



Celebration of Life Planning Guide

“The liturgy for the dead is an Easter liturgy. It finds all its meaning in the resurrection. Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we, too, shall be raised. The liturgy, therefore, is characterized by joy, in the certainty that “neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” This joy, however, does not make human grief unchristian. The very love we have for each other in Christ brings deep sorrow when we are parted by death. Jesus himself wept at the grave of his friend. So, while we rejoice that one we love has entered into the nearer presence of our Lord, we sorrow in sympathy with those who mourn.” *The Book of Common Prayer*, pg 507

As Christians, we know that death does not have the final word. Through God’s grace, Jesus has conquered death forever. Funerals are among the times that we as Christians do the task of the Church the best. We comfort one another in our grief, we gather in community, and we proclaim Christ crucified and risen. A Christian funeral is not a tribute to how wonderful you were,

but instead it publicly affirms the saving power of God, as demonstrated in your life. We tell how God’s story interacts with your story. Baptismal imagery is important because it reminds us of God’s saving deeds. As Paul writes in Romans 6:5, “For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.”

In the days following a death, it can often be overwhelming for family members to put the details of a funeral together. Whether it is following a long illness or a surprising accident, your loved ones may wonder what your wishes really were.

This worksheet is an opportunity for you to think about these things now, discussing them with your family, friends, and priest. A copy will be kept in a confidential file at St. Paul’s to assist the priest and your family in planning your funeral. It is not a legally binding document, but a guide and starting point for having conversation about what is to come.



335 Longmeadow Street in Longmeadow, Massachusetts 01106

413.567.5901 + www.st-andrews-longmeadow.org

Celebration of Life Planning Worksheet

Please provide all applicable information.

Full name: _____

Date of birth: _____ Place of birth: _____

Date of baptism: _____ Place of baptism: _____

Date of confirmation: _____ Place of confirmation: _____

Date of marriage: _____ Place of marriage: _____

Spouse's name: _____

Survived by: _____

Preceded in death by: _____

Next of kin and/or those making funeral arrangements: _____

Work and education: _____

Hobbies, activities, and passions: _____

Care of the Body

This worksheet is not a binding document, but it can guide your loved ones in making decisions. Please talk with your family about these options now. Some decisions require separate signed documents.

Organ donation (circle one): Yes No

Donation for research (circle one): Yes No

Cremation (circle one): Yes No

Traditional Casket Burial: (circle one): Yes No

Have you done any pre planning with a funeral home? (circle one): Yes No If yes, which funeral home? _____

Visitation

The visitation is an opportunity for friends and family to gather, often before the celebration of life.

Please Circle One: No visitation Visitation at funeral home Visitation at the church

Date and Time of Visitation: _____

Celebration of Life

A member of the clergy affiliated with St. Andrew's normally officiates at funerals held at St. Andrew's. Other clergy may participate in the service at the Rector's invitation and discretion. At St. Andrew's, a white funeral pall covers the casket as a reminder of baptism, and the Paschal Candle is lit as a reminder of Christ's triumph over death. Episcopalians leave the casket closed as a sign of resurrection. Communion is typically celebrated.

Funeral location (circle one): St. Andrew's Church Funeral Home _____

Other: _____

Body/cremated remains present? (circle one): Yes No

Liturgy (circle one): Rite I (traditional, Elizabethan-inspired language)

Rite II (contemporary language most commonly used in worship and most welcoming to guests unfamiliar with The Episcopal Church.)

Communion? (circle one): Yes No Unsure

Readings

You may choose one reading from Hebrew Scripture such as: Isaiah 25:6-9 (He will swallow up death for ever) Isaiah 61:1-3 (To comfort those who mourn) Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33 (The Lord is good to those who wait for him) Wisdom 3:1-5, 9 (The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God) Job 19:21-27a (I know that my Redeemer lives)

A suitable psalm, hymn, or canticle may follow. The following Psalms are appropriate: 23, 27, 42:1-7, 46, 90:1-12, 106:1-5, 116, 121, 130, 139:1-11.

You may choose one New Testament reading, such as: Romans 8:14-19, 34-35, 37-39 (The glory that shall be revealed) 1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-44, 53-58 (The imperishable body) 2 Corinthians 4:16--5:9 (Things that are unseen are eternal) 1 John 3:1-2 (We shall be like him) Revelation 7:9-17 (God will wipe away every tear) Revelation 21:2-7 (Behold, I make all things new)

You may choose one Gospel reading, such as: John 5:24-27 (He who believes has everlasting life) John 6:37-40 (All that the Father gives me will come to me) John 10:11-16 (I am the good shepherd) John 11:21-27 (I am the resurrection and the life) John 14:1-6 (In my Father's house are many rooms)

First Reading:

Psalm:

Second Reading (this can be a non-biblical piece such as a poem):

Gospel:

Words of Celebration and Remembrance

In addition to the homily, others are welcome to share reflections, memories and

stories as long as the offerings are brief. Typically, no more than two people offer Words of Celebration and Remembrance in the context of the service. Additional offerings can take place in the context of the reception.

Words of Celebration and Remembrance (circle one): Yes No

If yes, who do you wish to have offer the Words of Celebration and Remembrance:

Music

Through music, we are often able to express what words alone cannot. For services at the church, St. Andrew's Director of Music Ministry will normally be the musician. Please discuss the fee schedule with the Parish Office. A soloist can be secured for an additional fee.

