

Funerals
at
St James Episcopal Church

St James Episcopal Church

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Give rest, O Christ, to your servants with your saints, where sorrow and pain are no more, neither sighing, but life everlasting.

You only are immortal, the creator and maker of humanity; and we are mortal, formed of the earth, and to earth shall we return. For so did you ordain when you created me, saying, "You are dust, and to dust you shall return." All of us go down to the dust; yet even at the grave we make our song: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Give rest, O Christ, to your servants with your saints, where sorrow and pain are no more, neither sighing, but life everlasting.

Concerning the Service

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

Baptized Christians are properly buried from the church. The service should be held at a time when the congregation has opportunity to be present.

The coffin is to be closed before the service, and it remains closed thereafter. It is appropriate that it be covered with a pall or other suitable covering.

If necessary, or if desired, all or part of the service of Committal may be said in the church. If preferred, the Committal service may take place before the service in the church. It may also be used prior to cremation.

A priest normally presides at the service. It is appropriate that the bishop, when present, preside at the Eucharist and pronounce the Commendation.

It is desirable that the Lesson from the Old Testament, and the Epistle, be read by lay persons.

When the services of a priest cannot be obtained, a deacon or lay reader may preside at the service.

At the burial of a child, the passages from Lamentations, 1 John, and John 6, together with Psalm 23, are recommended.

It is customary that the celebrant meet the body and go before it into the church or towards the grave.

The anthems at the beginning of the service are sung or said as the body is borne into the church, or during the entrance of the ministers, or by the celebrant standing in the accustomed place.

-Book of Common Prayer, p. 490

Notes:

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.”

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. 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.

-Book of Common Prayer, p. 507

DEATH

Death is a process rather than a moment in time. All body functions, pulse, respiration, brain waves, cease to function permanently, but not all at the same time. Death happens when the body begins to disintegrate. Defining the precise moment is not important. At death, we give our lives back to God; our personality will enter a new environment that is different from the space/time environment we know on earth. In that new environment we will be welcomed and will flower into our most wonderful form. For many persons of faith, death is a coming home, the culmination of a journey from home to home. Dag Hammarskjöld once defined home as a “place where life resounds, a clear pure note in the silence.”

Death is a fact of life. Talking about death, knowing what to expect, can lessen our fear of it, help us to accept its reality and die in peace and dignity when it is time. As His Holiness the Dalai Lama once said, “As death appears to be inevitable, perhaps we should consider it now.”

Christians believe that death is a bridge between this life and the next, but no matter how strong our faith is, we still need help when we are told that we, or someone we love is going to die. When confronted by that reality, many of us discover that beliefs we once took for granted are now called into question.

*-From Chrysalis by Val Hillsdon-Hutton,
Forward Movement Publications, Cincinnati, OH (1998).*

DISPOSITION OF THE BODY

There are three basic options for the disposition of the body, all fully acceptable in the tradition of the Episcopal Church:

1. Donation of the body to science and/or parts of the body for transplant.
 2. Burial or entombment of the body.
 3. Cremation, with several options for the disposition of ashes.
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1. Donation – ask your physician for arrangements for donation of the body or donation of organs for transplant. This must be arranged prior to death. **Miracles for Life** at www.miraclesforlife.org/organdonationVermont.html can provide further information.
 2. Burial – The body may be buried in a cemetery or entombed in a mausoleum. Funeral homes can provide all of the information needed, as well as the costs for burial or entombment.

3. Cremation – Cremation reduces the body to ashes. The ashes may be disposed of in a number of ways, including burial, placement in a columbarium, or scattering.

St James Episcopal Church has a **Memorial Garden** for the placement of ashes. Within the Memorial Garden there are two options for the disposition of ashes:

- a) The ashes may be placed within the walled comingled garden. The names of persons whose ashes are placed in this area are engraved on the large stone at the head of the garden. A spouse or loved one of the person whose ashes are placed in this area, and who plans to have his/her own ashes similarly interred, may have his/her name inscribed on the stone at the same time as the deceased's name is inscribed. The cost is \$500.00 for parishioners and \$750.00 for others and does not include the price of the stone engraving.
- b) The ashes may be placed within a five-foot square individual plot outside of the walled comingled garden. Location of the plot will be determined by a licensed surveyor using the existing Memorial Garden Plan. Any cost of the survey will be covered by those requesting the interment. There will be one brass plate per plot. Plates will be placed flush and centered in the plot. All plates will be of uniform size, design and composition and will be purchased through the church office. The Rector will provide a copy of this design to those requesting interment outside of the walled comingled garden. The cost is \$500.00 for parishioners and \$750.00 for others and does not include the price of the survey and brass plate.

