



Good Samaritan Episcopal Church

Guidelines for preparing for the end of life

The Christian Burial

A Christian funeral is a holy and tender moment — a bittersweet mixture of grief at the loss of a loved one and joy in the sure and certain hope of the Resurrection given to us in Jesus Christ.

At the time of death, people turn to the Church, as they have done for centuries, seeking prayer, ritual, and the comfort of community. Christian burial is an act of worship. In it, we recall our baptism into Christ's death and resurrection, we mourn together, and we proclaim the gift of eternal life.

Celebrating the Holy Eucharist within the Burial Office is especially fitting, for in communion we proclaim: **“Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.”**

Preparing in Advance

We encourage you to speak with your family and clergy well in advance about your wishes, concerns, and hopes for your funeral. Making plans ahead of time allows you to express your faith clearly and can be a great gift to your loved ones, sparing them difficult decisions during a time of grief.

We encourage you to:

- Create a Will and/or Estate Plan.
- Designate a Financial Power of Attorney.
- Complete a Directive to Physicians (Advance Directive or DNR).
- Complete a Medical Power of Attorney.
- Consider a Pre-Arranged Funeral Plan with a funeral home or crematory.
- Complete this Personal Funeral Plan document.
- Share your funeral plans with your clergy so they may be kept on file.

An attorney can assist you with wills and advance directives. Online resources are also available at www.mydirectives.com.



Keep copies of all important documents and provide them to:

- Your attorney
- Trusted family members
- Your physicians
- Your designated Powers of Attorney

Important: Emergency medical personnel advise keeping copies of advance directives in a clearly labeled envelope taped to your refrigerator, marked “END OF LIFE CARE PLANS.” This can prevent confusion during a medical emergency.

When Death Is Near

When death is near or imminent, please contact the church office (858-458-1501). Your clergy and staff will do everything possible to be present with you and your loved ones — offering prayer, Scripture, anointing, and pastoral support.

We understand the emotional and spiritual weight of these moments, and we are honored to walk with you.

At the Time of Death

Please notify the clergy as soon as possible after a death occurs. Early communication allows us to offer pastoral presence and begin planning in a timely and thoughtful way.



Scheduling a Funeral

Funerals and memorial services are ordinarily scheduled on weekdays or Saturdays, typically mid-morning or early afternoon.

Because of our regular worship life, funerals are not scheduled on Sundays or major holy days, including:

- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day
- Ash Wednesday
- Maundy Thursday
- Good Friday
- Holy Saturday
- Easter Day

We will always make every effort to honor a family's wishes while also honoring the rhythm of the Church calendar.

Presence of the Body or Creains

The Book of Common Prayer envisions that the body (casket or cremains) be present at the Burial Office. Many grief counselors affirm that this helps families begin accepting the reality of death and moving toward healing.

However, a Memorial Service may also be held without the presence of the remains. We commend the soul to God, trusting always in God's mercy and love.

The Pall

The coffin or urn is covered with a parish pall — an embroidered cloth symbolizing that in death, as in life, we stand equal before God. If flowers or a flag cover the casket upon arrival, they will be respectfully removed during the service and replaced afterward.

An open casket is not part of the worship service. If desired, a viewing may take place in another appropriate location within the church building.



The Service Bulletin

Good Samaritan provides a printed order of service. Photographs and biographical material may be included with clergy approval.

The Homily & Personal Reflections

A brief homily is preached by clergy or an authorized lay preacher during the Burial Office.

Personal reflections are often most appropriate during the reception following the service. If such reflections are planned, please let clergy know in advance so we may prepare accordingly.

Photography

To preserve the sacred character of worship, photography and video recording are not permitted during the Burial Office.

Flowers

Clergy will coordinate with the Flower Guild regarding altar flowers. Altar arrangements remain in the sanctuary.

Additional flowers from family and friends may be displayed in the narthex or reception area. Families may take these arrangements home afterward.

Families may also request that no flowers be used.



Music

Music is an integral part of Christian worship.

