

## **SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BALTIMORE**

### **Policies Relating to Services Upon the Occasion of a Death**

The death of a loved one, regardless of the circumstances, is a time of significant loss and grief. Because it is difficult to plan appropriately when under the emotional stress of loss, you are encouraged to consider, discuss, and even plan in advance the arrangements that will be necessary at the time of your own death or the death of a loved one. This includes decisions about the Christian options of burial, cremation or donation of the body for medical purposes.

The Pastor(s) of Second Presbyterian Church welcome the opportunity to assist you with such planning.

#### **Because We Believe**

Because Christians believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting, death is understood to be a natural part of this life. It is the occasion when those who die in the Lord move from this world where all die, to the realm of life eternal lived with the Lord, where death, loss, mourning, crying and pain no longer exist. (Rev. 21:4) Christians also experience death as a time of loss when sorrow, grief and bereavement are both natural and appropriate. These two convictions guide the church in its ministry to those who have lost a loved one to death, affirming with both joy and tears the promise and hope of the gospel.

#### **Grieving in a Community of Hope**

Christians do not bear bereavement in isolation, but are sustained by the power of God's Spirit, the Comforter, and are to be surrounded by the support, consolation and care of the faith community. The Pastor(s) of this church have been trained to minister to and provide support and assistance to those who have lost someone to death. The Pastor(s) welcomes the privilege of ministering to you on such occasions, and stand ready to assist you in such times of need. When death occurs, please inform the Pastor as soon as possible.

#### **Choices To Be Made**

A number of choices will need to be made beyond that of burial, cremation, organ or other donation for medical purposes before the service can be planned:

- Will the family wish to have an opportunity to view their loved one's body? (Viewings are possible even when the deceased has made arrangements for organ donations.) Viewings can be very helpful to the grieving process that will follow, especially if the

death was unexpected. The Pastor can talk with you about this and assist you in your decision.

- Will the viewing be private (for family members only) or also include the larger community of friends?
- Will the body be buried, cremated or donated?
- Does the deceased have a burial plot or columbarium niche? If not, a funeral director can assist you with the purchase of a grave, or a niche may be purchased from the church.
- Will the service be a funeral or memorial service? Funeral services have the casket or urn present in the service; memorial services take place after burial, scattering of ashes or inurnment (placing of an urn in a columbarium niche).
- Does the family prefer Sanctuary or Chapel for the service?
- Will the burial, scattering or inurnment be a continuation of the worship service or take place before or at an extended time after the service?
- Will there be a reception following the worship or committal service, and where will it be held—the church, a club, nearby hotel or private home?
- When and where will the funeral or memorial service be held? The funeral or memorial service is ordinarily held in the usual place of worship in order to join the service to the community's continuing worship, life and witness to the resurrection. It may be held on any day of the week, and should be planned for a time that will meet not only the needs of the family, but also enable the participation of other members of the faith community. Be aware that due to parking restrictions in Baltimore, it is not wise to schedule a funeral to begin after 2 pm on a weekday.

### **Policies Concerning the Service**

The service itself is under the direction of the Pastor and typically includes scripture readings, hymns, brief sermon, and prayers that affirm God's power over death, belief in the resurrection to everlasting life and the assurance of the communion of saints. The service will give thanks for the life of the one who has died with special emphasis upon the gifts, attributes, accomplishments and contributions of the person's life. Family members and/or friends may be invited to participate as leaders in the service at the discretion of the Pastor. All memorial and funeral services occurring in Second Presbyterian Church property will ordinarily be led by the Pastor, or by the Associate Pastor upon request from Pastor. Upon request of the family, and at the discretion of the Pastor, guest clergy may be invited to assist in the service. A request to celebrate the Lord's Supper as a part of the service requires the approval of the Session (the governing body of the congregation) with such a request being made through the Pastor. The service is complete in itself and any fraternal, civic or military rites must be conducted at a separate time and place. Military rites may be held immediately following the benediction of a memorial or funeral service. When there are important reasons not to hold the service in the usual place of worship, it may be held at another suitable place such as a chapel, home, funeral home, crematorium, mausoleum, columbarium or graveside.