Please call the parish office for more information.

An urn for the ashes is not necessarily a requirement. The Memorial Garden at St James does not allow urns to be interred along with the ashes. Only the ashes themselves are ever placed into the ground.

Flowers (artificial, cut or otherwise), flags and other items are not permitted to be placed anywhere within the Memorial Garden.

What is **important** is that plans are made for the disposition of the body, or at least wishes be made known, ahead of death. An important part of our Christian commitment is to make appropriate preparations for our death.

WILLS

Another aspect of planning for death is the **will**, which directs what will happen to one's estate upon death. It is important to have a will, in that an individual has a clear say on who receives the estate, rather than the state making the determination. When making out a will, please remember St James Episcopal Church.

A **Treatment Directive** is a written document that states how we wish to be treated if we become incapacitated by illness, injury or old age. It is extremely important that one's health care providers and family members know of your living will and have copies available in the event of sudden illness.

A **Proxy Directive** is a written instrument by which one person appoints another as an agent, and gives that agent the authority to act in the person's place for matters related to health care.

VISITATION

It is important that family members and friends have the opportunity to visit the immediate family after a death. This may be done by an **open house** after the death and before the funeral, by a **formal visitation time** in either a funeral home or Church, or by a **time before the funeral** when family members are present. The gift of visitation is that extended family members, parishioners, and friends can express their sympathy personally and have the time to grieve and reflect with others. It also helps to grasp better the reality of death.

At St James, the sanctuary can be used as a respectful place for visitation prior to the funeral. Either the body or the container of ashes can be placed before the altar, and people can visit the immediate family. If a casket is present, the casket is **closed** – there may be a private viewing with only immediate family members present. If family members wish to have a viewing of the body, a funeral home would be a more appropriate place to do this. The Paschal Candle is lit as a sign of Resurrection in a visitation in the sanctuary.

FUNERAL SERVICE

There are several options for burial. **One** is a burial service from the funeral home, which is strongly discouraged for members of the parish. **Two** is a burial service from the sanctuary, the preferred option for Church members. **Three** is a simple burial service said at the graveside or in the Memorial Garden.

The **Burial of the Dead** is the service from the Book of Common Prayer. Lessons from Scripture are read, there is a homily, and prayers are said for the person who died and their family. **Eucharist** is strongly encouraged for members of the parish, with participation open to all. **Hymns** may be sung and **music** played at the funeral service. The casket or container/urn of ashes may be present for this service. *Appendix A* is a form to help with funeral liturgy planning.

It is **important** that the family meet with the Rector prior to the funeral so that the service can be planned, musicians contacted, bulletins printed (if desired) and persons who are part of the service invited to participate.

At St James, we have the tradition that if family members or friends wish to speak briefly about the person, then they do so after the homily. Please let the Rector know if this is desired when you meet to plan the service.

TIME OF SERVICE

It is best to schedule the service when the greatest number of people can attend, and when it works best in the parish calendar and the clergy. Weekday services may start at 12 noon at the earliest. The burial of the body (if a casket) can then happen later. Funerals are public services of the Church, to which everyone is invited.

MUSIC

Music that is appropriate for a funeral focuses on God. A guideline would be music appropriate for a Sunday morning Church service – hymns, songs of praise, etc. The Rector and Director of Music will have final authority in the selection of music for the funeral. *Appendix B* contains several hymn suggestions.

FLOWERS

The parish uses the retable that sits behind the altar for flowers. Flowers for a funeral would be ones that fit on this retable. Flowers that do not fit on the retable will be placed elsewhere at the discretion of the Rector and Altar Guild. It is not appropriate to have flowers or other decorations placed on the casket, as it is covered with a pall for the funeral service. If you wish to have pictures of the deceased on display, they

are to be placed either in the entryway of the church or in the parish hall for the reception.

PALL

A pall covers the casket or the container of ashes. This is provided by St James. A flag or flowers may be placed on the casket once the casket leaves the church.

MILITARY or OTHER HONORS

Military or other honor services may be done at the end of the funeral service. In the event of military honors, the casket will be taken outside of the Church, the pall removed, the American or other national flag placed on the casket, and then appropriate honors done.

PALL BEARERS

It is appropriate when a casket is present to have six to eight persons escort the casket from the funeral hearse to its resting place in the sanctuary, and then from the hearse to the place of burial. There may also be honorary pallbearers for ashes. Pallbearers may be women or men.

RECEPTION

A reception for the family may be held in a parish hall of the Church, depending upon availability. There is an extra charge for custodial care for the reception. Food and beverage can be provided through family and friends or a caterer. **No alcohol** may be served unless the Rector has specifically approved its use.

