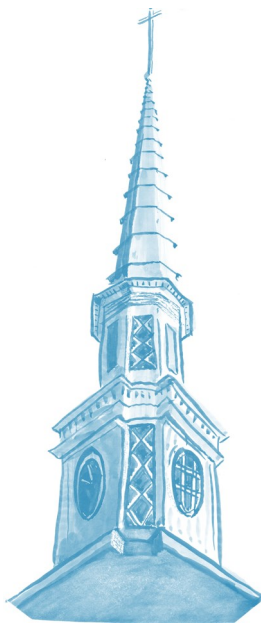


*Witness to the  
Resurrection*

A PLANNING GUIDE TO SERVICES AT  
FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
BURLINGTON



508 West Davis Street  
Burlington, North Carolina 27215  
336.228.1703  
[www.fpcburlington.org](http://www.fpcburlington.org)

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## *Dear Friends*

Jesus promised that he has gone ahead "to prepare a place for us, " and that in his father's house there are "many rooms." Paul assured us that we will all be raised with Christ to enjoy the new heaven and new earth. The creeds of the church also assure us of the resurrection of the body to life eternal.

We at First Presbyterian Church believe these words. These words allow us with calm assurance to face our death and to plan properly. As we have sought to live faithfully, so we also want to plan faithfully for our funeral service that we may honor the God who keeps "our going out and coming in" forever. That is the purpose of this resource guide.

If you would like us to keep your thoughts on file at the church, please read this booklet and complete the funeral planning guide. When you have considered your choices, call to schedule a brief appointment with a pastor to share your wishes and create your file. We hope it will help you and your family to know that we want to honor your wishes and give thanks for your life. In doing so, you will have done a great service to your loved ones by planning ahead.

Grace and peace,

*Your ministers of First Presbyterian Church*

*Witness to the Resurrection***A Planning Guide to Services at First Presbyterian Church, Burlington, North Carolina**

Because the resurrection is essential to a living faith, Christians affirm with tears and joy, the hope of the Gospel even in the face of death. The Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) reminds us that 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 (W4.10001).

The Book of Order encourages members to plan in advance for the time of death. The pastor(s) will direct the service, which generally includes scripture, music, prayers, the proclamation of God's power over death, and words of remembrance of the deceased.

It ends with the commendation of the one who has died to the care of the eternal God and bears witness to faith in the resurrection from the dead. While preparation for the worship service is key, many other decisions must be made at this time.

This guide has been prepared to provide members of the First Presbyterian Church with a plan of action and guidance in making decisions about the time of bereavement.

*Prior planning with*

*First Presbyterian Church*

The time of death is emotional, stressful, and filled with decisions. Your prior planning will help ease this burden on loved ones and ensure that your wishes are carried out. After you have read this information and completed the accompanying form, make an appointment with a First Presbyterian pastor to discuss your decisions and initiate a special file. Your appointment will be most welcomed, and the decisions made will be honored with sincerity, dignity, and confidentiality. The file will contain the written information of your choices so that, at the time of death, plans can be put in motion smoothly and quickly.

The final pages of this booklet contain a checklist to help you or your loved ones through the time of death.

*Making arrangements at  
the time of death*

An appointment with a funeral home/mortuary counselor can help you decide what you feel you and your family need from the many services available. The funeral home can coordinate details about transportation to and from services, visitations, preparation of obituary for newspapers, completion of appropriate documents and arrangements with the cemetery or memorial garden. Or you can do these things on your own with guidance from a home funeral guide. (Please contact FPC member, Sara Williams 919-623-0051 for more information.)

Please contact First Presbyterian Church first if you plan to use the sanctuary or the chapel for the service of worship. In addition, the First Presbyterian Church Columbarium is available for the cremated remains of members, former members and their families. Cemeteries throughout the area will also provide you with tours and plot purchase information, or you may already have a family plot elsewhere.

*The Service*

A FUNERAL IS A WORSHIP SERVICE and should be comforting to those who mourn as well as bear witness to our faith in Jesus Christ. The concern of gathered friends does minister to our grief, but essentially a funeral is a service of worship to God. The Book of Order gives these guidelines. "The funeral should be a service of worship in which God's people witness to their faith in the communion of saints, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting and in which also assurance of God's love and salvation in Christ is ministered especially to the bereaved." Since a funeral is a service of worship, all that takes place should be consistent with this principle.

**The Location of the Service.** It is appropriate to have the funeral or memorial service in the church, using either the sanctuary or the Williams' Chapel. It is in the church that we are baptized and confirmed. It is here that we make promises in the baptism of children. It is here that the congregation worships week by week. Here we open our lives to the Lord, find forgiveness, take the bread and the cup, and join with our families and friends in a commitment to follow Jesus Christ. Therefore, it is fitting to recognize the end of our earthly life and celebrate our resurrection to life eternal in this same place.

