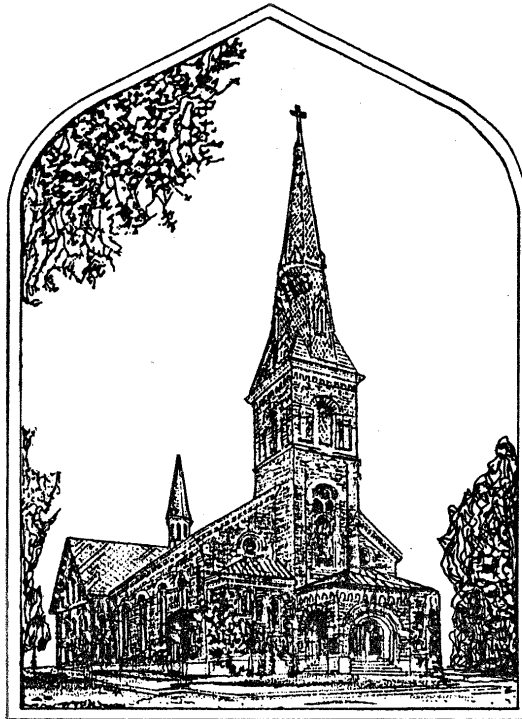


*CHRISTIAN WITNESS TO
THE RESURRECTION*

*Guidelines for Services on the
Occasion of Death*

*Funerals * Memorial Services * Committal Services*



*First Presbyterian Church
403 Washington Street
Watertown, NY 13601
315-782-1750*

CHRISTIAN WITNESS TO THE RESURRECTION

For Christians, the death of a loved one brings a paradox in feelings: sorrow and joy. Sorrow comes from a feeling of deep personal loss when a loving presence has been removed from our lives. Joy comes from the belief in the resurrection as the central doctrine of faith. Christians believe that God has promised, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, that a place has been prepared for the children of God. We understand that through death, our loved ones have received God's promise. The service of Christian Witness to the Resurrection should address both emotions by offering consolation to the living for their sense of loss and by praising God for the hope of His Gospel.

Christians do not live in isolation; the church shares the joys and the sorrows of its members. Clergy should be notified of a member's death as soon as possible. The clergy can lend support to the bereaved, assist with the grief process, and even in the valley of the shadow affirms God's ever-present help and hope. He/she/they can also make sure that members of the church are available to comfort and sustain the bereaved. If clergy is not available, the Clerk of Session should be called to serve until the clergy arrives.

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These guidelines are offered to make this emotionally difficult time as easy as possible. First Presbyterian Church is sincerely interested in offering the family of the deceased comfort and the understanding that God's love will sustain them.

Arrangements

When a person dies, the clergy should be consulted before arrangements are made. The clergy will consult with the family to determine the time, location, and other details of the Witness to the Resurrection service. At this time, the family should mention any special desires, including the music to be played and readings or family memories to be shared. The church office files will be checked for any record of the deceased's wishes. If the family wishes to have a bulletin printed professionally or by the church office, it should be assembled under the direction of the officiating clergy.

It is also appropriate to discuss fees and other costs at this time (see page 8). The clergy will also contact the funeral coordinator who will assist in making the arrangements.

Church Worship Service

All Witness to the Resurrection services will be conducted with dignity and simplicity in facing the reality of death and the sorrow of separation. This will be accomplished with the use of prayer, praise, scripture, sermon, and hymns; God's word in our time of grief is the healing word of love and assurance.

- 1) The service can be called either a funeral, when the casket is present, or a memorial service, when the casket is not present. The family may request a private funeral or memorial service.
- 2) Worship can take place anywhere (in a church, a home, or a funeral home). The House of the Lord, however, helps to give us an awareness of the presence of God which brings assurance and comfort.
- 3) The clergy of First Presbyterian Church will officiate at the Witness to the Resurrection service for church members and their immediate families. Services for affiliate members and others will be held at the discretion of the clergy.
- 4) Requests by other clergy to officiate at a worship service in either the sanctuary or the chapel can be made to our clergy for consideration and approval. Arrangements must include the funeral coordinator, organist and building supervisor.

