



Funeral Information & Planning Sheet

The clergy and people of Christ Church New Brighton extend their prayers and condolences to you upon the death of your loved one. We hope that these guidelines will help you to plan a funeral service within the liturgy of the Episcopal Church.

About Funerals

The funeral service is a celebration of the death and Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that baptized Christians share with Christ in his Resurrection and victory over death. This means that the funeral liturgy is an Easter liturgy and is, therefore, characterized by joy. This joy, however, does not make human grief unchristian. The very love we have for each other in Christ brings deep sorrow when we are parted by death. Jesus himself wept at the grave of his friend Lazarus. So, while we rejoice that one we love has entered into the nearer presence of our Lord, we sorrow in sympathy with those who mourn.

At the Time of Death

The death of a member of the Church should be reported as soon as possible to the parish, and arrangements for the funeral should be made in consultation with the Rector. 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.

The Vigil Service

The family of the deceased may arrange with the Rector to hold a vigil service on the evening before the funeral. The vigil service may be held at a family member's home or at the funeral home. At the vigil service Holy Scripture will be read, prayers will be offered for the deceased and for those who mourn, and there will be a time of remembrance. At the time of remembrance, family and friends will have the opportunity to share stories and memories of the deceased. The emphasis at the vigil service is on the life the deceased lived here on earth.

The Liturgy

The emphasis of the funeral liturgy is on the deceased's resurrected life with Christ. The order of the service, the decorations, and the music work together to celebrate our participation in Jesus' death and Resurrection.

The order of service for funerals is according to the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. The Book of Common Prayer has two funeral liturgies, and they are fundamentally the

same. The Rite I service uses traditional Elizabethan English, while the Rite II service uses a more contemporary idiom.

The staff of Christ Church will prepare a bulletin so that the congregation may easily follow the order of service.

Scripture Lessons

Lessons from Holy Scripture are read at funeral services. You will be asked to choose two or three to be read at the funeral. At funerals without the Holy Eucharist, two lessons are usually read, with a psalm read between them. At a funeral service in which the Holy Eucharist is celebrated two or three lessons, separated by a psalm and/or hymn, are usually read. At the Eucharist a Gospel lesson is always read by either a deacon or a priest. When three lessons are used, the first is from the Old Testament and the second is from the New Testament, excluding the Gospels. When two lessons are used, the first may be from either the Old Testament or the New Testament. The second lesson is from the New Testament, either an Epistle or Gospel. You may ask family members to read the first two lessons and/or the psalm.

Please refer to the following documents for further information: *Appropriate Readings for Funerals* and *Suggested Psalms for Funerals* (the last page of this document includes *Appropriate Hymns for Funerals*).

The Holy Eucharist

In the Episcopal Church the Holy Eucharist - also called the Mass, Holy Communion, or the Lord's Supper - is frequently celebrated as part of funeral and memorial services. The Holy Eucharist is our central sacrament which celebrates Christ's death and resurrection. A celebration of the Holy Eucharist as part of a funeral or memorial service reminds us that we also share with Christ his death and resurrection. In the Eucharist we also share in the heavenly banquet with the deceased and with those who have gone before. In the Episcopal Church, all baptized Christians who have been admitted to Communion in their own churches are welcome to receive Holy Communion.

Eulogies

The Vigil service is the appropriate time for family and friends to share memories and stories about the life of the deceased. However, one family member or close friend may speak at the funeral service. The eulogy should be five to eight minutes in length and share reflections appropriate for a church service. The Officiant at the funeral service will also preach. The purpose of the sermon is to relate the life and death of the deceased to the hope we have, even in the midst of sorrow, in the Resurrection of Christ.

Music

The music at funerals must be sacred in nature. Hymns are normally drawn from the 1982 Hymnal. Appendix C contains a list of hymns from the 1982 hymnal that are

appropriate for funerals. Hymns not found in the 1982 Hymnal may on occasion be used if the music can be secured and if copyright permission is granted. The Organist and Choirmaster of Christ Church plays at all funerals unless he gives permission for another organist to play. Vocal and instrumental solos must be approved by the Organist and Choirmaster of Christ Church. Music from tapes, compact discs, or karaoke-style music is not permitted.

The Church Environment

The liturgical color for funerals is white. White is the color used for many of the great feasts of the Church and symbolizes the joy of the Resurrection. The frontal on the altar, the hangings on the lectern, the pall on the casket, and the ministers' vestments are all white. The paschal candle, which is lit at Easter, baptisms, and funerals, is placed by the body to symbolize the presence of Christ and the victory of light over darkness.

Flowers

Flowers may be placed in the two vases on the retable behind the altar, other flowers may be placed in the narthex (entrance) of the church and at the reception.

The Body

The body of the deceased, as the temple of the Holy Spirit, is always treated with dignity and respect. When the body is present for the funeral, the casket is closed prior to the funeral. Prior to the funeral the casket is covered with a white cloth called a pall. The pall reminds us of the white garment of baptism and that the promises of baptism are fulfilled at our deaths. The cross and clergy proceed the casket into the church and family members may follow it if they wish. During the service the casket is placed at the steps of the chancel and next to the paschal candle. At the conclusion of the service, special prayers of commendation are offered around the casket and the clergy precede the casket out of the church with the family following.

A funeral service without a body is properly called a memorial service. It is conducted in much the same way as a funeral service with the exception that the prayers of commendation over the body are not used.

Cremations

Cremation is an acceptable and dignified way of treating the deceased's body. In a sense cremation merely hastens the natural process of returning a body to ashes and dust. When the ashes, sometimes called cremains, are present during the service they are treated the same way as a body in a casket. They are placed on a table at the front of the church and covered with a small pall. They may be processed in and out of the church or they may be placed on a table before the service begins. The ashes may be interred before or after the funeral service or at a later date.

Funeral Receptions

Funeral receptions are usually held in the Guild Room in the parish hall. Large receptions may be held in the auditorium on the second floor of the parish hall.

Contact Information

You can reach the Parish Administrator or our Rector at 718-727-6100 during normal business hours, Tuesday through Friday.

Fees

Parishioners: \$350, includes organist, sexton, and altar guild

Non-parishioners: \$550, includes organist, sexton, and altar guild

Honorarium for Rector's Discretionary Fund Soloists: Negotiated separately

Flowers: Responsibility of Family

Refreshments: Responsibility of the Family

Funeral Planning Assistance Sheet

Please take a moment to fill out the form as completely as possible. This will save time when you come in to speak with the Rector to set up the service. See Contact Information (above) to make an appointment to speak to the Rector.

Select a Service Type:

- Burial Office Rite 1
- Burial Office Rite 2
- Holy Eucharist Rite 1
- Holy Eucharist Rite 2

Hymn Selections:

After the Opening Anthems: _____

Before the Gospel: _____

At the Offertory: _____

At the Recessional: _____

Other: _____

Soloist: _____

Lesson Selections:

Old Testament: _____

Psalm: _____

New Testament: _____

Gospel: _____

Select a Burial Type:

- Casket
- Cremation

Select a Burial Location:

- Cemetery
- Christ Church Columbarium
- Other

Burial Time:

- Before the funeral
- After the funeral
- After the reception
- Other

Information about the Deceased:

Full Name of the Deceased: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Date of Death: _____

After you have finished filling out this information, please bring this page with you when you meet with the Rector to help plan the funeral service.