The service begins with the gathering of family and the larger community. If a casket has been open for viewing it shall be closed before the service begins, If the body has been cremated and not yet inurned, the urn may be placed in the sanctuary or chapel. During the time of gathering the organist or other musicians will play preludes suitable for reflection, meditation and personal prayer.

If tributes are to be offered by family or friends they should be brief. Because memorial and funeral Services are services of worship, the Pastor reserves the right to limit the number of tributes or total time allotted for them. Longer remembrances and recollections are more appropriately offered during a post committal/inurnment reception or meal.

The service itself shall consist of a number of readings from scripture including several Old Testament, Epistle and Gospel readings, the singing of hymns, and may also include anthems, or other vocal or instrumental music. The service is designed to give expression to God's sovereignty over death, confessing God's power to raise us to new life and God's desire to bring us comfort in our time of loss. The Pastor will want to consult with the family in the choosing of these lessons, hymns and other musical offerings. The Music Director will also be consulted if there are specific requests for soloists or other musicians. Any readings other than scripture or music (poetry, inspirational writings or songs) must have the prior approval of the Pastor to insure that their messages are consistent with the Christian gospel.

During the service the Pastor will lead the community in prayer. This prayer is a time to give thanks to God for the life of Jesus Christ and the promise of the gospel, for the gift of the life of the one who has died, remembering the characteristics, contributions and service that especially endeared the deceased to family, friends and the faith community. Thanksgiving is also offered for the promised comfort of the Holy Spirit, praying for support for family and friends in this time of loss. Included in this prayer are intercessions for family members and loved ones who are grieving, as well as for those ministering to them and for all who have suffered loss. Following a prayer commending the one who has died to the eternal care of God, and for the grace of faith and hope for all present, the pastor will lead the congregation in praying together the Lord's Prayer.

If a casket is present, the Pastor will lead it and the pallbearers out of the sanctuary at the conclusion of the service to the waiting hearse. The family may follow the casket.

At the present time we are generally able to record a funeral or memorial service taking place in the sanctuary using a single camera angle without the ability to change microphone settings during the service. The church can make the recording available to the family. We are not able to stream a service due to copyright restrictions and staffing limitations at the present time.

## **Service of Committal**

A service of committal may take place at the graveside or in the columbarium either before or after the main worship service. This service of farewell for family and friends is one of simplicity, dignity and brevity. It will include a brief reading from scripture, words of committal, prayers, final blessing and dismissal, entrusting the one who has died to the care of God, bearing witness to faith in the resurrection to eternal life. It is also possible to hold only a graveside service, which would include scripture readings, remembrances of the deceased and prayers similar to those in a full service, including the prayer of committal.

## **Innurement in Columbarium**

Please see separate Columbarium rules and regulations.

## **Frequently Asked Questions:**

### **Must one be a member of Second Presbyterian Church to have a funeral or memorial service at the church?**

No. This ministry of the church and its Pastor is open to all who profess faith in Jesus Christ, whether a member of the congregation or not.

### **How soon and at what time should the service be?**

Funeral services are generally held within three to seven days following death, thereby allowing appropriate time for family members and friends to gather for the service. Memorial services can be held at any time. If a funeral is to be followed by a burial that same day, the schedule of the cemetery workers may dictate the time of the service. (It is possible to have a late afternoon or evening service, followed by a burial the next morning.) Otherwise, the service should be scheduled for a time that will allow for the greatest number of people to attend. Frequently, weekday services occur before or after the luncheon hour, allowing people to be away from their offices for an extended time around noon. Saturday services are often held mid to late morning, with Sunday services being held a couple of hours after the last worship service. Due to parking restrictions around the church, we encourage services on weekdays to start no later than 2 PM.

### **What fees are associated with the service?**

Yes there are fees. See end of document.

**Is it possible for clergy not associated with Second Presbyterian Church to participate?**

The Pastor of this congregation is in charge of all memorial and funeral services occurring on church property. Upon request and at his/her discretion, guest clergy may be invited to assist in the service.

