



A Guide to Funerals
at
St. David's Episcopal Church

The liturgy for the dead is an Easter liturgy. It finds all its meaning in the resurrection. Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we too, shall be raised.

The liturgy, therefore, is characterized by joy, in the certainty that “neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, 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.”

Book of Common Prayer, Page 507

Call Your Parish Priest

When there is a death in your family or a family member is near death, call the church. Someone is always on call. The emergency telephone number after business hours is 770-993-6084. We want to support you and share with you at your time of loss.

Prayers and Readings: Near death or at the time of death

The Book of Common Prayer provides prayers for the time when a person is near death (p. 462), and at the time of death (p. 462-463). When possible, the family and friends join together in the Litany (p. 462) led by the parish priest or by a lay person if the priest cannot be present.

Funeral or Memorial Service

The priest will meet with the family to plan the service. The prayer book says that “Baptized Christians are properly buried from the church. The service should be held at a time when the congregation has an opportunity to be present.” (BCP, p. 490) This entails advance planning.

St. David’s has a strong team of caring parishioners who facilitate funerals. Led by the laity of the church, and under the direction and supervision of the Rector, the Guild of St. Joseph of Arimathaea assists in every aspect of the Burial Liturgy. From arranging readers, vergers, chalice bearers and ushers, to being with the family prior to the service, this guild works with the clergy to provide a thoughtful, dignified and meaningful service based on the Burial Rite in the Book of Common Prayer.

Suggested scripture readings are listed on pages 494 and 495 of the Book of Common Prayer and on page 8 of this booklet. Two or three readings are customary with at least one Psalm. Normally, members of the family or friends read the lessons. The Guild of St. Joseph of Arimathaea is happy to provide readers from the parish upon request.

The Theology of Death and Funerals

Our assurance as Christians is that nothing, not even death, shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Life. We take the Liturgy of Burial seriously and reverently, and endeavor to continue the sacredness of life and death as taught by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, the Holy Eucharist is the principal act of Christian worship and our chief means of offering thanks to God, thus it is especially appropriate to include Holy Eucharist at funerals. Care is given at a funeral to ensure that all baptized persons understand that they are welcome at the Lord's Table. The celebration of the Eucharist at a funeral emphasizes the joy of Resurrection, the New Life we share in Christ, and the presence of the whole communion of saints in which the living are united to the dead.

In keeping with this, the music is sacred; no individual eulogies are given by family or friends, and the sermon is intended to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ *and* honor the deceased.

All the funeral rites of the Church may be held with the body or ashes present or not present.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How soon do I call a priest when a family member dies?

A: You may call for “Prayers at the Time of Death” or request prayers as a person is approaching death. Please note: A Priest is always on call. The emergency telephone number is 770-993-6084.

Q: When a loved one has died, when are the funeral plans made?

A: The clergy will meet with the family in a day or two following the death. It is important to coordinate the date and time of the church service prior to making arrangements to use the services of a Funeral Home. We will work with the Funeral Home staff but reserve the right to confirm the date and time. Also, the priest who will preach meets with the family to listen to stories and recollections to help with the preparation of the sermon.

Q: How do I arrange for funeral flowers?

A: The flowers for the sanctuary are ordered through the Flower Guild (Contact Karen Marshall at 678-777-6423. No flowers may be placed on the coffin. Flowers that may be delivered to the church are placed where the reception will be held or in the front door entry area. Please see the cost sheet for current pricing.

In addition, we want you to know that, in lieu of flowers, a gift may be given in the person’s memory to the Church’s All Saints Memorial Fund or to an appropriate charitable organization. In the newspaper notice we suggest that you state, “In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be sent to...”. We will place this information into the service bulletin, as well. You will be notified of all gifts the Church receives in the name of your loved one.

Q: How are the Holy Scriptures chosen for a funeral?

A: The Burial Rite in the Book of Common Prayer suggests that readings be taken from the Old Testament, the Psalms, the New Testament, and of course the Gospels. There is a recommended list for the preparation of the Liturgy of the Lord. The family is encouraged to choose readings beloved by them or by the deceased.

The recommendations are as follows:

From the Old Testament

Isaiah 25: 6-9 (He will swallow up death for ever)

Isaiah 61: 1-3 (To comfort those who mourn)

Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33 (The Lord is good to those who wait for him)

Wisdom 3: 1-5, 9 (The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God)

Job 19: 21-27a (I know that my Redeemer lives)

A suitable psalm, hymn or canticle may follow. The following Psalms are appropriate:
42:1-7, 46, 90:1-12, 121, 130, 139:1-11

From the New Testament

Romans 8: 14-19, 34-35, 37-39 (The glory that shall be revealed)

1 Corinthians 15: 20-26, 35-38, 42-44, 53-58 (The imperishable body)

2 Corinthians 4: 16-5:9 (Things that are unseen are eternal)

1 John 3: 1-2 (We shall be like him)

Revelation 7:9-17 (God will wipe away every tear)

Revelation 21: 2-7 (Behold, I make all things new)

A suitable psalm, hymn, or canticle may follow. The following Psalms are appropriate:
23, 27, 106: 1-5, 116

The Gospel

John 5: 24-27 (He who believes has everlasting life)

John 6: 37-40 (All that the Father gives me will come to me)

John 10: 11-16 (I am the good shepherd)

John 11: 21-27 (I am the resurrection and the life)

John 14: 1-6 (In my Father's house are many rooms)

Q: How do I choose the music for the funeral?

