

Hilton Presbyterian Church
Newport News, Virginia

FUNERAL POLICY

"The resurrection is a central doctrine of the Christian faith and shapes Christians' attitudes and responses to the event of death. Death brings loss, sorrow, and grief to all. In the face of death Christians affirm with tears and joy the hope of the gospel. Christians do not bear bereavement in isolation but are sustained by the power of the Spirit and the community of faith. The church offers a ministry of love and hope to all who grieve. (W-6.3006)

Anticipating the Event

The session encourages members to discuss and plan in advance the arrangements which will be necessary at the time of death. It is useful to prepare a document in advance which should be kept in a place where it will be readily available to the surviving family members. This document should include the following details:

- Decisions about the Christian options of burial, cremation, or donation for medical purposes
- The selection of a funeral home
- Any desires concerning the cost of the funeral
- Any desires concerning the funeral service (clergy, music, scripture, readings, pall bearers, memorials)

These plans should provide for arrangements which are simple, which bear witness to resurrection hope, and in which the Christian community is central. The minister is available for counseling as such help may be needed.

The Event of Death

No one should face the event of death alone. When death is unexpected, it is an even more debilitating experience. The Christian community is a sustaining and uplifting resource. The Session urges that the minister be notified right away. The minister is ready to assist the family with any of the details which need to be attended to. The minister is available to go with the family to the funeral home and aid in the arrangements. The minister will also notify the appropriate people in the congregation of the death and the funeral arrangements.

The Christian Funeral

The Session grants priority for the use of the church building to funeral services in the case of any schedule conflict, with the exception of regular worship services. The Session likewise grants priority for the time of the staff of the church to implement the service. The service shall be under the direction of the pastor. Others may be invited to participate as leaders in the service at the discretion of the pastor.

The service is to be a simple, dignified witness to the hope we have in Jesus Christ. All music and readings should be in keeping with the tone. Special music and hymns which are consistent with the Biblical affirmations of God's power over death are to be chosen. The minister is ready to offer suggestions regarding hymns and scripture readings.

The service may be observed before or after the committal of the body. In order that attention in the service be directed to God, when a casket is present it is closed. If the family desires, the casket may be covered with a funeral pall, flowers, or the U.S. flag. The service may include 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. When there are important reasons not to hold the service in the usual place of worship, it may be held in another suitable place such as a home, a funeral home, a crematorium, or at graveside.

For members of the church, there are no fees for the use of the church building and no honoraria are necessary for the staff. For non-members of the church, a customary fee of \$100 to be paid to the church organist will be charged. It is always appropriate to give an honorarium to soloists or others who provide special music at a funeral. The amount is left up to each family or individual.

Memorial Gifts

When death occurs, friends wish to express their sympathy in some evident fashion. The Session encourages members to recommend to their friends the opportunity to make memorial gifts to the church. These gifts are held in the Memorial Fund. The Memorial Fund realizes a variety of projects suitable for memorial gifts (furnishings, books, musical instruments, flower fund, etc.) The Memorial Fund Committee appointed by the Session designates projects suitable for memorial gifts, and considers requests for memorial funds for particular projects.

Please discuss your wishes with your family and pastor and complete the following information to be kept on file in the church office. This information should be updated any time your personal situation or feelings on any of these matters change.

HILTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA

PERSONAL FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

NEXT OF KIN: (1) _____

(2) _____

I PREFER: (check one)

_____ A funeral service (a time of worship held prior to the disposition of the body)

_____ A memorial service (a time of worship held after the disposition of the body)

I PREFER A SERVICE BE HELD (check one)

_____ At the church sanctuary

_____ At the funeral home

_____ At the graveside

_____ Other

I PREFER THE DISPOSITION OF MY BODY BE IN THIS MANNER: (check one)

_____ Burial

_____ Cremation

_____ Medical science

IF YOU HAVE WILLED YOUR BODY OR ORGANS TO MEDICAL SCIENCE, WHERE MAY THAT DOCUMENT BE LOCATED?

VISITATION

I would like visitation: _____ Night before service _____ Before service _____ After service _____ At church

_____ At funeral home _____ At my home _____ Other: _____

I HAVE THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTIONS FOR WORSHIP:

Hymns: (1) _____ (2) _____

Soloists: _____

Organist: _____

Special Religious Music: (1) _____ (2) _____

Scripture Readings: (1) _____ (2) _____

On Casket: _____ Pall _____ Flowers _____ U.S. Flag

Pall Bearers: (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____

(4) _____ (5) _____ (6) _____

Alternates: (1) _____ (2) _____

WHAT FAMILY MEMBER(S) OR FRIEND(S) SHOULD BE CONTACTED CONCERNING THE SERVICE?

(1) NAME: _____

(2) NAME _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

PHONE NUMBER _____

FUNERAL DIRECTOR _____ I prefer _____

_____ I do not have a preference

LOCATION OF FAMILY BURIAL PLOT, IF ANY: _____

MEMORIAL GIFTS: (you may choose more than one)

The church Designated _____

Undesignated

A specific charitable cause (please specify) _____

The donor's choice

OTHER COMMENTS: _____