**Is it possible to use guest musicians?**

The musical portion of the service is under the supervision of both the officiating pastor and the church's Director of Music. Ordinarily we do not recommend the use of family or friends as soloists, as the emotional nature of the occasion makes singing or playing extremely difficult. If this is desired, it should be discussed with the Pastor during service planning and a final determination made at that time. A guest organist or other instrumentalists may be used, subject to the approval of the Director of Music. However the church's Director of Music always has the right of first refusal. In accordance with American Guild of Organists rules, when a guest organist is utilized for the service, the church's organist will receive the customary service fee with the family providing an honoraria or other stipend to the guest musician.

**Can friends or family speak during the service?**

Often family members or friends may offer "tributes" during the service. We request that you limit those to no more than three and that they plan to speak for no more than 3 minutes each. If there is a particular desire to have more people speak or to have them be allotted more time, please discuss this with the Pastor ahead of time. Sometimes immediate family members find it very difficult to speak at the service so we encourage each speaker to have written down their remarks ahead of time and to provide a copy to the Pastor or another family member so that their remarks could be read by another person.

**May we have a viewing at the church a day before the service or must that take place at a funeral home?**

Viewing can take place in the church, either on an afternoon and/or evening before the funeral, or one or two hours before the service on the day of the funeral itself. There will be a modest charge for the preparation and use of the space.

**Does the church provide pallbearers?**

No. If a casket is to be present, pallbearers will need to be provided by the family or friends, or arranged for by the family through the funeral director. If professional pallbearers are used, it is possible to have honorary pallbearers listed as such in the order of worship.

**Who is responsible for producing the order of worship or program?**

After the service has been planned with the Pastor, the church will produce a bulletin that contains the order of worship. The family may produce and provide a separate document with pictures and additional biographical information.

**Who provides the guest book?**

The family is responsible for providing a guest book, which can be purchased through a funeral director or at a fine stationery store.. This will be placed in the room during a viewing, or in the narthex during the service.

**When is payment due to the church?**

Once the service is complete, the church's business office will prepare a statement of charges, which can then be paid within 30 days of receipt. The single exception is payment for the columbarium niche, which must be paid for prior to the service.

**May a reception follow the service?**

Yes. This is an important time for worshipers to greet the family and extend their condolences. It is also a good time for people to engage in further remembrance. We suggest that if the family has favorite photographs, artwork or other important mementoes, these be displayed at the reception. The family is responsible for providing these. Please see separate instructions regarding receptions.

**Is the family responsible for ushers?**

No.

**What is the typical order for a Memorial or Funeral Service at Second Presbyterian Church?**

A typical service might look like the following, but the final order of any service is subject to revision by the Pastor:

- Prelude
- Seating of Family
- Sentences of Scripture/Call to Worship
- Hymn\*
- Prayer of Confession
- Words of Assurance
- Readings from Scripture
- Homily/Meditation
- Hymn\*
- Sharing of Memories/Tributes\*\*
- Affirmation of Faith
- Prayers of Thanksgiving
- The Lord's Prayer
- Hymn\*
- Commendation
- Blessing
- Recession/Procession to Columbarium or Grave

\*Optional but typically encouraged

**\*\*Optional and pastor may limit number and/or total time allowed. Longer and additional may appropriately be offered at a reception or meal or at the graveside.**

## **Possible Scripture Readings for Funeral and Memorial Services**

*This list merely offers suggestions and is not intended to be exhaustive.*

### **Old Testament**

Job 19:23-27  
Isaiah 40:1-11, 28-31  
Isaiah 40:28-31  
Isaiah 65:17  
Psalm 23  
Psalm 46:1-5, 10-11  
Psalm 90:1-10, 12  
Psalm 121  
Psalm 130  
Psalm 139:1-12

### **Epistle Lessons**

Romans 8:14-23, 31-39  
Romans 14:7-9, 10b-12  
1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-44, 50, 53-58  
2 Corinthians 4:16-5:1  
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18  
Revelation 21:1-4, 22-25, 22:3-5  
Revelation 22:1-5

