

Customary for Funerals and Memorial Services

St. Benedict Episcopal Church Lacey, WA Diocese of Olympia

PRIOR PLANNING

It is always advisable to make plans for your own death while still in good health and while able to make rational decisions, not simply about funeral arrangements, but about the myriad of details that must be dealt with upon the death of any individual. Couples **should make time to discuss frankly what will need to be addressed upon each other's demise**. Single persons should have the same discussion with a family member or a trusted friend or advisor. In any case, every individual should have a current and valid will. Good Christian practice and stewardship dictates that we make appropriate plans for the disposal of our earthly affairs in a timely manner. The following pages are designed to facilitate the planning of a funeral during difficult times. Copies of your **plans may be kept in the Parish Office at your request**. **"Funeral" refers to a service with a casket or urn present. A "Memorial Service" uses an identical worship format without a casket or urn.** This customary is intended to provide guidance for funerals and memorial services. Please refer to this document while completing the planning form, which can also be found on this website. The Rector and staff members will be glad to assist you.

A FUNERAL AT CHURCH OF ST. BENEDICT EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Whenever possible, when a person is near death, the Rector should be notified, in order that the ministrations of the Church may be provided. When the death of a member of the Church occurs, it should be reported as soon as possible to the clergy of the parish. Arrangements for the funeral can then be made in consultation with the priest. In the Christian tradition, the death of a loved one is not an occasion for despair and hopelessness. Death is an inevitable part of life and is part of the larger life of the soul, which ultimately is reunited to God in everlasting life. When we grieve at the loss of a loved one, we grieve for ourselves and for our loss, not for the deceased, for we believe that they are in the near presence of our Lord. The liturgy from the funeral services in *The Book of Common Prayer* reminds us that "in the midst of life we are in death." The Church's ministry prepares us both for life in this world and for the

life to come promised to the faithful. It prepares and equips us to live with in the Family of God, the Body of Christ, here on earth, where we may be fed and sustained through Word and Sacrament by the power of the Holy Spirit.

BURIAL FROM THE CHURCH

It is expected that members of the church will be buried or memorialized from the church building which was their spiritual home during their lifetime, and which is the appropriate place to receive their final sacraments and rites of the Church. Our Rector can assist you in making these arrangements.

TIME AND DAY

It is suggested that funerals conducted at the Church be scheduled for mid-to-late morning or early afternoon. This will provide sufficient time for the burial to take place at the cemetery or the Parish Columbarium prior to dusk. Selection of a time for the service should be based on the needs of the family, the expectation or lack thereof of out-of-town mourners, and the availability of the Church. It is difficult for our Altar Guild and our Flower Guild to prepare for an early funeral on Monday (or early Tuesday following a 3-day weekend) because no preparation can be done the day before. No arrangements for the funeral, which involve the clergy and the Church itself, should be announced before the Rector has been consulted and approval received.

THE SERVICE IN THE CHURCH

The actual service centers around prayers which will be for the departed person. We believe that death is but an episode in eternal life and that we should continue to pray for loved ones after death even as we did before death. The Burial Office contains prayers for the faithful departed, as well as those who mourn. The lessons from Scripture and the Psalms remind us of our faith and dependence upon God and of that place which our Lord has prepared for those who love him. As in all service of the church, the congregation is expected to participate fully. "The Order for the Burial of the Dead," as found in *The Book of Common Prayer*, is a simple yet stately service. A priest normally presides at the service. The celebrant meets the body or cremains and goes before it into the church. The service begins with words from the Holy Scripture as the procession enters the church, all standing. The family normally follows the casket into the church and then takes its place in the front pews of the Nave on the Epistle side.

It is desirable that the Lessons from the Old Testament and the New Testament be read by lay persons. Since every funeral is an occasion to remember that we affirm the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting, it is the custom, though not a requirement, in the Episcopal

Church to have a requiem celebration of the Eucharist, which is itself a feast of the Resurrection. The Prayer Book contains a service of the Holy Eucharist that can be used as a part of the Church Burial Service. In such services the family takes their Communion first and then members of the congregation are invited to receive if they choose. The service concludes in the Church with the Blessing. Following this, the congregation stands, and the priest precedes the casket back down the aisle and to the hearse. The service then concludes at the graveside.

