

Even at the Grave, We Make Our Song: Funeral and Memorial Services at Second Presbyterian Church

Jesus said to [Martha], "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." (John 11:25-26)

Each funeral and memorial service held at Second Presbyterian Church is *a service of witness to the resurrection in celebration of the life of* a beloved child of God.

"A service of witness to the resurrection..."

A funeral or memorial service is, above all, a service of worship. The 'congregation' of family and loved ones gathers at God's invitation to worship, seeking the comfort of scripture, prayer, and song, and proclaiming together, even in the midst of grief, the good news of God's victory over sin and death.

"...in celebration of the life of..."

In the context of worship we find space for thanksgiving and remembrance, and for the multitude of emotions that accompany loss. We give thanks to God for a particular person who is loved by God and others; we remember a particular life that in its own ways showed God's goodness and love; and we lean into the promises of forgiveness and eternal life in Jesus Christ for one and all.

Content of the Service

Funeral and memorial services incorporate prayer, sacred music, readings from scripture, and a meditation offered by the officiating pastor. While these broad strokes remain the same, each service is unique and personal. The meditation is an opportunity for the officiating pastor to proclaim the good news through the lens of the life and legacy of the deceased. If desired, one or more family members may participate by reading scripture or offering words of remembrance. Special honors or multimedia elements such as a slideshow or video are best suited for the calling, reception, or graveside committal.

The church will provide a bulletin for the service which contains the order of worship and names of those participating in the service. The front of the bulletin features an image of the church and the name and dates of birth and death of the deceased.

Setup of the Space

The setup of the space also reflects our understanding of the funeral as a worship service. Those who gather in the sanctuary or chapel face the *chancel*. This area is arranged so that the focus is on a few key symbols or elements: lit candles remind us of the light of Christ with us at all times; flowers situated between the candelabras reflect the beauty and new life that we know in Christ; white paraments (cloth coverings) on the pulpit and lectern point us to the hope of the resurrection.

The urn or closed casket is situated at the base of the chancel steps. A small table is available for an urn; this table can accommodate a flower arrangement and/or a framed photo. Alternatively, an easel is available to display a larger photo. Special flowers ordered by the family (if any) are ideal for use in this area or between the candelabras. (If the family does not provide a special arrangement for the space between the candelabras, a white silk arrangement will be used.)

All of these intentional elements—from the content of the service, to the setup of the physical space—turn our attention to God, creating a reverent atmosphere in which we can offer our worship and receive the comfort and promise of God's Word.

Scheduling and Logistics

Funeral and memorial services are part of our ministry. The Funeral Coordinator will help ensure the availability of the worship space, pastor, and organist. We will also provide ushers, greeters and hosts to help with setup and hospitality on the day of the service. *Note: When a casket or cremated remains are present, it is usually the case that a funeral director is legally required to be in attendance. Beyond this legally required individual, there is not a need for the presence of other funeral home staff.*

Calling or Reception

A calling or a reception may precede or follow the service. This informal gathering offers friends and loved ones the opportunity to receive the comfort of community and to share condolences and memories. The church may be able to provide light refreshments; if desired, the family may choose to work with an outside caterer. *Note: A guest book is not provided by the church but is welcome.*

Costs

Thanks to generous contributions to the Memorial Fund, the only cost associated with holding a funeral or memorial service at Second Presbyterian Church is the Organist fee (\$175). This is payable directly to the Organist on the day of the service. The Organist plays for all funerals and has right of first refusal.

Optional Fees

Soloist (\$150): If desired, a soloist is available to sing as part of your loved one's service. This is payable directly to the soloist on the day of the service.

Livestream – Sanctuary only (\$250): If desired, we may be able to livestream your loved one's service and provide a video recording of the livestreamed service. *Please note that our ability to livestream is dependent on the availability of our livestream team for your chosen date.* Checks for this purpose should be made to Second Presbyterian Church.

Video Recording – Sanctuary only (\$250): If desired, we may be able to provide a video recording of your loved one's service. Please note that this is dependent on the availability of additional AV staff for your chosen date. Checks for this purpose should be made to Second Presbyterian Church.

Honorarium: Some families choose to offer an honorarium to the pastor leading the service. This is not expected or required.

Contributions to Memorial Gifts fund: Some families choose to make a contribution to the Memorial Gifts fund as a sign of gratitude for the ministry of care received surrounding their loved one's funeral. The Memorial Gifts fund allows us to continue providing the staff and resources necessary for funerals and memorial services at no virtually no cost to families. Checks for this purpose should be made to Second Presbyterian Church.

The check for the organist and any checks for the optional fees or contributions described above may be given to the Funeral Coordinator on the day of the service.

Please contact Ashley McNamara, Coordinator of Pastoral Care and Funerals, with questions at AMcNamara@secondchurch.org or (317) 253-6461.