- 5) Presbyterians are participants, not observers, in worship. Our church can provide members to greet, open doors, usher, handle the signing of the memory book, and attend to the needs of the family during the Witness to the Resurrection service.
- 6) If the bereaved family and friends wish to gather to express condolences and sustain each other, either before or after the service, our facility is open for your use.
- 7) The Book of Order (PCUSA) gives the following guidelines regarding what is appropriate to include in this service:
 - a) scripture readings that witness the worship of God (suggestions p. 12-14)
 - b) hymns which declare belief in life everlasting (suggestions p. 10-11)
 - c) a sermon of hope and promise
 - d) prayers of thanks for God's gift of life and intercession for grieving

Music

The family, in consultation with clergy and church music staff, will select music appropriate to the setting of the service. The text of any ensemble and solo music selected for the service should reflect our belief in the joy of resurrection. Secular music during the Witness to the Resurrection is not permitted.

Organist

The church organist or his/her/their authorized substitute will play for the service of Christian Witness to the Resurrection. Other musicians can participate at the discretion of the clergy.

Soloist

Vocal and instrumental church soloists often are available for the service of resurrection upon request.

Sound

Radio Ministry volunteers will be present to run the sound board during the service. Technology is available to families who wish to live stream the service for those not able to be physically present at a memorial service. It can be viewed at www.watertownfirstpres.org. In addition, families may also receive a digital copy of the service upon request. Families should discuss with the Funeral Coordinator their wishes for the service.

Committal Service

The committal service is a short, dignified service of farewell with scripture and prayer at the deceased's final resting place. In the winter months this will take place as part of the service at the church.

Options include but are not limited to:

- 1) A short graveside committal service for the family only may be held. It can be either before or after a memorial service at the church.
- 2) A longer graveside service without a church service.

When planning a graveside service, please consider the weather, location, available space for guests at the graveside, and ease of access to the grave.

Questions That May Arise

May fraternal or civil rituals be included in the church service?

Since this is not part of our common worship service, it can be discussed with clergy, who has the final decision.

Can the service be held at the funeral home?

Funeral homes do provide a setting for services. Clergy would be available to officiate at services in other facilities at his/her/their discretion.

Are memorial gifts appropriate?

Memorial Gifts are very appropriate and can leave a lasting memory of your loved one. First Presbyterian Church has several ministries where contributions may be made, such as Radio Ministry, Deacon Funds, or Outreach. All of these ministries reach people far beyond our walls, and into the community.

What about cremation and organ donation?

This is a matter of personal preference. Both practices are considered to be consistent with the Christian faith. Cremation would be arranged with the Funeral Director. Organ donation must be pre-arranged with the hospital.

Should the casket be open or closed during the service?

The Book of Order (PCUSA) states, “in order that attention in the service be directed to God, when a casket is present it ordinarily is closed.” This practice helps to focus attention on the promise of the Resurrection rather than the personal loss of a loved one.

Is there parking at the church?

There is room in the church parking area for cars belonging to family and friends. Please do not use the spaces designated for our staff. Street parking is available. The parking lot behind the Retina Vitreous Surgeons across the street from the church is available during non-business hours. Do not use the Best Western parking area unless you are a registered guest, as the vehicle may be towed.

May the family display pictures and memorabilia?

Yes, displays of photos and memorabilia may be present at the church. Most often a single picture is displayed on the casket or communion table in the sanctuary. Photo boards and memorabilia would be displayed in Fellowship Hall for guests to view. The Funeral Coordinator will assist families with this as needed.

What are the fees?

Clergy-The Clergy honorarium is left to the discretion of the family.

The suggested honorarium is \$150.

Funeral Coordinator \$100

Building Supervisor \$125

Organist \$150

(Note: The Organist shall receive a supplement of \$35
per soloist or ensemble rehearsal.)

Soloist Negotiate directly

Building use fee for Non-Members: Sanctuary \$100 or Chapel \$50

How can I pre-arrange my own service?

Clergy is available by appointment to discuss arrangements with members and keep their requests on file in the church. These plans will then be used during the initial family consultation.

***Suggested Hymns for Funerals and Memorial Services from the
Celebration Hymnal***

Title	#
A Mighty Fortress Is Our God	151
Abide With Me	642
All Creatures Of Our God and King	63
All People That On Earth Do Dwell	101
Alleluia! Sing to Jesus	377
Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound	343
Be Thou My Vision	562
Be Still, My Soul	712
Beneath the Cross of Jesus	320
Blessed Assurance Jesus Is Mine	572
Come, Christians, Join to Sing	225
Crown Him With Many Crowns	45
Eternal Father, Strong to Save	808
For All the Saints	767
For the Beauty of the Earth	793
Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken	400
Great Is Thy Faithfulness	139
Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah	682
Holy, Holy, Holy	69
How Firm a Foundation	408
How Great Thou Art	147
I Love to Tell the Story	444
I'll Fly Away	779
In the Garden	635
Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee	90
Just a Closer Walk with Thee	564
Lift High the Cross	450
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling	648
My Faith Looks Up To Thee	539
Near to the Heart of God	617
O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go	606
O Worship the King, All Glorious Above!	104
Our God, Our Help in Ages Past	686
Precious Lord, Take My Hand	684
Rejoice, The Lord is King	370

Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart	169
Rock of Ages	342
Standing on the Promises	410
Sweet By and By	778
The Church's One Foundation	401
The King of Love My Shepherd Is	683
The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want	694
This Is My Father's World	143
We'll Understand It Better By and By	771
What A Friend We Have In Jesus	630
When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder	774

Suggested Scripture Readings For Funeral and Memorial Services

Old Testament

Job 19:23-27	I know that my redeemer lives
Isaiah 40:1-11	Comfort my people
Isaiah 40:28-31	Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength
Isaiah 43:1-3a,18-19,25	When you pass through the waters, I will be with you
Isaiah 55:1-3,6-13	Ho, everyone who thirsts
Lamentations 3:19-26,31b-32	The Lord's steadfast love

For the loss of a child

Isaiah 65:17-25	I create new heavens and a new earth
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For those whose faith is unknown

Ecclesiastes 3:1-15	For everything there is a season
Lamentations 3:1-9,19-23	The Lord's steadfast love

Psalms

Psalms 23	The Lord is my shepherd
Psalms 46:1-5,10-11	A very present help in trouble
Psalms 23	The Lord is my shepherd
Psalms 46:1-5,10-11	A very present help in trouble
Psalms 90:1-10,12	Teach us to number our days

Psalm 91	The one who dwells in the shelter of the Most High
Psalm 103	Bless the Lord, O my Soul
Psalm 121	I lift up my eyes to the hills
Psalm 130	Out of the depths I cry to the Lord
Psalm 139:1-12	Where shall I go from your spirit?
Psalm 146	Hallelujah! praise the Lord, O my soul

Epistles

Romans 5:1-11	Hope does not disappoint
Romans 6:3-9	Baptized into Christ's death, raised to live with him
Romans 8:14-23,31-39	Nothing can separate us from the love of God
Romans 14:7-9,10b-12	Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's
1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-44, 50, 53-58	Death is swallowed in victory
2 Timothy 2:8-13	If we died with him, we shall also live with him
Hebrews 2:14-18	Christ was tested in every way
Revelations 21:1-4,22-25,22:3-5	A new heaven and a new earth
Revelations 22:1-5	The Lord God will be their light

Gospels

Matthew 5:1-12a	The Beatitudes
Matthew 11:25-30	Hidden from the wise, revealed to infants
Matthew 25:1-13	Wise and foolish bridesmaids
Matthew 25:31-46	The Last Judgement
Luke 7:11-17	Jesus raises the son of the widow of Nain
Luke 18:15-17	We enter the kingdom only as a child
Luke 23:33,39-43	Today you will be with me in paradise
John 3:16-21	God so loved the world
John 5:24-29	Whoever hears and believes has eternal life
John 6:37-40	Anyone who comes to me I will never drive away
John 6:47-58	Whoever believes in me has eternal life
John 11:17-27	I am the resurrection and the life
John 11:38-44	Lazarus raised from the dead
John 14:1-6,25-27	Let not your hearts be troubled

At the loss of a child

Matthew 18:1-5,10	The greatest in the kingdom of heaven
Mark 10:13-16	Let the children come to me

For those whose faith is unknown

Matthew 25:31-46	As you did it to one of the least
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FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

(315) 782-1750

The Rev. Dr. Andrew Philip Long

(410) 916-1673

Patricia Gorman, Clerk of Session

(315) 785-5413

Michele Elmer, Funeral Coordinator

The Endowment Fund of the First Presbyterian Church was initiated in 1947 and formalized by the action of the congregation at the 1948 Annual Meeting. Income only from the investment of contributions to the Endowment Fund is used, as indicated by the donor's wishes for current expenses, benevolent purposes or unrestricted general purposes of the First Presbyterian Church.

Contributions to the Endowment Fund may be made by:

Cash donations

Gifts of securities

Gifts of life insurance policies, annuities, or trusts with the First Presbyterian Church Endowment Fund as the beneficiary. Specific details may be discussed with our clergy

Bequests - consult your attorney when making or changing your will.

Prepared by Worship & Music Council

1989

Revised:

May 2005

October 2009

July 2012

April 2014

May 2016

May 2019

October 2022