

Article X - Section 10.05 Policies: Funerals

A resource for members of New Hope Presbyterian Church

Planning Before Death

Death is an inevitable part of life, and yet most of us are unprepared for it when it happens in our family. It is most often a time of great sorrow when our instincts and emotions are at the fore, and our capacity and desire to make practical and rational decisions are diminished. Death is something we all need to prepare for, and this brochure is meant to help guide a person and a family through this important and difficult time.

There are many practical issues that must be addressed at the time of death. Most of these are handled by funeral home or crematorium staff, but choices need to be made and costs vary tremendously. Beyond the practical issues, death is a spiritual time. A service of Christian burial is a way of celebrating not only the life of a loved one now ended, but also the new life he or she has begun in eternity. Burial services are services of the resurrection, focusing on the fact that as Christ has been raised from the dead, we too are raised to eternal life. Planning one's own funeral with the assistance of the pastor and church staff and having these plans on file in the church office is a deeply faithful and meaningful act. We encourage members of our congregation to think about a plan, and to that end, provide a funeral service planning worksheet.

As the body of Christ, the death of one brings sorrow to us all. The pastor, staff and other members of New Hope wish to support you in every way possible when death happens in your family.

Immediate Responses:

When Death Occurs at Home

- If hospice is part of the care, call the service worker to certify death; otherwise call 911 and the primary physician to certify death.
- Call the pastor at New Hope: [add phone number].
- Call the funeral home or crematorium.

When Death Occurs in the Hospital

- The hospital is responsible for certifying death.
- Call the pastor at New Hope: [add phone number].
- The hospital staff will call the crematorium or the funeral home.

About Funeral and Memorial Services:

A funeral is a service where the body is usually present. The body is not usually present for a memorial service. The pastor can discuss further with a family what the differences are and what role a funeral home may play in each service. The pastor and staff typically conduct funeral and memorial services. Congregation members typically assist with certain aspects of both services, for example with ushering.

Music adds meaning and richness to the service. It is recommended that the family work with the music director to select appropriate hymns for congregational singing. The pastor and music director must approve hymns and other music for a service. The church will provide service leaflets, prepared in consultation with the pastor. If the family would like a family member or close friend to participate in the service by doing a reading, the family should take into careful consideration the emotional state of that person. The pastor will help advise the family regarding participation.

The casket may be part of the opening procession or may be in place in advance. The casket is always closed and covered with a pall provided by the church. In the case of a veteran, it may be covered with the American flag.

The service shall be complete in itself, and any fraternal, civic, or military rites should be conducted separately. The service of worship is an act of the Christian community in which the wider community is welcome. If other rites take place, these rites shall be conducted apart from the service and place of worship, for example at the gravesite.

Cremation is an option for Christians and is supported by the session and the church pastor. In case of cremation, no casket is present, and the family may wish to have a picture of their loved one present on the day of the service. The pastor can discuss the disposition of ashes with the family.

A service ordinarily is held in the church sanctuary, which seats approximately 125 persons. It is also appropriate to hold the service in the chapel of the funeral home, or to plan an abbreviated service at the grave.

The family should plan to arrive at the church not later than one-half hour before the service is scheduled to begin. The pastor will guide family members and those to be seated with the family to a particular room upon arrival and will let them know when the service is ready to begin.

If the family desires flowers for the service, it is the preference of the church to limit them to one bouquet under the cross in the Sanctuary. However, the family may also provide a casket spray. Other arrangements are often placed in the narthex. If there are additional floral arrangements in the sanctuary, they should not block the path from the aisle to the seats in the chancel area. No flowers should ever be placed on the piano. The family may arrange to take flowers home if they wish.

The church can provide a reception for church members and their relatives in the fellowship hall following the service. Please inform the pastor if you would like a reception or meal. The family will be asked to estimate the number of attendees in order to provide for this occasion. A table is available for pictures of the deceased in the Narthex and other tables are available for other memorabilia in the fellowship hall.

We encourage memorial gifts to the church, ministries or charities as a way of perpetually honoring the memory of the loved one. Any memorial gifts to New Hope Presbyterian Church may be made to the general fund or to an approved designated fund. Gifts will be added to accounts in perpetuity unless other arrangements or designations are made. Families wishing to make special arrangements should contact the pastor.

The Cemetery Committee can provide burial information.

About Hymns and Readings

Family members often have favorite readings and hymns that they would like to have included in a service. For those who would like some guidance, we offer some suggestions below. Understand that there are many other possibilities that we have not listed.

Suggestions for Readings

- Job 19:25-27
- Psalms 23; 46; 90:1-12; 103; 121; 139:1-12
- Proverbs 31:10-31
- Ecclesiastes 3:1-11a
- Romans 8:31-35, 37-39
- 2 Corinthians 5:1-10
- Ephesians 3:14-21
- 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
- 2 Timothy 4:6-8
- Hebrews 12:1-3
- Revelation 21:1-4

Suggestions for Hymns

- For All the Saints
- Joyful, joyful we adore thee
- There's a wideness in God's mercy
- The Church's one foundation
- Amazing grace
- A mighty fortress is our God (Easter hymns numbered)
- God our help in ages past 174-213 are also acceptable)
- Lift High the Cross
- My Faith Looks Up to Thee
- Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
- Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven
- The King of Love My Shepard Is
- The Strife is O'er, the Battle Done

(revised by Worship Committee July 2012)

Fee Schedule

Use of Church facilities (Members)	No charge
Use of Sanctuary and Parlor (Non-Members).....	\$200
Use of Fellowship Hall & Kitchen for reception (Non-Members).....	full cost determined by expected number and type of reception
Pastor's Honorarium (Members).....	at the discretion of the member's family
Pastor's Honorarium (Non-Members).....	\$300
Director of Music's Fee (Members).....	No charge
Director of Music's Fee (Non-Members).....	\$200
Additional Music Rehearsal (Non-Members).....	\$50
Arrangements for Additional Musicians.....	\$25
Soloist fee (variable).....	\$0 -150

Funeral Planning Worksheet

After consultation and before the service, please provide the pastor, music director, and church office with the following information.

Full name of Deceased: _____

Date of Birth _____

Date of Death: _____

Family contact(s): _____

Telephone number: _____

Address: _____

Funeral home: _____

Contact person: _____

Telephone number: _____

Method of interment: _____ Cremation _____ Casket _____

Place of interment: _____

Ushers: _____

Pall Bearers: _____

What will be done with flowers used for the service: _____

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be sent to: _____

Memorials sent to NHPC should be acknowledged to: _____

Special Requests: _____

Funeral Music

Organist: _____

Telephone number: _____ Confirmed? _____

Choir requested? _____ Yes _____ No

Other musicians/instruments requested: _____

Confirmed? _____

Funeral Service Information (also needed for the service bulletin):

Prelude music: _____

The First Reading: _____

The Second Reading: _____

The Gospel: _____

Psalms: _____

Congregational hymns: _____

Other music: _____

Postlude: _____

Officiating pastor: _____

Assisting pastor: _____

Other eulogists (include relationship to deceased): _____

Other material to include in bulletin (e.g. poems, special music): _____

Number of bulletins needed: _____

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be sent to: _____

Memorials sent to NHPC should be acknowledged to: _____

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