Details to Consider For the Worship Service

- 1) Where do you desire your service to be held? (Sanctuary, Milner Chapel, Funeral Home)
Note: Milner Chapel holds 80 comfortably. Livestreaming is only possible in the Sanctuary.
- 2) Who on our pastoral team do you wish to have lead your service? If this person is not available, who would you prefer to be asked next?
- 3) Which scriptures would you like read for old and new testament readings?
- 4) Are there any specific hymns or pieces of music that you wish to have incorporated in the service?
- 5) Do you have a preference for organ or piano (or both)?
- 6) Do you wish to have a soloist? Do you have a preference on male/female/baritone/alto/soprano?
- 7) Do you desire that the service be livestreamed? *Note: Livestreaming is only possible in the sanctuary and our ability to livestream is dependent on the availability of our livestream team.*
- 8) Will there be a calling/visitation or reception in conjunction with the service? If so, where? (At the church? Offsite?)
- 9) For the calling/visitation, do you wish to have a slideshow of pictures? A guest book? Flowers? A portrait to be displayed for the service? *Note: The funeral home can and will help with all of these items depending on the package you select with them.*
- 10) If there is a burial, which cemetery will be used?
- 11) Are you planning an obituary?
- 12) Is there a place you would like to designate memorial gifts in your name?

Scripture Ideas

Old Testament

Job 19:23–27	I know that my redeemer lives
Ecclesiastics 3:1–15	For everything there is a season
Isaiah 25:6–9	God will swallow up death forever
Isaiah 40:1–11	Comfort my people
Isaiah 40:28–31	Those who wait for the Lord
Isaiah 43:1–3a, 18–19, 25	When you pass through the waters
Isaiah 44:6–8	I am the first and I am the last
Isaiah 55:1–3, 6–13	Everyone who thirsts
Isaiah 61:1–4, 10–11	The spirit of the Lord is upon me
Isaiah 65:17–25	I create new heavens and a new earth
Lamentations 3:19–26, 31–32	The Lord's steadfast love
Daniel 12:1–3	Many of those who sleep in the dust shall awake
Joel 2:12–13, 23–24, 26–29	Return to the Lord with all your heart

Psalms

Psalms 16:5–11	The Lord is my chosen portion
Psalms 23	The Lord is my Shepherd
Psalms 27:1, 4–9a, 13–14	The Lord is my light and my salvation
Psalms 39:4–5, 12	Lord, let me know my end
Psalms 42:1–6a	As a deer longs for flowing streams
Psalms 43	Why are you cast down, O my soul
Psalms 46:1–5, 10–11	God is our refuge and strength
Psalms 90:1–10, 12	Lord, you have been our dwelling place
Psalms 91	You who live in the shelter of the Most High
Psalms 103	Bless the Lord, O my soul
Psalms 106:1–5	O give thanks to the Lord
Psalms 116:1–9, 15	The Lord has heard my voice
Psalms 118	Open the gates of righteousness
Psalms 121	I lift up my eyes to the hills
Psalms 130	Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord
Psalms 139:1–12	O Lord, you have searched me and known me
Psalms 145	I will extol you, my God and King
Psalms 146	Praise the Lord, O my soul!

New Testament

Matthew 5:1–12a	The Beatitudes
Luke 23:33, 39–43	Remember me when you come into heaven
John 3:16–21	For God so loved the world
John 11:17–27	I know he will rise again in the resurrection
John 14	Do not let your hearts be troubled
Romans 8:14–25	All led by Spirit of God are sons and daughters
Romans 8:31–35	Nothing can separate us from the love of God

Romans 14:7–9	We do not live to ourselves
1 Corinthians 15:20–26, 35–38, 42–44, 53–58	Where, O death, is your victory?
2 Corinthians 4:16–5:1	A house eternal in the heavens
Philippians 4:4–9	Rejoice in the Lord always
1 Thessalonians 4:13–18	God will bring with him those who have died
Revelation 21:1–4, 22–25, 22:3–5	Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth

Hymn/Solo Ideas

Give me Jesus
 The King of Love My Shepherd Is
 My Shepherd Will Supply My Need
 Our God, Our Help in Ages Past
 I'll Praise My Maker
 Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound
 Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah
 Be Thou My Vision
 My Faith Looks Up to Thee
 We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight
 Precious Lord, Take My Hand
 For All the Saints
 Abide with Me
 Now Thank We All Our God
 Eternal Father, Strong to Save
 How Great Thou Art
 It Is Well
 Great is Thy Faithfulness
 His Eye is on the Sparrow
 On Eagle's Wings
 Here I Am, Lord
 The Lord's Prayer
 Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee
 I Danced in the Morning
 For the Beauty of the Earth
 I Know That My Redeemer Liveth
 All Things Bright and Beautiful
 Morning Has Broken
 In the Garden
 When I Survey the Wondrous Cross
 Deck Thyself, My Soul, With Gladness
 A Mighty Fortress is Our God
 Draw Near to Me
 Sing Me to Heaven
 Take My Life
 Going Home
 Nearer My God to Thee
 Though I May Speak
 Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

Bulletin – Sample Order of Worship

Prelude

Welcome and Call to Worship

*Unison Prayer

*Hymn

Old Testament Readings

Words of Remembrance

New Testament Readings

Meditation

Solo or Hymn

Prayers of Thanksgiving and The Lord's Prayer

*Commendation (if no committal immediately following)

*Benediction

*Postlude