A: The clergy who meets with you to prepare the funeral service will assist you with this. We believe that hymns are an important part of Christian worship. A funeral or memorial service is a splendid time to express our Easter theology, that is, the hope and faith that Christians manifest in the face of death. The use of two or three congregational hymns at a funeral is appropriate. If you wish to use a personal

favorite not listed below, please discuss the choice with the parish priest.
A number of suggested hymns are listed below by title and the number assigned in the Hymnal. Please note, this list is not exhaustive.

8 – Morning has broken	618 – Ye watchers and ye holy ones
208 – Alleluia! The strife is o’er	625 – Ye holy angels bright
636 – How firm a foundation	488 – Be thou my vision
645 – The King of love my shepherd is	439 – What wondrous love is this
376 – Joyful, joyful we adore thee	657 – Love divine, all loves excelling
390 – Praise to the Lord, the almighty	671 – Amazing Grace
433 – We gather together	680 – O God our help I ages past
482 – Lord of all hopefulness	688 – A mighty fortress is our God
555 – Lead On, O King Eternal	362– Holy, Lord God Almighty
410 - Praise my soul, The King of Heaven	379– God is Love, let heaven adore him
178 – Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord	
304 - I come with joy	460 Alleluia, Sing to Jesus

Q: How do I arrange for a reception to follow the funeral?

A: We are blessed to have the ministry of the Daughters of the King who will arrange a funeral reception for you. Please talk to the priest for information. There is a small cost for this service.

Q: May I be interred in the *St. David's Memorial Garden*?

A: Baptized members of the parish or a family member may be committed to the ground in the Memorial Garden. This may be done at the time of the funeral or at a later date. There is a charge of \$205 for interment and for personalized plaques to be placed in the Garden and in the Nave.

Q: My family members want to speak about the deceased at the funeral. Is this allowed?

A: No eulogies are given at the liturgy. We recommend that this be arranged at the reception or family gathering. The clergy will preach a sermon intended to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ *and* honor the life of the deceased.

Q: My father was in the military. May the United States flag be draped over his coffin during the service?

A: A white pall is used over every casket or urn holding the cremated remains in the church. In the eyes of God, we are his beloved children and all are equal in His sight. Therefore, the particular burial rituals of fraternal orders, military

organizations, or other such associations, if used, are generally held at the graveside. Please discuss military honors with the clergy prior to making arrangements.

Q: What is the cost of a funeral at St. David's?

A: You will be asked to make donations to the Organist, the Flower Guild, and to the Sexton by check made payable directly to the individual. A donation also may be made to the clergy. Please see page 10 with current pricing information. Normally, these donations are made on the day of the funeral or the week following.

Q: What is the difference between the funeral and the interment? What is the Committal?

A: The liturgy for burial is woven together to include the Ministry of the Word, the Holy Eucharist, and the Commendation which are special prayers offered beside the casket or urn at the closing of the funeral.

The Committal is sometimes called the Graveside Service. These are prayers made at the grave. In many cases, following a funeral at St. David's, the family may drive to the Cemetery for the Committal. In other cases, the Committal is done at another time or location beyond Atlanta.

Other Information

For your reflection from the Catechism found in the **Book of Common Prayer**, pp. 861-862)

What is the Christian hope?

The Christian hope is to live with confidence in the newness and fullness of life, and to await the coming of Christ in glory, and the completion of God's purpose for the world.

What do we mean by the coming of Christ in glory?

By the coming of Christ in glory, we mean that Christ will come, not in weakness but in power, and will make all things new.

What do we mean by heaven and hell?

By heaven, we mean eternal life in our enjoyment of God; by hell, we mean eternal death in our rejection of God.

Why do we pray for the dead?

We pray for them, because we still hold them in our love, and because we trust that in God's presence those who have chosen to serve will grow in his love, until they see God as God is.

What do we mean by the last judgment?

We believe that Christ will come in glory and judge the living and the dead.

What do we mean by the resurrection of the body?

We mean that God will raise us from death in the fullness of our being, that we may live with Christ in the communion of the saints.

What is the communion of the saints?

The communion of saints is the whole family of God, the living and the dead, those whom we love and those whom we hurt, bound together in Christ by sacrament, prayer, and praise.

What do we mean by everlasting life?

By everlasting life, we mean a new existence, in which we are united with all the people of God, and in the joy of fully knowing and loving God and each other.

What, then, is our assurance as Christians?

Our assurance as Christians is that nothing, not even death, shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Life. Amen.

Funeral Cost Information

Funeral Service: \$250

Funeral Altar Flowers: \$150

Make check payable to "St. David's Episcopal Church"

Reception (Optional): \$100

Make check payable to "St. David's Episcopal Church"

Sexton: \$100

Make check payable to "Freddie Stokes"

Memorial Garden (Optional with Bronze name plaque and name plaque in Nave): \$230

Make check payable to "St. David's Episcopal Church"

Organist: \$150

Make check payable to "Sue Mitchell-Wallace" to be paid on day of funeral.

Clergy: Donation

Kindly prepare separate checks made out to each individual (see above) for the Organist, Clergy and Sexton. Thank you!

CLERGY

The Rev. Remington Slone
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The Rev. Michelle Ortiz, Associate Rector
mortiz@stdavidchurch.org

The Rev. Anne Elizabeth Swiedler, Priest Associate, retired
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The Rev. Antonio Brito, Hispanic Ministry
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The Rev. Tom Ader, Deacon, retired

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