



# THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

## Funeral Customary & Guidelines

*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.... This, 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. ~ The Book of Common Prayer*

The death of a loved one, whether suddenly and unexpectedly, after a long-term illness, or having lived a natural life span, is a traumatic time in the lives of those left behind. While still grieving, families and loved ones are called on to make decisions with little time to prepare. This document is designed to facilitate the planning of a funeral during a very difficult time and establish church guidelines and policies to make it easier for family and friends to prepare for the funeral and interment of their loved one.

There are provisions in the Book of Common Prayer for the appropriate readings, psalms, and hymns for a funeral service. All Episcopal worship is bound by the rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer and the Canons of the Church. Our worship, including the liturgy of the Burial Office, with or without Holy Eucharist, must be conducted according to liturgies approved by the Church. Please choose those provisions which will make this service the right one for the departed and a fitting memorial in the hearts and minds of those who mourn.

We at the Church of the Good Shepherd stand ready to assist you in making decisions for a beautiful and meaningful service. With that in mind, all arrangements for the funeral should be made first in consultation with the parish priest before any others.

### **The Burial Service**

After a death, surviving family members and/or those responsible for funeral arrangements should contact the church and consult a parish priest. Your priest will help guide you toward making appropriate and reasonable decisions regarding the funeral.

Selection of a time for the service should be based on the needs of the family, the availability of the priest and the church building, and the expectations of out-of-town mourners. *Scheduling should be done in consultation with the parish priest prior to establishing a day and time with a funeral home.* Funerals are customarily held on a weekday, although scheduling a funeral on a Saturday may be possible. Funerals are not held on Sundays, however private family interment of cremains in the parish Memorial Garden are permissible on Sundays upon approval of the Rector.

The Church of the Good Shepherd uses *The Book of Common Prayer, 1979* (Rite I or Rite II), for services. The Holy Eucharist may be celebrated at Episcopal funerals. Please know that we are an inclusive denomination; all baptized Christians present who can receive communion in their own denomination are invited to receive Holy Communion in The Episcopal Church. Those who do not profess the Christian faith or who, for any other reason, choose not to receive Holy Communion may come to the altar rail at the time of Communion and receive a blessing from the priest. The

Prayer Book Service of The Burial of the Dead with Communion takes approximately an hour, depending upon the number of people receiving communion and the musical selections.

Eulogies, while not traditionally customary for Episcopal funeral liturgies, are allowed at Good Shepherd. With the priest's permission, we allow 1-2 eulogies following the Gospel lesson. As our funeral rite is a worship service, we require that any eulogy given to be short (2-4 minutes). Any lengthier eulogies are better conducted at a visitation, wake, or reception after the service. A sermon is preached at all funerals and immediately follows the Gospel reading or the eulogy, if one. The act of preaching is limited to the parish priest or another clergyperson at the approval and invitation of the Rector.

### **Funerals of Non-Members and Inactive Members**

Funerals are always officiated only by the parish priest (See Participating Clergy below.) People who are not active communicants in good standing of the Church of the Good Shepherd may have a funeral service at the church at the sole discretion of the Rector. Funerals of non-members and inactive members are subject to the same church canons, rubrics, and policies as those of active members. Funerals for non-members and inactive members will incur a \$1,000 facilities fee and a required \$500 honorarium for the presiding priest. Please see the Fees section at the end of this document for more information.

### **Pall for the Casket**

The casket or urn may be already in place in the church or may be a part of the opening procession. The casket will be closed before the service and remains closed thereafter. The church provides a white pall to cover the casket or urn. The pall is a symbol of our baptismal garment and reminds us of the equality of all people before God (Revelation 7:13-14). In the case of a Veteran of the United States military, the casket or urn may arrive at the church covered by a flag. The flag will be removed and reverently folded as soon as the casket or urn enters the church. It is immediately replaced with the white pall. When the casket or urn leaves the church, the pall will be removed and the flag replaced.