### **Gospels**

Matthew 5:1-12a  
Luke 23:33, 39-43  
John 11:17-27  
John 14:1-6, 25-27

### **Hymns**

Our God, Our Help in Ages Past  
A Mighty Fortress is Our God  
Amazing Grace  
How Firm a Foundation  
Abide With Me  
Be Thou My Vision  
Give Thanks for Life

Approved by Session, October 18, 2022

O Lord of Life, Where'er They Be  
Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah  
Now Thank Thee All Our God  
The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want  
The King of Love My Shepherd Is  
My Shepherd Will Supply My Needs  
For All the Saints Who From Their Labors Rest



**Funeral and Memorial Service Fee Schedule, As of October 2022**

	<b>Members</b>	<b>Non-Members</b>
<b>Pastor</b>	No charge	\$ 250.00
<b>Organist/Pianist</b>	No Charge**	\$ 200.00
<b>Vocalist</b>	<b>\$150.00</b>	<b>\$150.00</b>
<b>Sanctuary, Chapel, Wescott</b>	No charge	<b>\$ 300.00</b>
<b>Reception in Smith Hall</b>	<b>\$100.00</b>	<b>\$300.00</b>

**In some situations fees may be reduced at the discretion of the Pastor if family financial circumstances warrant.**

**\*\*It is customary for an honorarium to be given to the Organist. Suggested honorarium is \$175.00. If the church's Music Director is not available to provide instrumental music, there would be a set fee of \$250 for the instrumentalist.**

## **BOOK OF ORDER REFERENCES TO SERVICES ON THE OCCASION OF DEATH**

### W-4.10000 10. Services on the Occasion of Death

#### W-4.10001 Christians and Death

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. (W-6.3006)

#### W-4.10002 Planning Arrangements

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 which 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. (W-1.4004)

#### W-4.10003 Setting of the Service

The service on the occasion of death ordinarily should be held in the usual place of worship in order to join this service to the community's continuing life and witness to the resurrection. W-4.10000: 2 Helv.Conf. 5.235–5.236 W-4.10003–.10005 Directory For Worship 130 Book of Order 2015/2017

The service shall be under the direction of the pastor. Others may be invited to participate as leaders in the service at the discretion of the pastor.

This 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 a service on the occasion of death requires the approval of the session.

#### W-4.10004 Form and Order

The service begins with scriptural sentences. It is appropriate for worshipers to sing hymns, psalms, spirituals, or spiritual songs which affirm God's power over death, a belief in the resurrection to life everlasting, and the assurance of the communion of the saints. Scripture shall be read; a sermon or other exposition of the Word may be proclaimed; an affirmation of faith may be made by the people. Aspects of the life of the one who has died may be recalled. Prayers shall be offered, giving thanks to God (1) for life in Jesus Christ and the promise of the

gospel, (2) for the gift of the life of the one who has died, (3) for the comfort of the Holy Spirit, (4) for the community of faith; making intercessions (5) for family members and loved ones who grieve, (6) for those who minister to and support the bereaved, (7) for all who suffer loss; lifting supplications (8) for faith and grace for all who are present; concluding with the Lord's Prayer. The service ends by commending the one who has died to the care of the eternal God and sending the people forth with a benediction.

#### W-4.10005 Alternatives and Options

This service may be observed before or after the committal of the body. In order that attention in the service be directed to God, when a casket is present it ordinarily is closed. It may be covered with a funeral pall. The service may include other actions common to the community of faith and its cultures when these actions do not detract from or diminish the Christian understanding of death and resurrection. The service shall be complete in itself, and any fraternal, civic, or military rites should be conducted separately. When there are important reasons not to hold the service in the usual place of worship, it may be held in another suitable place such as a home, a funeral home, a crematorium, or at graveside. Ordering Worship for Special Purposes W-4.10006 Book of Order 2015/2017 131

#### W-4.10006 Service of Committal

Members and friends of the family of the one who has died should gather at the graveside or crematorium for a service of farewell, which is to be conducted with simplicity, dignity, and brevity. The service includes readings from Scripture, prayers, words of committal, and a blessing, reflecting the reality of death, entrusting the one who has died to the care of God, and bearing witness to faith in the resurrection from the dead.