### *The Service*

**Type of Service.** The following are types of services most used in our church and community.

- **The Funeral Service** is a service where the body is present either in a casket or an urn. Usually the funeral service is concluded with a service of committal at the burial site. When a casket is present, it shall be closed, and draped in a pall. This practice is followed by Christians as a way of walking alongside a child of God, as we sing, pray, tell the gospel story, say farewell, and in faith return our loved one to God with thanksgiving.
- **The Memorial Service** is a service where the body is not present. Interment of the remains in a service of committal has either preceded the memorial service or will take place at a later time. By having the interment before the funeral, those who gather are free to turn their thoughts to God, celebrate the life of the deceased and the resurrection to eternal life, and thus leave the worship service with reassuring and comforting thoughts.
- **The Service of Committal** (often referred to as a graveside service) occurs at the interment site where the remains of the deceased are laid to rest. It is usually brief. If no other service (memorial or funeral) is held, the service of committal may take a longer form.



*The Service*

- **Fraternal or civil rites** are not a part of our worship to God, and therefore it is appropriate for these organizations to pay tribute to their deceased members at the grave site or another location.

**The conducting pastor(s).** You and your family are free to request which pastor(s) you would like to conduct the service, or the church will let you know who is available when you call. One common question is about the use of non-First Presbyterian clergy in conducting the service. The overall policy is that leading funeral and memorial services is the privilege and responsibility of the First Presbyterian pastors available at the time of death. However, if there is another pastor you would like to invite to participate, please discuss your desires during your appointment with the First Presbyterian pastor.

*The Service*

**Order of worship.** The service is based on the Lord's Day service as outlined in The Book of Order. A funeral or memorial service in the reformed tradition usually follows this order of worship:

Opening Voluntary

Call to Worship

Hymn

Confession and Pardon

Old Testament Lesson

(Solo)

New Testament Lesson

Homily and Thanksgiving of Life

Affirmation of Faith – Apostles' Creed

(Solo)

Prayers of Thanksgiving, Supplication and Intercession

Lord's Prayer

Commendation (if a funeral service)

Benediction

Recessional Hymn

Closing Voluntary

*The Service*

**Scripture to be used.** Emphasis of Scripture should be on the declaration of Christian hope and the affirmation of God's power over death. Favorite scriptures of the deceased are always appropriate. For assistance in choosing scripture, see the following list. Your preferences for scripture should be part of your file. The pastor may choose for you if you prefer.

<b>Old Testament</b>	Job 19:23-27 Ecclesiastes 3:1-15 Isaiah 40:1-11 Isaiah 40:28-31 Isaiah 65:17-25
<b>Psalms</b>	Psalm 23 Psalm 46:1-5, 10-11 Psalm 90:1-10, 12 Psalm 103 Psalm 121 Psalm 130
<b>Epistles</b>	Romans 8:31-39 Romans 14:7-9, 10b-12 1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-44, 50, 53-58 2 Corinthians 4:16—5:1 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 Revelation 21:1-4, 22-25; 23:3-5
<b>Gospel</b>	Matthew 18:1-5 Luke 23:33, 39-43 John 11:17-27 John 14:1-6, 25-27

*The Service*

**Music.** Most of the music for a funeral service should be congregational songs. The music shall be sacred music that is appropriate for a service of worship at First Presbyterian Church and expresses resurrection faith. Taped or prerecorded music can not be used in a funeral service at First Presbyterian Church. Our Organist-Choirmaster will provide music for the service in consultation with the Pastor. Soloists and additional musicians may be requested, but they must be approved and arranged for by the Organist-Choirmaster.

For assistance in choosing hymns, see the following list. All hymns that are sung will ordinarily be chosen from the *Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal*.

A psalm or hymn of praise is appropriate at the beginning of the service. The family may select hymns from the following list or others from the hymnal.

- 1      *Holy, Holy, Holy*
- 687   *Our God, Our Help in Ages Past*
- 275   *A Mighty Fortress is Our God*
- 12    *Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise*
- 39    *Great is Thy Faithfulness*
- 35    *Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty*
- 611   *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee*
- 620   *Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven*

*The Service*

- 808    *When Memory Fades*  
157    *I Danced in the Morning*  
268    *Crown Him with Many Crowns*  
610    *O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing*  
14      *For the Beauty of the Earth*  
409    *God is here*  
624    *I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art*  
246    *Christ is Alive*  
238    *Thine is the Glory*  
394    *Christ is Made the Sure Foundation*  
826    *Lift High the Cross*

Easter hymns, affirming the resurrection, are appropriate at the end of a funeral or memorial service. This could also be the place for funeral hymns which are strong and which affirm a long life well lived. Some suggestions are:

- 233    *The Day of Resurrection!*  
236    *The Strife is O'er*  
366    *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*  
321    *The Church's One Foundation*  
326    *For All the Saints*

*(Continued on page 14)*

*The Service**(Continued from page 13)*836 *Abide With Me*555643 *Now Thank We All Our God*

**Flowers.** Floral decorations shall be limited to two arrangements of flowers in the chancel. No casket spray can be used. Flowers that are to be used or have been used in the sanctuary for Sunday worship are sometimes available for use. If they desire, the family may provide other flowers. The church office can offer guidance in making arrangements for flowers. The cross and two candles are a part of our worship and the candles will be lit before the service.

