a brief graveside service of scripture and prayer is held for the family. Then the family and congregation go to the church sanctuary for the service of worship
9. Since the resurrection of the body is a certain hope for all who put their trust in Jesus Christ, there is no reason to reject methods of disposal of the body other than burial; therefore, cremation or the donation of the body or parts of the body for medical use or research are Christian possibilities for those who desire to do so.

10. Fees for non-members for the use of the church or the services of the Pastoral Staff:

Use of church facilities:	\$350.00
Professional services of the Pastoral Staff	\$250.00
Services of the Organist	\$150.00
Custodial fee	\$ 85.00
Committal service fee	\$ 40.00
Vocalist services (if contracted thru OPPC)	\$ 60.00

11. . Fees for members: (there is no fee to church members for the use of the church)

Services of the Organist	\$150.00
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12. Suggested Pastor honorarium \$150.00

13. Media presentations are welcome outside of the sanctuary.

THE RESURRECTION FAITH

“The resurrection is a central doctrine of the Christian faith and shapes Christians’ 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 Spirit and the community of faith. The Church offers a ministry of love and hope to all who grieve.

Because it is difficult under emotional stress to plan wisely, the session should encourage members to discuss and plan in advance the arrangements which will be necessary at the time of death, including decisions about the Christian options of burial, cremation, or donation for medical purposes. These plans should provide for arrangements that are simple, which bear witness to resurrection hope, and in which the Christian community is central. The session is responsible for establishing general policies concerning the observance of services on the occasion of death.”

In accordance with this statement from the “Directory for Worship” of the Book of Order, the Session of Orchard Park Presbyterian Church (OPPC) commends the following suggestions to you to be read and pondered now, and then to be kept for guidance and help on those occasions when death comes within your family.

A funeral planning section is included in this pamphlet. OPPC maintains a confidential file for those who wish to submit service plans to the church office or pastoral staff.

FUNERAL RECEPTIONS AT OPPC

The OPPC Deacons' Bereavement subcommittee will provide a warm and comfortable gathering place for those families who need such a place before or after funerals or memorial services at the church. Table, chairs and set-ups, and servers are provided. Food service will be set up in our lounge area. The approximate number of people must be given in advance so the amount of food needed can be determined.

There are several options for families planning receptions, including the following:

Baked Goods Reception This reception provides breakfast pastries, if appropriate, or desserts served with a selection of beverages.

Luncheon Reception This reception provides a light luncheon, menu items to be determined by the committee.

Professionally Catered Reception If neither of the above receptions meet the needs of the family, a third option is to hire a caterer. If this option is chosen, the family is responsible for all arrangements and payment to the caterer. The family should coordinate with the Deacons if assistance is needed with serving.

For options 1 and 2 there is no charge for food items or servers, but if desired, a donation to defray expenses would be welcomed.

WHEN DEATH COMES

1. Call the church immediately. In the ensuing days the pastoral staff will be sharing the experience and responsibility with you in many ways. Pastoral guidance can be most useful in easing your burden, assisting in decisions and making this time holy and significant. The pastoral staff will also wish to be engaged in ministry to the terminally ill and their families.

2. Call the funeral director to take charge of those preparations and arrangements for which he/she is responsible. It is wise before such an occasion arises to select a director carefully and to visit with this person about your preferences.

WHEN FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS ARE TO BE MADE

1. **In consultation with the pastor and the funeral director**, set the time of the funeral or memorial service. Services are not held on Sunday, except in cases of absolute necessity.
2. **Whether or not to have a “viewing” at the funeral home** is a matter of personal choice. Such a meeting with friends may be helpful in the comfort it offers. The casket may be closed, if desired, in which case those visiting are coming to make a call to express their sympathy. OPPC can accommodate visitors in the parlor as arranged with the pastor.
3. **The brief committal service at the grave** is structured to minister to the needs of the family. All those attending the funeral need not come to this final intimate act at which scripture is read and prayer is offered.

OUR PRAYER FOR TRUST

O God in whom we live and move and have our being,
so fill our hearts with trust in you
that by night and by day,
at all times and in all seasons,
we may without fear or distress commit ourselves
and those dear to us to your steadfast love
in this life and the life to come.
Living or dying we are yours
through him who is the resurrection and the life
Amen.

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR FUNERALS AND MEMORIAL SERVICES

Job 19:23-27	I Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38,
Isaiah 40: 1-11, 28-31	42-44, 50, 53-58
Isaiah 40: 28-31	2 Corinthians 4:16-5:
Ecclesiastics 3:1-15	1I Thessalonians 4:13-18
Psalms 23	Revelation 21:1-4, 22-25, 22:3-5
Psalms 46:1-5, 10-11	Matthew 5:1-12a
Psalms 90:1-10, 12	Luke 23:33, 39-43
Psalms 103	John 3:16-21
Psalms 121	John 11:17-27
Psalms 139:1-12	John 14:1-6, 25-27
Romans 8:14-23	Romans 14:7-9, 106-12

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR FUNERALS AND MEMORIAL SERVICES

(From Glory to God—The Presbyterian Hymnal)

- 1 Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty
- 39 Great is Thy Faithfulness
- 43 You Who Dwell in the Shelter of the Lord (On Eagle's Wings)
- 233 The Day of Resurrection!
- 236 The Strife is O'er
- 275 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God
- 306 Blest Be the Tie That Binds
- 326 For All the Saints
- 353 My Hope is Built on Nothing Less
- 366 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
- 436 God of Compassion, in Mercy Befriend Us
- 450 Be Thou My Vision
- 611 Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee
- 619 Praise My Soul, the King of Heaven
- 624 I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art
- 625 O Lord My God
- 643 Now Thank We All Our God
- 649 Amazing Grace
- 687 Our God, Our Help in Ages Past
- 801 The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want
- 802 The King of Love, My Shepherd Is
- 808 When Memory Fades
- 819 Be Still, My Soul
- 824 There is a Place of Quiet Rest (Near to the Heart of God)
- 826 Lift High the Cross
- 829 My Faith Looks Up to Thee
- 833 O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go
- 834 Precious Lord, Take My Hand
- 835 Just a Closer Walk with Thee
- 836 Abide with Me
- 840 When Peace Like a River (It is Well with My Soul)

Contemporary song suggestions are available in the church office.

Orchard Park

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



STAFF MEMBERS

who assist with OPPC funeral services:

Rev. Dr. Shelly Wood-Sr. Pastor, Head of Staff
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Rev. Mike Samson, Associate Pastor
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Michael Pietranczyk –Director of Music
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Lisa Alexander– Facility & Administration Coordinator
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