WHAT IS A COLUMBARIUM?

A columbarium is a sacred place within a church set apart for the memorialization of loved ones lost, and for the care, placement, and inurnment of their cremated remains. A columbarium allows one to visit a final resting place in a serene interior environment. The Columbarium at St. Benedict is a single tray design.

HOW ARE ARRANGEMENTS MADE FOR COMMITTAL PRAYERS AT THE TIME OF INURNMENT?

Typically, the final placement of the deceased's remains, contained in a permanent cremation urn, occur immediately following the celebration of the Requiem Holy Eucharist and Committal Prayers contained in the Book of Common Prayer. Following Committal Prayers, the columbarium niche will be appropriately sealed. Performing the actual inurnment and placement in the columbarium niche as part of the funeral liturgy is done at the discretion of the family.

The name of the deceased who is interred in the Columbarium is inscribed on the Columbarium Board in the narthex of the Church to hold in memory the faithful departed of St. Benedict Church.

PARTICIPATING CLERGY

The priest who has helped the family members prepare for the funeral is the appropriate priest to perform the burial rites. If an Episcopal priest other than one from St Benedict Parish is desired to assist (or officiate), the permission and invitation of the Rector is required. The location of the funeral other than in the parish church changes nothing; non-parochial priests may only function with the permission and invitation of the Rector of the parish. Guest clergy (other than Episcopal priests and deacons) are invited from time to time to read the lessons, lead prayers, and/or preach. The Book of Common Prayer, the guidelines of which each priest at his ordination has sworn to uphold, is very specific about who may do what. These guidelines may not be violated in any way.

RESERVED SEATING

Pews will be reserved at the front on the Gospel side of the church for pallbearers and on the Epistle side for family members. In order that sufficient space be reserved, please let the priest know ahead of time how many pallbearers there will be and how many family members will be seated in the reserved area.

READINGS FROM SCRIPTURE

Please refer to the planning form for scripture selections prescribed in *The Book of Common Prayer*:

- A reading from the Old Testament
- A Psalm
- A reading from the New Testament
- A Gospel reading

A deacon, priest, or bishop reads the Gospel. Lay readers of the church read from the Old Testament and the New Testament and lead the congregation in the reading of the Psalm. If the family would like a family member or friend to read a lesson(s), please take into careful consideration the emotional state of that person.

The following readings are authorized for the service of The Burial of the Dead:

Old Testament:

Isaiah 25:6-9 (He will swallow up death in victory)
Isaiah 61:1-3 (To comfort all that mourn)
Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33 (The Lord is good unto them that wait for him)
Wisdom 3:1-5, 9 (The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God)
Job 19:21-27a (I know that my Redeemer liveth)

New Testament:

Romans 8:14-19, 34-35, 37-39 (The glory that shall be revealed)
I Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-44, 53-58 (Raised in incorruption)
II Corinthians 4:16-5:9 (Things which are not seen are eternal)
I John 3:1-2 (We shall be like him)
Revelation 7:9-17 (God shall wipe away all tears)
Revelation 21:2-7 (Behold, I make all things new)

Psalms:

Psalm 21, Psalm 23, Psalm 27, Psalm 42, Psalm 46, Psalm 90, Psalm 106, Psalm 116, Psalm 121, Psalm 130, Psalm 139 (These may be found from pages 471 to 479 in *The Book of Common Prayer*)

Gospel:

John 5:24-27 (He who believes in 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)

THE SERVICE AT THE GRAVE

The committal service is brief. Family and friends may choose for this to be a private service or may open the service to all. During the Committal Prayer at the grave the priest will cast earth from the grave onto the casket while saying "earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust." When the service is concluded the family of the deceased may choose to depart immediately or to remain to acknowledge the presence of their friends.

MUSIC

The music at funerals should be appropriate for the occasion. The music serves to support, clarify, and complement the action and words of the liturgy at all times. It should suggest ideas of triumph, resurrection, strength, comfort, thanksgiving and repose; Easter hymns are especially appropriate. When the family of the deceased meets with the clergy, suitable hymns and music can be discussed. It is appropriate to sing hymns or have organ music according to the wishes of the family. The parish musician has right of first refusal for all funerals. Final responsibility for determining the suitability of music is reserved to the Rector.