Our parish musician works closely with clergy to assist in selecting appropriate sacred music. Soloists, choir members, or instrumentalists may be engaged for an additional fee.

Because the Burial Office is an act of worship, music should be sacred in character. We strongly recommend hymns from *The Hymnal 1982* and other authorized Episcopal hymnals.

Typically:

- 2–3 hymns are sung at a service without Holy Eucharist
- 3–4 hymns are sung at a service with Holy Eucharist

Suggested hymns are listed later in this document.

Scripture Readings

The Burial Office includes four readings:

- One from the Old Testament
- A Psalm
- One from the Epistles
- One from the Gospels

Non-scriptural readings are generally reserved for the reception.

Suggested readings are listed in this document.

Attending to the Family

Family members and those participating in the service are asked to arrive one hour prior. Family and close friends gather in the Parlor for prayer, final instructions, and pastoral care.

Ushers will seat the family before the congregation enters and escort them out following the service.



Reception

If you wish to host a reception, please inform the clergy. Often members can assist in offering a reception. A catered meal is also an option for those hoping to create more time and space for family and friends to gather.

The Memorial Garden

Good Samaritan's Memorial Garden is a sacred space for the interment of cremains. There are no individual ground markers, but names may be inscribed on the memorial wall.

Please speak with clergy if you would like more information.

Funeral Fees

There are costs associated with hosting a funeral. Families are invited to help offset these expenses.

Suggested Parish Donation: \$1,000

This includes:

- Use of the church facilities
- Clergy and staff support
- Printed order of service
- Standard altar flowers

It is important to us that no one be denied a Christian burial because of financial hardship. The fee is suggested, not required.

Parish Musician: Typically \$300 (may vary)

Memorial Garden Interment: \$800

(Includes interment and inscription on the memorial wall)

Reception and additional flower costs vary depending on needs.



PERSONAL FUNERAL PLAN

Completing this plan is an act of faith and love — a gift to those who will one day gather to give thanks for your life.

Date this plan was completed: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Designated Powers of Attorney (and those you want to make final arrangements):

Contact Info: _____

Others I would like to notify of my death and funeral (please include contact information):

Date of Last Executed Will: _____

Location of Will and other Legal Documents: _____

Please note any pre-paid or other funeral arrangements here:



Are you registered as an organ donor?

Are you planning to be cremated?

Please note liturgical/service preferences here, such as Rite 1 or Rite 2, including Eucharist (Communion) or not, burial preferences:

Are there any preferred readers, from the parish or from the family?

Preferences for flowers or colors to be used:

In lieu of flowers, I request that a charitable donation be made to the following organization(s):

Please consider including a bequest to the Good Samaritan Episcopal Church in your Will or Estate Plan. Contact the church office at 858-458-1501 for more information.

Other Information for my survivors:

Readings for a burial from the *Book of Common Prayer*

From the Old Testament: (*chose one*)

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 (*chose 1*): 23, 27, 42:1-7, 46, 90:1-12, 106:1-5, 116, 121, 130, 139:1-11.

From the New Testament: (*chose one*)

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)

The Gospel (*chose one*)

John 5:24-27 (He who believes has everlasting life)

John 6:37-40 (All that the Father gives me will come to you)

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)

Hymns from The Hymnal 1982

180	He is risen	473	Lift high the cross
182	Christ is alive	482	Lord of all hopefulness
208	The strife is o'er, the battle done	516	Come down, O love divine
293	I sing a song of the saints of God	541	Come, labor on
304	I come with joy	618	Ye watchers and ye holy ones
335	I am the bread of life	620	Jerusalem, my happy home
362	Holy, holy, holy	645	The King of love
376	Joyful, joyful, we adore thee	657	Love divine, all love excelling
383	Fairest Lord Jesus	671	Amazing grace
390	Praise to the Lord	680	Oh God, our help in ages past
410	Praise my soul, the King of heaven	688	A mighty fortress is our God
439	What wondrous love	690	Guide me, O thou great Jehovah