In some circumstances, other musicians may participate at the Rector's and Director's invitation and discretion. In selecting music, it is important to consider how the hymn proclaims Christ crucified and risen as demonstrated in the life of the deceased. The following list suggests a number of hymns from The Hymnal 1982 that are appropriate. Hymns from other sources are allowed along as the music and copyright permission can be secured in a timely manner. Typically, we sing 3 to 5 hymns. Instrumental music can be offered during the Offertory (when the Altar is set for Holy Communion) and/or during the distribution of Communion.

Easter Hymns

174 At the lamb's high feast we sing
178 Alleluia, Alleluia! Give thanks to the risen Lord
179 Welcome, happy morning!
180 He is risen, he is risen!
181 Awake and sing the song
188 Love's redeeming work is done
191 Alleluia, alleluia! Hearts and voices heavenward raise
194 Jesus lives!
199 Come, ye faithful, raise the strain
204 Now the green blade riseth
205 Good Christians all, rejoice and sing!
207 Christ the Lord is risen today!
208 The strife is o'er, the battle done
209 We walk by faith and not by sight

Hymns of Praise and Thanksgiving

379 God is Love, let heaven adore him
390 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
397 Now thank we all our God
398 I sing the almighty power of God
400 All creatures of our God and King

410 Praise, my soul, the King of heaven
411 O Bless the Lord, my soul
429 I'll praise my Maker while I've breath Hymns to Jesus Christ, Our Lord
447 The Christ who died but rose again
455 O love of God, how strong and true
460 Alleluia! Sing to Jesus
473 Lift high the cross
478 Jesus, our mighty Lord
482 Lord of all hopefulness
487 Come my Way, my Truth, my Life
488 Be Thou my vision

Hymns to the Holy Spirit

508 Breathe on me breath of God
516 Come down, O Love divine

Hymns for the Saints and the Church Triumphant

287 For all the saints
293 I sing a song of the saints of God
620 Jerusalem, my happy home
623 O what their joy and their glory must be
625 Ye holy angels bright

Hymns of the Christian Life and Pilgrimage

555 Lead on, O King Eternal
556 Rejoice, ye pure in heart!
635 If thou but trust in God to guide thee
636 & 637 How firm a foundation
645 & 646 The King of love my shepherd is
658 As longs the deer for cooling streams
663 The Lord my God my shepherd is
664 My Shepherd will supply my need
665 All my hope on God is founded
671 Amazing Grace! How sweet the sound
680 O God, our help in ages past
687 & 688 A mighty fortress is our God
690 Guide me, O thou great Jehovah
692 I heard the voice of Jesus say

Hymns of the Church and the Church's Mission

517 How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord
518 Christ is made the sure foundation
525 The Church's One Foundation
541 Come, labor on

Hymns for Burial
356 May choirs of angels lead you to Paradise
358 Christ the Victorious, give to your servants rest

Paraphrase of the Nunc dimittis
499 Lord God, you now have set your servant free
Navy Hymn 608 Eternal Father, strong to save

Hymns (3-5): _____

Other Selections for Instrumental Music and/or Soloists (please specify):

Including Others In Your Service

There are several opportunities for including friends and family in the service. The parish can secure people to serve if needed.

Pall bearers (up to eight): _____

Readers (up to three): _____

Ushers (two to four): _____

Acolyte: _____

Soloist: _____

Other Musicians: _____

Internment (circle one): in-ground casket burial cremation

Will the committal/interment take place immediately following the service (circle one):
Yes No

If yes, where: _____

Ashes can be buried in the Memorial Garden at St. Andrew's or interred in a niche as part of the Columbarium. Please contact the Parish Office to inquire.

Funeral Reception

Will there be a reception (circle one)?: Yes No

If yes, location: _____
St. Andrew's can host the reception either in the St. Andrew's Room or the Parish Hall.

Altar Flowers

Altar Flowers (circle one): Yes No

If yes, please list the florist and color/type preferences: _____

Typically, the vases are provided by St. Andrew’s. The florist can see the vases for inspiration and to select the appropriate insert. The vases do not leave the church. If a Celebration of Life takes place within three days leading up to a Sunday, the flowers usually stay on the Altar to beautify the community’s worship of God.

Military Honors

Those who have served in the military may be eligible for military honors. A flag is usually displayed.

Have you served in the military? (circle one): Yes No

If yes:

What branch?: _____

When?: _____

If you would like Military Honors, please describe: _____

Memorial Gifts

I have shared with my next of kin where financial gifts in my memory should be directed (circle one): Yes No

Recipients include: St. Andrew’ Episcopal Church: Yes No

Other: _____

Gifts are to be in lieu of flowers (circle one): Yes No

Planned Giving (optional section)

I have included St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church in my will (circle one): Yes No

I am a member of St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church’s Legacy Society (circle one): Yes No

I have planned another type of deferred gift (circle one): Yes No

Please list: Life insurance, gift-annuity, charitable trust, etc.:

If you have circled yes above, you may wish to note the following:

St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church is included in my estate plan for:

Percentage: _____ % Estimated value of gift: \$_____

Fixed amount: \$_____

Please see next page.

Please share any additional details or requests:

Name of person preparing this form (print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Do you desire a visit with a priest to discuss these plans? (circle one): Yes No

Please feel free to call upon a priest at any time for help with issues of death, dying, grief, or mourning.

Please return this worksheet to: St. Andrew's Episcopal Church
335 Longmeadow Street Longmeadow, MA 01106

This document is an altered version of a planning guide from St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Lynchburg, Virginia.