Hymns (Hymnal, 1982) appropriate for the Burial of the Dead:

208 The strife is o'er
314 Humbly I adore Thee
324 Let all mortal flesh keep silence
383 Fairest Lord Jesus
473 Lift high the cross
474 When I survey the wondrous cross
562 Onward, Christian soldiers
608 Eternal Father, strong to save
635 If thou but trust in God to guide thee

645 The King of love
662 Abide with me
671 Amazing grace!
680 O God, our help in ages past
687 A mighty fortress is our God
690 Guide me, O thou great Jehovah
691 My faith looks up to thee
694 God be in my head
707 Take my life
708 Savior, like a shepherd lead us

CREMATION

The Episcopal Church approves of cremation for those who desire it. St. Benedict Episcopal Church has available a columbarium in the Church Garden which is reserved for members of the parish family and others by exception. Cemeteries in the area also have facilities for the interment of ashes. Do not have ashes sent to St. Benedict Episcopal Church unless a final disposition of these ashes is known.

FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS

The Order for the Burial of the Dead, given in *The Book of Common Prayer*, is a complete service in itself, and the addition of rites added to the service in the church by the participation of fraternal organizations is not recommended. The members of such organizations are most cordially invited to join with the congregation in the Church's last rites for the deceased. Fraternal rites may be conducted at the graveside after the Prayer Book Service has been completed.

USE OF THE PALL

At St. Benedict, as the casket enters the church, it will be covered with a large, brocaded cloth called the "pall." The purpose of this lovely covering is to emphasize the equality of all persons in death. In the case of a cremation, the container of ashes is similarly draped with a brocade covering. In the Episcopal Church the casket is closed before the service begins and remains closed thereafter. The U.S. Flag and any flowers must be removed by the honor team at the door of the Church and replaced with the pall.

FLOWERS, ALTAR LINENS, VESTMENTS, PHOTOGRAPHY

It is customary for two arrangements of white flowers to be placed near the Altar for a funeral. A casket spray may accompany the casket to and from the church but will be removed and replaced with a funeral pall before entering the church. The family should work with a local florist for all flowers.

Floral sprays and decorations sent by family and friends will not be displayed in the church. The flowers and candles used in decorating the Church become the property of the Church and, when the funeral is on a Friday or Saturday, the Altar flowers may be used for Sunday services.

The color for Altar hangings and clergy vestments is always white for funerals, because 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 Altar Guild is made up of volunteer parishioners who spend countless hours decorating the Church for a funeral, preparing the vestments for the clergy, and a variety of other very important tasks. A note of appreciation after the funeral is appropriate and always appreciated by the Guild.

Professional photography and videography must be coordinated with the Rector of St. Benedict Episcopal Church at least one day before the service.

If livestreaming or recording is desired, please arrange this in advance through the Parish Office.

HOMILIES AND REMARKS

The Prayer Book does provide for the possibility of a homily after the reading of the Gospel. This is usually given by the clergy presiding or a member of the family or a friend. No invitation should be extended to anyone to give the homily without the prior consent of the officiating priest. If the homily is given by the priest, brief remarks by a family member or close friend may precede the homily if desired. This should be coordinated with the rector.

SERVICE BULLETIN

It is our policy that service bulletin, if desired, be produced in-house. A photograph may be used in the service bulletin if a photograph of sufficient quality is provided. Digital photographs are preferred. Lead time of no less than three business days is preferred in order to give adequate time for preparation and production.

GUEST BOOK

St. Benedict Episcopal Church does not provide a guest book for congregation members to sign. In most cases, this is provided by the funeral home or family member.

RECEPTIONS FOLLOWING THE SERVICE

You may choose to have a reception at the home of the deceased, or some other place designated by the family. If so, please advise the rector who will announce the location at the close of the service.

From time to time the Parish Hall may be used for a brief reception following the funeral but only when hosted and or sponsored by our parish Hospitality Committee. We have a wonderful lay volunteer Hospitality Committee here at St. Benedict. If a reception is desired, we may ask this committee if they are able to provide one. Please understand that they may not always be able to do so, in which case friends of the family who are familiar with St. Benedict kitchen and may step in upon approval of the Rector. The Hospitality Committee does not provide special request menus. They have “finger food” and drinks appropriate to the time of day for the reception. Alcoholic beverages will not be served. If a floral arrangement centerpiece for the reception table is desired, those arrangements will be provided by the family or friends. It is desirable that the reception following a funeral be before the graveside service in consideration of the people who are unable to attend the gravesite. This reception should not extend beyond one hour unless approved by the Rector.