### **Participating Clergy**

The parish priest who has helped the family members prepare for the funeral is the appropriate priest to preside at the burial rite. If an Episcopal priest other than one from Good Shepherd is desired to assist (or officiate), the permission and invitation of the Rector are required according to The Canon Law (Title III, Canon 21, Section 5a). The location of the funeral other than in the parish church does not change this requirement; non-parochial priests may only function with the permission and invitation of the parish Rector. (Former priests of Church of the Good Shepherd may attend funerals as mourners but are not permitted by the bishop to take a leadership role in pastoral liturgies for the church where they previously served.) Guest clergy (other than Episcopal priests and deacons) are invited from time to time and may assist in the service as allowed by the Rector.

### **Readings from Scripture**

During the service, one to three readings from the Bible are read. You may choose a reading from the Old Testament, a psalm (read by the congregation as a whole), a lesson from the New Testament, and a reading from the Gospels. The parish priest will assist you in selecting the readings. A family member or friend may be selected to read the scripture lessons or lead the prayer of the people. If there will be a celebration of the Eucharist, then Gospel lesson will be read by clergy.

The following readings are those authorized for The Burial of the Dead:

**Old Testament:**

Isaiah 25:6-9 (He will swallow up death for ever)

Isaiah 61:1-3 (To comfort all who mourn)

Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33 (The Lord is good unto them that wait for him)

Wisdom 3:1-5, 9 (The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God)

Job 19:21-27a (I know that my Redeemer lives)

**Psalms:**

Psalm 23 (KJV recommended), Psalm 27, Psalm 42:1-7, Psalm 46, Psalm 90:1-12, Psalm 106:1-15, Psalm 116, Psalm 121 (KJV recommended), Psalm 130, Psalm 139:1-11

**New Testament**

Romans 8:14-19, 34-35, 37-39 (The glory that shall be revealed)

I Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-44, 53-58 (The imperishable body)

II Corinthians 4:16-5:9 (Things that are unseen are eternal)

I John 3:1-2 (We shall be like him)

Revelation 7:9-17 (God shall wipe away every tear)

Revelation 21:2-7 (Behold, I make all things new)

**Gospel:**

John 5:24-27 (He who believes has everlasting life)

John 6:37-40 (All that the Father gives me shall come to me)

John 10:11-16 (I am the good shepherd)

John 11:21-27 (I am the resurrection and the life)

John 14:1-6 (In my Father's house are many rooms)

**Music at the Funeral**

The music for the funeral should be taken from the Hymnal 1982 and other sources of sacred music approved by The Episcopal Church for use in worship services. When music is requested, the organist's fee is \$350. There are additional charges for unusual sacred music or guest musicians when requested. These fees are paid directly to the musician.

Recorded music is not permitted in the church sanctuary. There is a wealth of beautiful and appropriate sacred music suitable for use in the context of the Burial of the Dead. The selection of music for the service is made in consultation with and subject to the approval of the parish priest. We recommend that two or three hymns from the Episcopal Hymnal 1982 be sung. Suitable times for hymns are at the opening of the service; before the Gospel reading; as the altar is prepared during the offertory; and at the end of the service. The Church of the Good Shepherd organist will play at all funerals with music if available. If musicians (soloists or instrumentalists) other than the church organist are used, the organist will coordinate hiring such persons. Guest musicians and all music selections must still be approved by the presiding priest.

**Some hymns appropriate for the Burial of the Dead:**

208 The strife is o'er

287 For all the saints

293 I sing a song of the saints of God

473 Lift high the cross

620 Jerusalem, my happy home

625 Ye holy angels bright

637 How firm a foundation

646 The King of love my shepherd is

662 Abide with me  
671 Amazing grace!  
680 O God, our help in ages past  
688 A mighty fortress is our God  
690 Guide me, O thou great Jehovah  
691 My faith looks up to thee  
707 Take my life and let it be  
708 Savior, like a shepherd lead us

## **Reserved Seating**

Pews will be reserved at the front of the church for the family and pallbearers. Please let the priest know ahead of time how many pallbearers there will be and how many family members will be seated in the reserved area.

## **Flowers at the Service**

Inside the church, flowers for the service are usually displayed as on Sundays, on stands behind the altar, one arrangement on either side. If the family chooses to commission the church's Flower Guild to provide these arrangements, the cost is \$250 and these arrangements may or may not be used on the altar for the Sunday service. If the family uses an outside florist to provide the two arrangements, they may be removed from the altar following the end of the service. Floral sprays and decorations sent by family and friends may be displayed in the church's narthex or in the parish hall at the reception. Flowers are not to be placed on the casket or urn at the church. Coordination of funeral flowers may be made with the officiating priest or the Funeral Reception Committee.

