



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



Funeral & Memorial Services

Last Revised February 2026

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Richmond, Virginia

Guidelines for Funeral and Memorial Services

SERVICES OF WITNESS TO THE RESURRECTION

The pastor, leaders, and members of First Presbyterian Church extend their condolences to you if you are reading this brochure at a time of loss. We pray God's peace for you and want to be in ministry to you as we are able. In this brochure, you will find descriptions for planning a memorial service or funeral at FPC. Don't hesitate to contact our pastor if you have any questions.

The Presbyterian funeral or memorial service is "A Service of Witness to the Resurrection" and an integral part of Christian worship. It is a service of worship of the congregation in which we seek to honor God and comfort those who mourn. We do this by celebrating the Resurrection and affirming the profound hope we have through the love and grace of our risen Lord. Joining with others, we give our pain, our memories, our hopes, and our gratitude to God.

STYLE OF SERVICE

The term "funeral" normally refers to a service at which a casket is present and followed by a graveside service to commit a body to the ground. A funeral is often more formal in order and tone and typically takes place within five days or so of a death.

The term "memorial service" is often used in reference to a service at which there are either cremains or no physical remainder of deceased present. It may be further separated in time from a death. As Services of Witness to the Resurrection, both funerals and memorial services include scripture, a pastor's message, and music, as well as other readings appropriate to the occasion.

A "committal" is a short service at the graveside or scattering garden, intended to minister intimately to the deceased's loved ones. It includes brief scripture readings and prayers. Committals may be scheduled before or after a memorial service, or after the conclusion of a funeral. To learn more about FPC's Memorial garden, [click here](#).

FORMAT AND DIRECTION OF THE SERVICE

Responsibility for planning and conducting the service resides with the pastor, who normally meets with the family of the one who has died to offer prayer, support, and planning guidelines for the service. The pastor will work with the family to personalize the service. The service is normally held within our sanctuary, depending on scheduling, need, or appropriateness. Should the family desire others to assist in the service, please consult with the pastor who has the authority to extend the invitation. In all cases, our pastor will have final decision on all aspects of the service.

SCHEDULING

We will seek to schedule services in timely ways that meet family and community needs. While a funeral will be planned within a week of a death, as noted earlier, a memorial service may be planned a bit later. Normally, we will work to avoid Sundays and church holidays. Your pastor will work with you to set a date and time. As a Service of Witness to the Resurrection is a worship service of God's people, the date and time planned will be publicized to the congregation of First Presbyterian Church. You may also publish it in obituaries or through other forms of communication.

MUSIC

All music performed or sung during the service should be consistent with the message that God's love is stronger than death and our hope is in Christ. The pastor, in consultation with our organist and Minister of Music and Arts, will assist in selecting and arranging for music. FPC employs professional soloists who can be available. Outside musicians will require approval of the officiating musician, who will also orient them to our church.

REFLECTIONS AT THE SERVICE

Brief, prepared reflections about the deceased may be offered by family and friends during a service as arranged with the pastor.

FLOWERS

Flowers beautify the service and remind us of our hope in Christ. Their presence should enhance our worship. There is room for one arrangement in our Sanctuary chancel. We can provide you with the contact information for florists with whom we regularly work.

FRATERNAL, CIVIC, AND MILITARY CONSIDERATIONS

First Presbyterian Church affirms fraternal, civic, or military services outside of the funeral or memorial service itself, either before or after, or in conjunction with a committal of remains. We follow Presbyterian guidelines in this regard, which state:

The service may be observed before or after the committal of the body [or ashes]. The service may include other actions common to the community of faith and its cultures when these actions do not detract from or diminish the Christian understanding of death and resurrection. The service shall be complete in itself, and any fraternal, civic, or military rites should be conducted separately.

(Directory for Worship 4.10005)

WORSHIP BULLETIN

If a worship bulletin is desired, members of the church staff will assist in producing one that includes the order of service. A photo of the deceased may be provided for inclusion on the front cover of the bulletin. If the family desires a more elaborate bulletin, they are welcome to have one produced at their own expense, and in consultation with the pastor.

RECEPTIONS

If the family desires a reception in our Fellowship Hall, they may have it catered at their own expense. The church staff can share the names of caterers with whom we work. The reception is an appropriate location to provide a collection of photos, appropriate memorabilia, or slideshow presentations about the deceased, provided that arrangements have been made ahead of time. Please note that our bylaws prohibit the serving of alcohol on our campus.