USHERS

Ushers at a St. Benedict funeral are expected to fulfill two important responsibilities: the seating of guests, and the ushering of the congregation to the Altar Rail to receive Holy Communion. If a large congregation is expected, our ushers will expedite the seating of guests and reduce both congestion and noise from the narthex. It is the custom in this Church to remain silent in the nave before a funeral service of the Church, allowing the congregation a quiet moment of reflection before the service begins. Good ushers model and facilitate such a silence, enhancing the service and its solemnity. Volunteers from St. Benedict Parish can be scheduled to serve as ushers. In some cases, the funeral home will provide competent and reverent ushers for the service.

HONORARIA

Members of St. Benedict Parish are not expected to compensate the parish for the use of the building. However, to defray additional expenses, we ask the family to consider the following honoraria, which may be submitted to the Parish Office in one payment. Please speak with the Rector if your financial circumstances limit you in any way. Suggested honoraria for Organist and Officiating priest.

EXPENSES

It is suggested that the family of the deceased cover the church's out-of-pocket costs incurred by the funeral. This includes musician fees, if applicable, as well as an honoraria to the musician and to the priest's discretionary fund. Additional expenses may be incurred for use of the parish hall for a reception. A schedule of the current charges is available. Of course, if such costs are an unreasonable financial burden, arrangements can be made with the clergy of the parish to adjust the fees or to make other arrangements for payment.

The following amounts are suggested donations to the church for the costs incurred. Quotes for additional items will be made upon request. We ask that you submit one check to the church (no online payments, please). Please discuss with a member of the clergy any special circumstances.

The Priest: No cost to members

St. Benedict Episcopal Church Building Fund: No cost to members

Pianist/Organist \$225

Altar Guild: \$100

God of all, we pray to you for those we love, but see no longer: Grant them your peace; let light perpetual shine upon them; and, in your loving wisdom and almighty power, work in them the good purpose of your perfect will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen - *The Book of Common Prayer*

Funeral Planning Form

***All burials performed at St. Benedict Episcopal Church will be recorded in the Parish Registry by the clergy and verified by a member of the Altar Guild.**

I. Name of the deceased: (Please print)

First: _____ Middle: _____ Last: _____

Birth Date: ___/___/___ Birth Place: _____

II. I (we) would prefer: (Please check)

- Holy Eucharist (always includes Holy Communion)
- Memorial Service with no Holy Communion, burial preceding
- Memorial Service with no Holy Communion, burial following
- Memorial Service with no Holy Communion, cremation preceding
- Memorial Service with no Holy Communion, cremation following
- Graveside service only
- Interment service only
- Interment to be public
- Interment to be private
- Interment to be held at All Saints' (or locally) at a later date
- Interment to be held out of state at a later date

III. Pallbearers (Six are standard/Eight are the maximum, 1 for urn)

Name/Phone #

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Pallbearers (Honorary)

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IV. Requests or Instructions

I have made arrangements with the following funeral home or crematory:

If I have chosen cremation in the instructions above; the instructions for internment of the remains are as follows:

V. Requests for the Service

1. Hymns or Songs:

2. A Preferred Soloist:

3. Favorite Scriptures:

4. Favorite Poetry (Copy must be attached):

5. Personal Instructions:

6. Friends and family that should participate and how (include phone # if applicable):

VI. Memorials

Family and friends often desire to make a gift to St. Benedict Episcopal Church in memory of the deceased. If you desire a statement in the bulletin about this, please tell us here:

Who should be notified when a memorial gift is received:

Their mail address/phone/email address:

VII. Burial

1. As a veteran, the deceased is eligible for an American flag.

Yes _____ No _____

2. The deceased has a grave plot or Columbarium niche at the following
or at St. Benedict Episcopal Church Columbarium

location:

3. Other instructions not included elsewhere in this planning:

Signature _____ Date _____

Address

City, State, Zip Code _____

Phone (including area code) _____