

GUIDELINES FOR PLANNING A FUNERAL OR MEMORIAL SERVICE at Immanuel Presbyterian Church

Use these guidelines to fill out the planning information form.

Because it is difficult under emotional stress to plan wisely, the Session encourages members to discuss and plan in advance the arrangements which will be necessary at the time of death.

The Session of Immanuel Presbyterian Church
has established general policies concerning services on the occasion of death,
*“providing for funerals that are simple, dignified, expressive of good stewardship,
bear witness to resurrection hope, and convey the centrality of Christian community.”*
The Directory for Worship, Presbyterian Church (USA) W-4.0702

1. Contact the church immediately at the time of death so that pastoral care may be provided and plans for the funeral or memorial service may be made. The place, day, and time of the funeral service should not be finalized until there has been a conversation with the minister who will be conducting the service.
2. Check with the church to see if a funeral planning information form is on file for the deceased if you are the person responsible for making arrangements.
3. Consult with one of the ministers prior to your visit to a funeral establishment about the necessary arrangements and decisions.

WHEN AND WHERE?

4. The service may be held on any day of the week, depending on the availability of the church, the minister conducting the service, and the organist. Traditionally, a funeral is held approximately three days after a death; memorial services (when burial precedes the service or when the body has been cremated) may be scheduled at any time.
5. *The service on occasion of death “is most appropriately held in the congregation’s usual place of worship, demonstrating continuity with the community’s faith, life, and hope” (Directory for Worship W-4.0703).* The Sanctuary and the Chapel of Immanuel Presbyterian Church are available for the services of church members at no cost.
6. If the family desires the presence of an open casket, it may be in the church Parlor or the Sanctuary prior to the funeral service. The viewing of the body is not a necessary component of the funeral service; it may be a private time for family members either at the funeral home or the church, prior to the actual funeral service.
7. *“Fraternal, civic, or military rites are to be conducted separately” (Directory for Worship W-4.0704).* This service may be observed before or after the committal of the body.
8. *“When there are important reasons not to hold the service in the usual place of worship, it may be held in another place, such as a home, funeral home, crematorium, or graveside” (Directory for Worship W-4.0703).*
9. When cremation is chosen and the Immanuel Columbarium is the resting place for the remains, a service of committal may precede or follow the memorial service.

WHO IS INVOLVED?

10. *“The service is under the direction of the minister of the Word and Sacrament of the congregation in which it is held. Others may be invited to share in leadership at the discretion of the minister of the Word and Sacrament” (Directory for Worship W-4.0703)*
Services held at the church are conducted by the pastor. At her discretion or the family’s request one of the associate pastors may be invited to assist in leading the service. The participation of family members in the service may be emotionally difficult at this time, and it is encouraged that testimonials and remembrances be shared in an alternate setting. If words of remembrance are offered by a friend or family member as part of the service, they should be appropriate to the worship context.
11. The services of a funeral establishment may not be needed for a service at the church. Check with the minister conducting the service before arranging for funeral establishment personnel at the church.
12. Members of the church are available to serve as greeters and ushers.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

13. Funeral establishments offer a menu of services; fees and payment plans vary.
14. There is no fee for the use of the church building. Funerals and memorial services are part of the pastoral care ministry of the church.
15. The church organist may be secured for a funeral service. Arrangements for music are made by the minister conducting the service. The fee for the organist is \$225.00 and is payable directly to the organist at or before the time of the service. Soloists from the church choir are available on a fee basis for vocal music (\$175). Arrangements are made with the minister and music for the service is approved by the minister. Fees are payable on the day of the service, either through the funeral establishment or directly from the person(s) responsible for the service arrangements.
16. If extra custodial time is required, a small fee to cover costs will be requested if the service is not held during his regular working hours.
17. The Deacons will provide coffee and light refreshments in the Parlor following the service, if desired. Additional food and beverages may be arranged with a caterer at the family’s expense. Serving wine at a church reception must be approved by the Session.

WHAT IS INVOLVED IN THE ACTUAL SERVICE?

16. The service shall include scripture and prayer; it may include hymns or other vocal music, words of remembrance, and an affirmation of faith.
17. A printed order of service is provided by the church.
18. A closed casket may be present in the Sanctuary for a funeral service. It may be covered with a funeral pall. A casket may be used if the body is to be cremated after the service. Cremated remains (ashes) are not present at a memorial service.
19. Flowers should be simple. The Communion Table vases may be used. The family may wish to designate memorials be made in the place of flowers. Flowers sent by friends and family members are placed in the Great Hall and Parlor. They may be distributed by the family or left at the church for distribution to home bound members.
20. Photographs of the deceased may be displayed in the Parlor; in the Sanctuary, the cross is the central visual symbol.