PARISHIONERS

Persons who are considered active parishioners are those who attend regularly (unless prevented from doing so by being homebound) and contribute financially to the congregation. This also includes their immediate family. Others are invited to have their funerals at St James, with the understanding that there are expected expenses beyond those asked of active parishioners.

FEES

No one will be excluded from the ministry of the church for financial reasons. The financial charges serve as guidelines. All fees should be paid at the time of the funeral. Checks should be made to St James Episcopal Church. Please complete *Appendix C* and attach it to your check. The Parish Office will disburse the funds.

For parishioners, there is no fee for the use of the sanctuary, or for clergy. However, a contribution to the parish (for use and utilities) and the Rector’s Discretionary Fund (for Outreach use) would be appreciated.

QUESTIONS?

Please contact the Rector if there are questions.

FEES

	<u>Parishioners</u>	<u>Others</u>
Use of Church	Contribution	\$400.00
Use of Parish Hall	Contribution	\$100.00
Clergy	Contribution	\$150.00
Altar Guild (cost of flowers not included)	\$25.00	\$25.00
Organist (soloist – additional)	\$100.00 \$50.00	\$125.00 \$50.00
Bulletins	\$35.00	\$35.00
Comingled Garden** (cost of the stone engraving not included)	\$500.00	\$750.00
Individual Plot** (cost of the survey and brass plate not included)	\$500.00	\$750.00

**This includes interment.

RESOURCES

Chrysalis by Val Hillsdon-Hutton, a Forward Movement Publication, Cincinnati, OH, 800-573-1813. This booklet looks at the issues of death and has a place for noting records.

Final Acts by Nan Cobbey, a Forward Movement Publication, Cincinnati, OH, 800-573-1813. This booklet looks at the issues of death and burial, and offers resources.

Funeral and Memorial Societies of America offers a plastic, see-through, string-tied “freezer pouch” of planning materials to be filled out and kept in the freezer at home. The pouch is \$5 plus \$2 shipping, and is obtained from FAMSA at 800-765-0107.

Planning a Funeral Service: A Guide to Planning a Funeral in the Episcopal Church by Jedediah Holdorff, from Morehouse Publishing at \$5.95, 717-671-4500.

Faithful Living, Faithful Dying: Anglican Reflections on End of Life Care by the End of Life Taskforce of the Standing Commission on National Concerns, from Morehouse Publishing at \$14.95, 717-671-4500.

The Burial of the Dead: A Commentary by Associated Parishes for Liturgy and Mission, a booklet about death and preparation for death, the paschal mystery, the theology and practice of the Episcopal Church. From Associated Parishes at \$3, Box 27141, Baltimore, MD 21230. 410-752-0877.

APPENDIX B

HYMN SUGGESTIONS

Opening Hymn:

For all the saints	Hymnal #287 (verses 1-4)
The strife is o'er	Hymnal #208
Praise my soul the king of heaven	Hymnal #410
O God our help in ages past	Hymnal #680

Sequence Hymn:

Amazing grace	Hymnal #671
I come with joy to meet my Lord	Hymnal #304
I sing a song of the saints of God	Hymnal #293
All things bright and beautiful	Hymnal #405

Offertory Hymn:

The King of love, my shepherd is	Hymnal #645, 646
Alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord	Hymnal #178
I am the bread of life	Hymnal #335
Give thanks for life	Wonder, Love, and Praise #775

Communion Hymn:

You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord	Wonder, Love, and Praise #810
In remembrance of me	Lift Every Voice and Sing #149
Let us break bread together	Hymnal #325
Take my life and let it be	Hymnal #707

Recessional Hymn:

Light high the cross	Hymnal #473
Now thank we all our God	Hymnal #396,397
Jerusalem, my happy home	Hymnal #620
For all the saints	Hymnal #287 (verses 5-8)
Lord of all hopefulness	Hymnal #482
Joyful, joyful we adore thee	Hymnal #376

APPENDIX C

FUNERALS AT ST JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH

FORM TO ACCOMPANY PAYMENT

Please complete and attach to your check.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Disbursement of Funds:

	Parishioners	Others
Use of Church (4055-00)	_____	_____
Use of Parish Hall (4055-00)	_____	_____
Clergy (4101-00)	_____	_____
Altar Guild (4053-1) (cost of flowers not included)	_____	_____
Organist (4053-12) (soloist – additional)	_____ _____	_____ _____
Bulletins (4055-00)	_____	_____
Comingled Garden** (4092-01) (cost of the stone engraving not included)	_____	_____
Individual Plot** (4092-01) (cost of the survey and brass plate not included)	_____	_____