



CHRISTIAN BURIAL CUSTOMARY

Information and Planning Guide

The liturgy for the dead is an Easter liturgy. It finds 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 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.”

WHEN SOMEONE WE LOVE DIES . . .

our loss can leave us not only sorrowful but also stunned, not knowing what to do or where to turn. There are so many decisions to make, and we may not even know the questions to ask. The clergy and staff of St. Paul's Episcopal Church are here to help you work through this very difficult time. Together, we will explore the options for your service and help you make decisions that are most appropriate for the deceased and for the loved ones who remain. Through it all, our conversation will grow from God's assurance that through Jesus Christ, death is not the last word and that the love you shared can never die.

HERE ARE SOME STEPS TO TAKE PRIOR TO OR IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF A LOVED ONE:

- First, notify St. Paul's so that a priest can meet with you for pastoral counsel and to schedule the service.
- Second, let family and friends know and tell them if you wish to receive visitors, flowers, or food.
- Third, gather memories about the deceased for an obituary; a funeral home will assist you with this.
- Fourth, meet with the clergy to plan the service. The Episcopal Church's liturgy is beautiful and well designed, but there will be opportunities to select scripture readings and hymns.

SCHEDULING THE SERVICE

The clergy will work with you to establish a date and time for the funeral taking into consideration the needs of your family and the schedule of the church. Except for unusual circumstances, Sundays and major feast days are not available. Please wait to publicize the service and visitation times until you have confirmed the date and time with your clergy.

RECEPTION AND VISITATION

Before or after the service, St. Paul's is happy to host a gathering of friends and family in our Parish Hall if the deceased or the family is linked to the parish. This offers an opportunity to share memories and stories of the deceased. Ms. Jerry Redditt leads a team of parishioners who make the arrangements and provide the refreshments. If alcohol is to be served, the deceased's family can provide it.

COLUMBARIUM

Many people choose to have their remains cremated. St. Paul's has a columbarium located in a small courtyard adjacent to the nave; it is a place of peace to memorialize loved ones. Member families or individuals may reserve one or more spaces for interring ashes through the columbarium trustees/clerk. The fee for the interment and engraving is \$800 per individual. The urns for the outside columbarium at St. Paul's are supplied by Woodfin's Funeral Home for under \$70. If you have purchased a space in the columbarium inside the church, these arrangements have already been made.

FLOWERS

St. Paul’s provides the altar flowers for the service at no cost, though the family may choose to make a donation to the Flower Guild. The Guild consults with the family in arranging for flowers and colors that are meaningful to them. If the family chooses to hire a florist at their own expense, the Flower Guild will consult with the florist and provide them with the urns, which the florist must use. After the service the altar flowers remain; if the church uses them for a Sunday worship service, the bulletin will add a dedication that will read, “The flowers on the altar are given to the Glory of God and in loving memory of . . .” Any additional flowers or plants that arrive will be placed in the narthex (entry hall) or the Parish Hall; after the service, the family is free to remove them or leave them for the church’s use.

RECEIVING THE BODY OR ASHES OF THE DECEASED

St. Paul’s will work with the funeral home or crematory you have selected. When the remains arrive at the church, it is our custom for a priest to receive the body or ashes and say a prayer for the deceased (*Book of Common Prayer*, page 466). The body or ashes will be reverently cared for until the time of the service.

PLANNING THE SERVICE

A priest will go over the service with you and help you choose appropriate readings and music from Holy Scripture and the Hymnal. We follow the order of service listed in the *Book of Common Prayer* beginning on page 469 (Rite I) or page 491 (Rite II). You will need to decide if you wish to include Holy Communion with the service. All baptized Christians are welcome to receive communion at St. Paul’s.

MUSIC

Our Organist/Director of Music, plays for all funerals or memorial services at St. Paul’s, and if unavailable, secures a substitute organist. Although there is no fee for playing, you may wish to offer an honorarium. In addition, the Organist/Director of Music is available to assist you in selecting appropriate hymns from one of the hymnals used at St. Paul’s. All music, including vocal solos and instrumental music, must be suitable for a church service. Additional musicians and soloists can be arranged in consultation with the Organist/Director of Music.

