



**FUNERALS AT
CHRIST CHURCH CHRISTIANA HUNDRED**

P. O. Box 3510, 505 E. Buck Road
Wilmington, Delaware 19807-0510
Phone: (302) 655-3379
Website: www.christchurchde.org

OVERVIEW:

Funerals are pastoral services of worship that contain many different components, covering the complexity of grief, a celebration of life, and our belief in the resurrection. Included here are explanations of those various parts, so that you may make informed decisions when planning a funeral for either yourself or for a loved one.

CONSIDERATIONS AROUND DEATH:

Ideally, before one's death, we have addressed the important and sometimes hard choices that come at the end of life. This includes thinking through your ethics around death and dying. This consideration informs the task of creating medical directives, wills, and an outline of your wishes for your burial.

Create a medical directive to state your wishes in the event you are not capable of making your own decisions. Your health care provider can be of assistance.

Make a will, arranging for the disposal of the material goods you have received in your lifetime and, if you are able, leaving bequests for religious and charitable uses. This is where your will becomes a last testament, a testimony of the people and the places that have blessed your life. If you intend to include Christ Church Christiana Hundred in your will, you may find information on our website or you may speak with the Rector.

Plan your funeral. Make an outline of your wishes for your burial, using the document, "Advance Planning for a Funeral," available on our website or from the parish office. This document may be kept on file in the parish office as well. Also, members may choose to be buried in our Memorial Garden. When you make these choices, you help your family through a difficult time.

Of course, death does not always come after the deceased has taken the time to plan. As a family member, you may find yourself facing all of these decisions from memory of what your loved one might have wanted. Take heart; we are here to guide and help you through this process. It is holy work and something that gives honor to your loved one while you grieve for their death.

LITURGY:

The purposes for a liturgy at the time of death are two-fold: to give thanks to God for the presence and gift of one who has died and to give support and encouragement to those who are

bereaved. In a Christian funeral, we are not “doing something for” the one who has died nor are we simply celebrating the personality and successes of the deceased. Our worship is God-centered, and the deceased is honored as a child of God’s own redeeming. Burdened with grief, the family and loved ones of the deceased seek to honor their dead and proclaim our trust in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The customary place for the liturgy is in the Church or Chapel of the Christ Child. Services may also be conducted at the graveside or in a cemetery chapel or funeral home.

The Book of Common Prayer

We begin with the Episcopal liturgy. *The Book of Common Prayer* includes a Contemporary form (Rite II) or Elizabethan form (Rite I) which can be used for the service. If neither of these forms is suitable, with careful planning, the parish clergy can assist in creating an order of service based on the structure suggested on BCP page 507. There is no right or wrong way in regard to the church service.

Readings

It is customary to include at least one reading from Scripture, and you may choose several others including a Psalm. Verses suggested by *The Book of Common Prayer* and culled from our experiences are found in the document, “Readings from Scripture for Funerals,” available on our website or from the parish office. Other passages may be used, as arranged with the clergy.

The Eucharist

It is appropriate to use the Eucharist for the Burial of one who regularly receives Holy Communion. Remember that all are welcome to receive communion in this church. For Episcopalians, the sacraments are a comfort, for we receive the real presence of Christ Jesus to strengthen us on the journey. Holy Communion is also considered a foretaste of the heavenly banquet awaiting us and creates union in the great Communion of the Saints—the assembly of all the faithful living here on earth and in God’s heaven.

Music

Our Christian faith is often beautifully expressed in the hymns of The Episcopal Church’s *Hymnal 1982* as well as its other hymnals. All Saints’ Day or Easter hymns are most appropriate. The singing of hymns by the congregation is encouraged. Some recommended hymns are found in the document, “Suggested Hymns for Funerals,” available on our website or from the parish office. Hymns that are not included in the resources of The Episcopal Church may be allowed, with appropriate copyright permission. The officiating clergy has the final say as to the appropriateness of any hymn or piece of music.

In addition to hymns, a member or members of the Christ Church Choir can be employed by the family to offer an anthem. The Director of Music arranges for singers and any additional instrumentalists at an additional cost for their services.

Participation

We encourage the family to work with the clergy in planning the service. Family and/or friends can participate directly in our worship by:

- reading one of the scripture readings or leading the prayers;
- offering a personal eulogy or tribute;
- serving as an usher, pallbearer, Eucharistic minister (if licensed/trained), or an acolyte (if trained).

The Gospel is read by one of the clergy. The priest may offer a homily, which relates the life and personality of the deceased to the texts selected and to the Good News of Jesus Christ, who gives victory over death.

The Service Bulletin

Christ Church has a standard format that guides the congregation through the worship. It includes the name of the deceased, the participants, and the outline of the service. If the family prefers to add photographs or other writings, they may choose to create a more detailed bulletin at an additional cost for its production.

Flowers

The family may provide flowers for the altar, as this worship service is a celebration and a reminder of Easter's promise and joy. You or your funeral director may contact an area florist. The florist can pick up liners for our containers. The flowers may be transported to the site for the reception or distributed by the Altar Guild after the service. Please note that flowers sent to the church will be placed at the discretion of the Altar Guild. The family is encouraged to designate memorial gifts to the church or a charity "in lieu of flowers."

Cremation or Burial

This decision is important to make as part of your pre-planning. There is no prohibition to cremation in our tradition, and using this method may substantially lessen the funeral cost. It is wise to have a burial space purchased or to make other wishes known to family members.

The All Saints' Memorial Garden at Christ Church is a dignified and beautiful place for the interment of loved ones' cremated remains, and it is limited to members of the parish and their family members. More information is available from the parish office.

Receptions

While some families choose to greet guests at the funeral home for the tradition of calling hours, an increasing number have eliminated that custom or supplement it with another gathering following the service. The Christ Church Parish Halls may be used by those who wish to have a reception immediately following a funeral. The Facilities Manager will assist you with reception planning and maintains a list of suggested caterers. In addition, our Celebration of Life Committee will help coordinate reception details.

FEES FOR THE FUNERAL SERVICE:

There is no charge for the use of the Church for a funeral. Fees are charged based on options chosen for a service and are listed below. While it is the practice of the clergy to receive no payment for conducting services for a church member, many choose to donate to the Clergy Discretionary Fund, which is used for outreach and education in our community.

Optional Contribution to Clergy Discretionary Fund

\$250-\$1,000 (as a thank offering for clergy assistance)

Used by the clergy for outreach and education

Organist

\$250-\$325

Soloist

\$175

Professional Choir Quartet

\$600

Professional Choir Octet

\$1000

Full Professional Choir

\$1800

Instrumentalists

varies

Reception in Parish Center

\$350 (no fee for pledging members)

Standard Service Bulletin

no fee

Customized Service Bulletin with Photo

\$100 (100-300 copies)

Livestream of Service

\$350

TOTAL
