

St. Mary's Funeral Booklet

Dear Family and Friends,

The loss of a loved one is perhaps the most difficult experience that any person must bear. Please know that we are praying for you during this time of grief.

In the Christian faith we are consoled by the knowledge that death is not the last word. Rather, through Jesus Christ, resurrection is assured.

In the Episcopal tradition, therefore, a service of burial (commonly called a funeral) is rooted in the hope of resurrection. Indeed, we often refer to a funeral as "an Easter liturgy."

As you look through this book, keep in mind the words of St. Paul, who wrote, "I am convinced that neither death nor life...nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

-Romans 8:38-39

Peace and Blessings,



The Rev. Dr. Todd Cederberg

Requirements for Funerals and Memorial Services at St. Mary's

St. Mary's has a policy that any person may have a funeral or memorial service at our church, regardless of membership. The service will be based on the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer liturgy, which provides a beautiful version of a Christian ceremony.

Some Initial Questions

What will be the day and time of the service?

St. Mary's often has funerals Monday-Thursday when the office is open and the staff and clergy are present. Common times for funerals are 11 a.m. or 1 p.m. Funerals on Friday and Saturday require additional planning, and there are additional fees associated. Funerals are not held on Sundays.

Are you working with a funeral home?

St. Mary's does not have a specific relationship with any one funeral home in the area. Generally, a funeral home is not involved in the planning of the church service. However, please provide us with contact information so that we can coordinate with them.

Where is the body or ashes to be buried/interred?

St. Mary's does not have a relationship with any local cemetery. Our memorial garden is available for ashes to be buried or placed in a niche. Some families take the ashes with them to be laid to rest in a different location. In all cases, it is still possible to purchase a brass plaque to be hung in our memorial garden. Please let us know your wishes.

Will the body or ashes be present at the service?

In the case of ashes, St. Mary's does have a small collection of boxes and urns which can be used free of charge. If the body/ashes will *not* be present at the church, the ceremony is known as a memorial service.

Will the service include Holy Eucharist (Communion)?

Sharing the body and blood of our Lord is an appropriate and powerful action for a funeral or memorial service. However, it is not required. Please know that at St.

Mary's, all Baptized Christians, regardless of denomination, are welcome to receive Communion.

Will the service include music?

A church service does not need to include music. If you do desire music, our church music director can play a variety of pieces. Some families opt for only organ music, while others include sung hymns. Families sometimes request that a friend or family member sing or play an instrument. This should be arranged through our music director who will schedule a rehearsal.

About how many people will be attending?

Our church can comfortably accommodate 200 people.

Planning a Burial Service

The liturgy used for funerals begins on page 491 in the Episcopal Book of Common Prayer. The prayerbook allows for some flexibility and choices. Specific questions about the liturgy can be directed to the priest who will be presiding.

The main choices that are made in planning a service are the following:

- Scripture readings (two to four readings)
- Hymns (two to four hymns)
- Family words or a eulogy (two persons maximum)

Scripture

Here are some suggested scripture readings. More options are available, or you may choose different readings from the Bible.

Old Testament

Isaiah 61:1-3

Ecclesiastes 3:1-11

Psalm 23

Psalm 130

New Testament

Romans 8:14-19, 34-35, 37-39

Revelation 7:9-17

Gospel

John 10:11-16

John 14:1-6

*For a service with Eucharist (Communion) a Gospel passage must be used.

Music

Pieces and hymns should be discussed with the clergy and music director. For a full Communion service, the order may be as follows:

Organ prelude

Processional or opening hymn

Hymn before the Gospel reading (optional)

Communion hymns

Recessional or closing hymn

Organ postlude

Family words or Eulogy

At an Episcopal service, the priest always offers a homily reflecting the Christian understanding of death and resurrection. Prior to this homily, it is appropriate (but not necessary) for one or two family members or friends to offer memories or reflections about the deceased. These remarks must be typed or written on paper.

This is for two reasons:

- 1) so that you know where to begin and end.
- 2) so that, in the event that you find yourself unable to read it, the priest or someone else may read it on your behalf. We recommend that remarks be no more than 2 double spaced pages, and that you read it out loud to yourself on the day before.

Other Topics

Creating the funeral bulletin (program)

St. Mary's will create the printed bulletin for the service, and we will create as many copies as needed. If you have a specific poem or verse to be included in the bulletin, please send it via email. A picture of the deceased may be included on the back of the bulletin. Please send this in digital form via email.

Flowers

St. Mary's works with Harbor Bay Florist. Flowers are permitted on the reredos behind the altar, and two vases are used. Additional arrangements are not permitted in the sanctuary. Large flower arrangements are not permitted in front of the altar, lecterns, or chancel area, or on the pews. After the service, families may take the flowers with them or leave them at the church.

Outside florists are allowed. Flowers should be delivered in their own vases.
Reminder: two medium size arrangements only.

Receptions

St. Mary's is generally able to provide space for receptions following funeral services. Please check with our facilities manager. The possible venues include the courtyard, Smith Hall, and the Pittenger Center. We encourage the use of private caterers, especially on Fridays and Saturdays.

Worksheet for planning the liturgy

Prelude music:

Opening Hymn:

The priest begins the liturgy on page 491

Old Testament Reading:

Reader:

Psalm:

Reader (or congregational):

New Testament Reading:

Reader:

Family Words or eulogy:

Hymn:

Gospel reading:

Homily by priest

Apostles Creed

Prayers (page 497)

Intercessor:

Holy Eucharist

The Lord's Prayer

Hymns during Communion:

The Commendation (if the body or ashes are present)

Recessional or closing hymn:

Postlude music

Fees

Use of the Church - no charge

Organist - \$200

(Make checks payable to Joanne Nelson)

Flowers - \$110 to \$150

(Make checks payable to St. Mary's if we do the ordering through Harbour Bay Florist.)

Sexton Fee for Saturday service - \$100

Clergy Fee

Especially for Friday and Saturday services, families are encouraged to give an honorarium of \$200 to the officiating priest. For Mon-Thursday funerals, a clergy honorarium is not necessary.