The following hymns are particularly appropriate for funeral services:

Sequence and/or Offertory Hymns:	The King of love my shepherd is H645	Offertory/Communion Anthems:
Amazing grace H671, LEVAS 181	What a friend we have in Jesus LEVAS 109	God Be in My Head by John Rutter
Be thou my vision H488		Over My Head by John Bell
Blessed assurance LEVAS 184	Communion Hymns:	Precious Lord, Take My Hand by Thomas
Come down, O Love divine H516	I am the bread of life H335	A. Dorsey LEVAS 106, WLP 800
Come, thou fount of every blessing H686, LEVAS 111	On eagle’s wings WLP 810	Saints Bound for Heaven by Alice Parker
Great is thy faithfulness LEVAS 189	Seek ye first H711	and Robert Shaw
Hymn of promise MHSO 86	Spirit Song LEVAS 118	Shall We Gather at the River by John Carter
I want to walk as a child of the light H490	Recessional Hymns:	Steal Away by Howard Helvey
It is well with my soul LEVAS 188	A mighty fortress is our God H688	The Lord Is My Shepherd by Neil Harmon
Jerusalem, my happy home H620	For all the saints H287	(Psalm 23)
Lord of all hopefulness H486	Guide me, O thou great Jehovah H690	The Lord Is My Shepherd by Howard
My faith looks up to thee H691, LEVAS 88	How firm a foundation H636	Goodall (Psalm 23)
My hope is built LEVAS 99	I’ll praise my Maker while I’ve breath H429	There Is a Balm in Gilead H676
On Jordan’s stormy banks LEVAS 9	O God, our help in ages past H680	
Rock of ages H685	The strife is o’er H208	

continued on the next page . . .

Hymns appropriate for funeral services continued:

Offertory/Communion Solos:	I Know That My Redeemer Lives by G. F.	Pie Jesu by Gabriel Faure (soprano)
Ave Maria by Franz Schubert (any voice)	Handel (soprano)	Pie Jesu by Andrew Lloyd Webber (2
Deep River (any voice)	If I Can Help Somebody (any voice)	sopranos)
Give Me Jesus (any voice)	O Rest in the Lord by Felix Mendelssohn	
He Shall Feed His Flock by G. F. Handel	(alto)	
(soprano or alto)	On Eagle's Wings by Michael Joncas	
His Eye Is on the Sparrow (any voice)	(Psalm 91; any voice)	

WORSHIP SERVERS

There are several ways for individuals to assist during the service. While the church will provide Lay Eucharistic Ministers who help serve communion, acolytes who assist the clergy, and ushers, many families desire to choose family members or friends for the reading of scriptures. The priest with whom you plan the service will assist you with these decisions.

REMEMBRANCES

Occasionally, a family member will ask to give a remembrance during the service. This is a special opportunity to share fond memories with the congregation. We strongly urge you to discuss this option with the officiating priest. Our desire is that your remembrance will be heartfelt but also of reasonable length—just 2 or 3 minutes. The visitation and other family gatherings will be excellent opportunities to continue sharing special memories.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

“One or more of the following passages from Holy Scripture is read. If there is to be communion, a passage from the Gospel always concludes the readings.” (*Book of Common Prayer* 470/494)

Old Testament Readings

Isaiah 25:6-9

On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear. And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations; he will swallow up death forever. Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken. It will be said on that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us. This is the Lord for whom we have waited; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Isaiah 61:1-3

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.

Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. “The Lord is my portion,” says my soul, “therefore I will hope in him.” The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that seeks him. It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. For the Lord will not reject forever. Although he causes grief, he will have compassion according to the abundance of his steadfast love; for he does not willingly afflict or grieve anyone.

Wisdom 3:1-5, 9

But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seem to have died, and their departure was thought to be a disaster, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace. For though in the sight of others they were punished, their hope is full of immortality. Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself. Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his holy ones, and he watches over his elect.

Job 19:21-27a

Have pity on me, have pity on me, O you my friends, for the hand of God has touched me! Why do you, like God, pursue me, never satisfied with my flesh? O that my words were written down! O that they were inscribed in a book! O that an iron pen and with lead they were engraved on a rock forever! For I know that my Redeemer lives, and that at the last he will stand upon the earth; and after my skin has been thus destroyed, then in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see on my side, and my eyes shall behold, and not another.

New Testament Readings

Romans 8:14-19, 34-35, 37-39

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, “Abba! Father!” it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him. I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, 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.

1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-44, 53-58

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. But someone will ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?” Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable,

what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown in a physical body, it is raised in a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.” “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

2 Corinthians 4:16-5:9

So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because 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. For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling—if indeed, when we have taken it off we will not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we groan under our burden, because we wish not to be unclothed but to be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord—for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.

1 John 3:1-2

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God’s children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is.

Revelation 7:9-17

After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, “Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!” And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, singing, “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen.” Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, “Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?” I said to him, “Sir, you are the one that knows.” Then he said to me, “These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

Revelation 21:2-7

And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.” And the one who was seated on the throne said, “See, I am making all things new.” Also he said, “Write this for these words are trustworthy and true.” Then he said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children.

Gospel Readings

John 5:24-27

Very truly, I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life, and does not come under judgment, but has passed from death to life. “Very truly, I tell you, the hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For just as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself; and he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man.”

John 6:37-40

Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away; for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day.

John 10:11-16

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them up and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.

John 11:21-27

Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.” Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” Martha said to him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.” Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” She said to him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into this world.”

John 14:1-6

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going.” Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

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St. Paul's
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Forming People Into the Body of Christ