## **Visitations**

If you would like to hold a visitation, this is appropriately done at the funeral home, where the casket may be open, and family and friends can have a time of goodbyes. It is customary that the visitation be held the day or night before the funeral. The casket is never open during the church service.

## **During the Service Itself**

Members of the family will be seated before the beginning of the service. The congregation will be invited to stand, sit, and kneel as full participants in the service following the rubrics of the Prayer Book and will be invited to receive communion at the appropriate time and place, if communion is celebrated by the priest. This will be explained and discussed by the officiating priest during preparations for the funeral.

## **Service Leaflets**

Our policy is that service leaflets for the funeral be produced in-house by the Church of the Good Shepherd staff. These follow the rubrics from the Book of Common Prayer.

## **Guest Book**

The funeral home (or family) usually provides a guest book for mourners to sign.

## **Memorial Gifts**

Memorial Gifts to the church may be made by individuals, organizations, or by the family of the deceased.

## **At the Graveside**

The committal service is brief. It is usually held after the church service. Family and friends may choose for this to be a private service or may open the service to all. Extra-liturgical ceremonies, such as military honors or those conducted by fraternal organizations, may be held with the approval of the Rector.

## **Receptions**

It is our honor to host a reception following the funeral, as we are able. All receptions are coordinated with our Funeral Reception Committee. There is a fee for a two-hour or less reception for use of selected areas. The church provides tables and chairs set-up, use of the audio-visual projection system, serving utensils, white paper products, and certain drinks (water, tea and coffee). It is preferred that alcoholic beverages not be served. The Funeral Reception Committee does not provide food but will work with the family in choosing a caterer or an appropriate source for food delivery. Displays of pictures of the deceased and other memorabilia may be displayed on a table in the parish hall, along with any flowers in addition to the altar flowers. The goal is to assist the family in having a reception that truly honors the life of the deceased family member.

## **Cremation**

Cremation is an acceptable practice within The Episcopal Church. If the ashes are to be present at the burial service, please coordinate the delivery to the church with the officiating priest. It is customary that following the service, ashes are either interred in a committal service or returned to the family for a later committal.

## **Burial of Cremated Remains in the Memorial Garden**

The Good Shepherd Memorial Garden is available for the interment of ashes. There is a \$2,000 fee associated with burial in the memorial garden. This fee covers the perpetual maintenance of the garden, plants, pathways, and bronze memorial markers.

***“All we go down to the dust;  
yet even at the grave we make our song  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia”***

## **Fees Related to Funeral Services**

### **Funeral Facilities**

*Members* - There is no funeral facilities fee for Active Members of the Church of the Good Shepherd. Customarily, the deceased's family may choose to gift the priest with an honorarium. Honorariums are paid directly to the priest, not the church.

*Non-Members/Inactive Members* - There is a funeral facilities fee of \$1,000 payable to the Church of the Good Shepherd. This fee covers use of the church campus, set-up and clean-up activities, printing of service leaflets, and church staff overhead costs. Additionally, an honorarium for the priest is required and set at \$500, payable directly to the priest.

### **Music**

Music for funerals at Good Shepherd is optional. When music is requested, the organist's fee is \$350. There are additional charges for unusual sacred music or guest musicians when requested. These fees are paid directly to the musicians.

### **Reception and Flowers**

Flowers and receptions at Good Shepherd are also optional. All altar flowers arrangements and receptions are coordinated with our Funeral Reception Committee. As they are available, our Flower Guild may be commissioned to provide altar flower arrangements for a fee of \$250. As we have space available, we are honored to host a funeral reception. There is a reasonable fee for the reception – the amount depending on what is requested.

### **Memorial Garden**

There is a \$2,000 fee associated with burial in the church memorial garden. This fee covers the maintenance of the garden, plants, pathways, and bronze memorial markers.

### **Memorial Gifts & Donations**

Memorial Gifts to the church may be made by individuals, organizations, or by the family of the deceased. These funds will be placed in the General Memorials Fund.

Separate donations to the Church of the Good Shepherd are always deeply appreciated. Unless otherwise specified, donations to the church will be placed in the Benevolence Fund and used for charitable purposes.