**The Pall.** The church has available a pall for funeral services. A pall is a large cloth that covers the casket during the service. The pall reminds us of our confidence in the resurrection and symbolizes our having put on the robe of Christ's righteousness in baptism. It reminds us that in death all believers are equal. The pall shall be placed on the casket upon entry into the narthex and removed before the casket exits the narthex. The pall may also be used on the casket during viewing or visitation at the funeral home.

**Processional Cross.** You may chose to use the Processional Cross and have a procession from the narthex as is customary on Sunday morning.

*The Service*

**Paschal Candle.** The Paschal Candle stands at the head of the casket or by the urn. The candle, symbolic of God's gift of grace bestowed upon us in baptism, has been used since ancient times to remind God's people that we are, through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, delivered from darkness and into the light of God's eternal love.

**Photography, recording, live video streaming.** No flash photographs may be taken in the sanctuary or chapel from the time worshipers begin to arrive until the service is over. Videography is permitted in the sanctuary from the balcony only, provided no additional lighting is used. Since there is no unobtrusive way for videography in the chapel, it is not permitted.

No photographs of the deceased or other memorabilia shall be displayed in the sanctuary, chapel or narthex. An audiotape or CD of the service will be provided for you following the service. Live video streaming of the service may be available if there are family members who are unable to attend the service.

**Bulletin.** A printed bulletin will be provided. The information form with this book will provide the details for the bulletin. The standard format will be discussed when the pastor meets with the family at the time of death. The church office administrator will prepare and print this bulletin.

**Nursery.** Nursery care for funerals and memorial services for infants, toddlers or preschoolers is not provided by First

### *Columbarium and Memorial Garden*

THE COLUMBARIUM AND MEMORIAL GARDEN of First Presbyterian Church is a place of interment for church members and their immediate family who choose cremation. It provides a quiet, dignified place of peace and beauty for loved ones to meditate and pray. This garden fulfills, in an urban location, the traditional church function of providing space on church grounds for the disposition and identification of the earthly remains of those who have shared the faith and fellowship.

The Columbarium is a permanent structure with niches where urns are placed. The name of the deceased, date of birth and date of death is engraved on the niche cover. If you would like to keep your loved one at home or if buried elsewhere, then a memorial plaque may be purchased with the name of the deceased, year of birth and year of death and placed on the memorial wall in the garden.

A service of committal in the memorial garden is a service of worship and is often conducted following a Sunday service of worship at First Presbyterian Church. Any desired music must be approved by the Pastor. The Organist-Choirmaster can assist in securing musicians.

Information is available in the church office as to the cost of niches and nameplates and for reserving a niche and choosing a location in the columbarium wall.



*Reception or meals*

One of our bereavement teams will provide either a meal or a reception for the family. One of the pastors will discuss this with the family to see what their preference is. The family is welcome to receive friends in the boardroom following the service, or a reception in the John Knox room or Calvin Hall may be requested.

We hope that this information will be of help to you. Our clergy invite you to discuss with them any of the information and considerations mentioned and to talk about any plans that may be appropriate for you.

*Expenses to the family*

For church members, there are no charges for use of the church's facilities. Costs to the family related to the memorial or funeral service will be for flowers, additional musicians or soloist that the family may request.

*Memorial gifts*

If friends and loved ones wish to designate a memorial that reflects the interests of the deceased, our church offers numerous opportunities for gifts to existing funds. Each contributor and the family receives acknowledgement of any memorial gift.

## *Checklist: At time of death*

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Write the following info:

- Deceased full name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Location of body: \_\_\_\_\_
- Your name, address, phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Name, address, and phone number of next of kin: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Contact church

336-228-1703 \*A pastor will call you.

Contact funeral home

- Rich & Thompson (Burlington & Graham)  
336-226-1622
- Lowe (Burlington)  
336-228-8366
- McClure (Graham & Mebane)  
336-227-2711

Contact Home Funeral Guide

Sara Williams 919-623-0051

Service arrangements

- Church:

Day: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Scripture readings: \_\_\_\_\_

Hymns: \_\_\_\_\_

Special music: \_\_\_\_\_

- Graveside/interment

Day: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Memorial Gifts (in lieu of flowers)

- FPC
  - \* Music Fund
  - \* Good Samaritan Fund
  - \* Building and Grounds Fund
- \* Furniture Ministry Fund
- Other charitable organizations

Honorariums

- Clergy
- Music Director
- Special Music (Consult Music Director)

Notes:

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**FPC**  
BURLINGTON

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A Welcoming, Worshiping, Transforming,  
and Serving Community of Faith