MEMORIAL GIFTS

If you would like to include the church in your loved one's obituary, we invite you to use this language: *In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be sent to First Presbyterian Church at 4602 Cary St Rd. Richmond, VA 23226. Donations can also be received online at fpcrichmond.org/give. Please be sure to note IMO [loved one's name] in the memo field. A thank you note will be sent to donors from the church, and a list of those who have donated will be shared with you.*

FEES AND HONORARIA

Members of First Presbyterian Church may receive the ministry of the church, including pastoral services and space for a service, without specific charges. However, if you have the means to provide honoraria, we ask you to consider the fee schedule included below.

For non-members we do ask fees as suggested here. However, no Christian funeral should be denied on the basis of financial resources. If you are unable to provide honoraria to worship leaders or space use fees to the church, these may be either reduced or waived by the pastor. Conversely, if you are able to provide more than is suggested, we encourage you to do so in order to enable the church's ministry to those who cannot.

A statement of services will be provided to you from the church office before or shortly after the service. Honoraria and fees should be remitted directly to the persons providing the service individually through the church office. Ideally, this should be handled prior to the start of service or within 30 days. If circumstances make this a challenge, please let the church office know ahead of time.

	Monday-Thursday (Church Member)	Monday-Thursday (Non-Member)	Friday-Saturday* (Member & Non-Member)
Graveside Service			
Pastor	None required, suggested \$100 - 150	\$250	\$250
Memorial Service			
Pastor	None required, suggested \$300 - 500	\$500	\$600
Assisting Pastor/Liturgist	None required, suggested \$150 - 250	\$500	\$300
Minister of Music and Arts	None required, suggested \$200 - 300	\$300	\$250
**Organist	\$350	\$350	\$350
Soloist/Instrumentalist	Variable	Variable	Variable
Audio and Livestream	\$125	\$250	\$250
Sexton	\$125	\$250	\$250
Use of Sanctuary	***No fee	\$150	\$150
Reception	***No fee	\$150	\$150

* Fees are higher for weekends since the church is typically closed on these days.

** Fee for organist may be higher for nonstandard repertoire.

*** A memorial gift to the church in honor of your loved one and in support of ongoing ministry is welcomed.

ORDER OF SERVICE

A Service of Witness to the Resurrection and Thanksgiving for the Life of....

We Gather as God's People

Prelude Music
Entrance of the Family
Welcome
Remembrances and Thanksgiving (optional)
Call to Worship and Opening Prayer
Hymn

We Hear God's Word

First Reading (scripture or poem)
Special Music (optional)
Second Reading (scripture)
Homily (pastor)
Special Music or Hymn (optional)

We Respond to God's Grace and Call

Prayer of Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer
Hymn

We Are Sent in God's Name

Commendation and Benediction
Postlude Music



Hymn Suggestions

A Mighty Fortress is our God	Hymn #275
Come, Christians, Join to Sing	Hymn #267
Rejoice, the Lord is King	Hymn #363
Come Sing, O Church, in Joy	Hymn #305
Christ the Lord is Risen Today!	Hymn #245
Lead On, O King Eternal	Hymn #269
Lift High the Cross	Hymn #826
The Day of Resurrection!	Hymn #233
For all the Saints	Hymn #326
Abide with Me	Hymn #836
The King of Love My Shepherd Is	Hymn #802
The Lord's My Shepherd	Hymn #801
Christ is Made the Sure Foundation	Hymn #394
When Peace like a River	Hymn #840

Scripture Suggestions

Old Testament

Job 19:1, 23-27
Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

I know that my Redeemer lives
A time for everything

The Psalms

Psalms 23
Psalm 27
Psalm 42
Psalm 90
Psalm 103
Psalm 121
Psalm 130

The Lord is my Shepherd
The Lord is my Light and my Salvation
My soul is thirsting for the living God
Lord, you have been our refuge
The Lord is kind and merciful
I look to the hills...where is my help to come from?
Out of the depths, I cry to you, Lord

New Testament

Romans 8:31b-39
Romans 14:7-9, 10b-12
1 Corinthians 15:51-57
2 Corinthians 4:14- 5:1
Revelation 7:9-17
Revelation 21:1-5a, 6b-7

Who can ever come between us and the love of Christ?
Whether alive or dead, we belong to the Lord
Death is swallowed up in victory
What is seen is transitory; what is unseen is eternal
God will wipe away every tear from our eyes
There will be no more death

Gospels

Matthew 5:1-12
Matthew 11:25-30
John 11:17-27
John 14:1-6, 27

Beatitudes; Rejoice for your reward will be great in heaven
Come to me and I will give you rest
I am the resurrection and the life
There are many rooms in my Father's house. Jesus promises peace.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

R I C H M O N D

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