



A Guide For
FUNERAL PLANNING
at
St. Andrew's United Methodist Church



This guide will help members of St. Andrew's and their families think about the decisions surrounding a funeral or memorial service by providing a range of options instead of a one-size-fits-all program. Consultation with the pastor when planning your loved one's service is key in accommodating your family's needs, the church's schedule, theological standards, and coordinating among the various people involved. Please contact the presiding pastor as often as you need to during this process.



SCHEDULING

One of the first things the pastor does when there is a death in the congregation is to meet with the family in order to provide pastoral care and to plan the arrangements. The first step in making arrangements is

establishing a general schedule of

dates and times. The funeral home is an important partner in this phase of planning. Both the church's schedule and the funeral home's schedule need to coincide.

The next step in scheduling involves deciding on the particulars. Several different areas to consider are covered in the following topics. There is no one "right" way in which to place all these elements. A checklist at the end of the guide will help you to review all the material.

VISITATION

Providing a time to greet friends and family is an important part of the grief process for the immediate family and for those who visit. Visitation can be held at St. Andrew's just before the worship service, after the worship service, or the night before. Visitation may also be held at the funeral home.

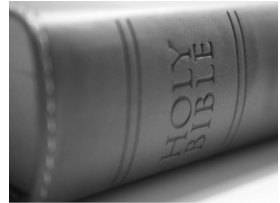
Several factors influence when visitation is scheduled. Working people often prefer to visit in the evening when they know that they cannot get off from work for a daytime service. Holding visitation and the funeral back-to-back is a balance between the number of people expected and the stamina of the family. Other factors to consider include the mobility of family members and the travel schedule of out-of-town family.

MEAL

A group of dedicated people at St. Andrew's provides a meal for the immediate family when there is a death. This group can accommodate up to 35 people at church or deliver the meal to someone's home. Eating a meal prepared with love can be just the thing for a hungry heart after a funeral. When making plans, give the pastor an approximate number of people who will be present for the meal, as well as whether you would like to eat at the church, or receive the meal at home.

WORSHIP

Scripture: The "Service of Death and Resurrection" as it is titled in the hymnal, is at its core a series of Scripture readings, prayers, and music. One of the primary ways to customize the service is to decide if there are Scripture passages that are particularly important to you or the deceased. If you are unsure, let the pastor know, and she or he can select them with you or on your behalf.



Music: Congregational hymns are a great way to hear and feel the support and prayers of the congregation. Music can also express complex emotions with Christian faith and hope. There is no minimum or maximum number of hymns, but 2-3 usually works well.

The Music Director will play or arrange for an organist or pianist to play. The musician can also include favorite hymns or music pieces during the gathering time, processional, and recessional. If this is too much for you to think about, our musicians can select appropriate pieces on your behalf. Sometimes families choose a soloist to sing, or a special musician to play. A soloist or special musician will need to coordinate directly with the music staff. Please have contact information handy.

Music is important in imparting a distinctly Christian character to worship. Thus, St. Andrew's suggests that only sacred music be used. We are flexible with secular music, but such choices will need to be approved by the Music Director and/or the pastor.

As contemporary music with drums and guitars is now a mainstay in Sunday worship, it is also welcome at funerals and memorial services. St. Andrew's, however, does not currently have the paid staff to guarantee a full band for a funeral. If you desire contemporary music, you will need to collaborate with the Music Director and take an active role in making those arrangements.

Speakers: The pastor will typically prepare a short sermon for a funeral or memorial service. Other speakers such as family members or guest pastors may also be involved. When a guest pastor is desired, and the funeral is being held at St. Andrew's, the proper etiquette is for the pastor of St. Andrew's to make that invitation. On some occasions, for brevity or simplicity, the family may also request that no sermon be preached.



*Memories
moments*

Video: Use of modern video equipment is also increasingly popular with some families. Our sanctuary is currently not equipped to present video, or to produce audio or video recordings.

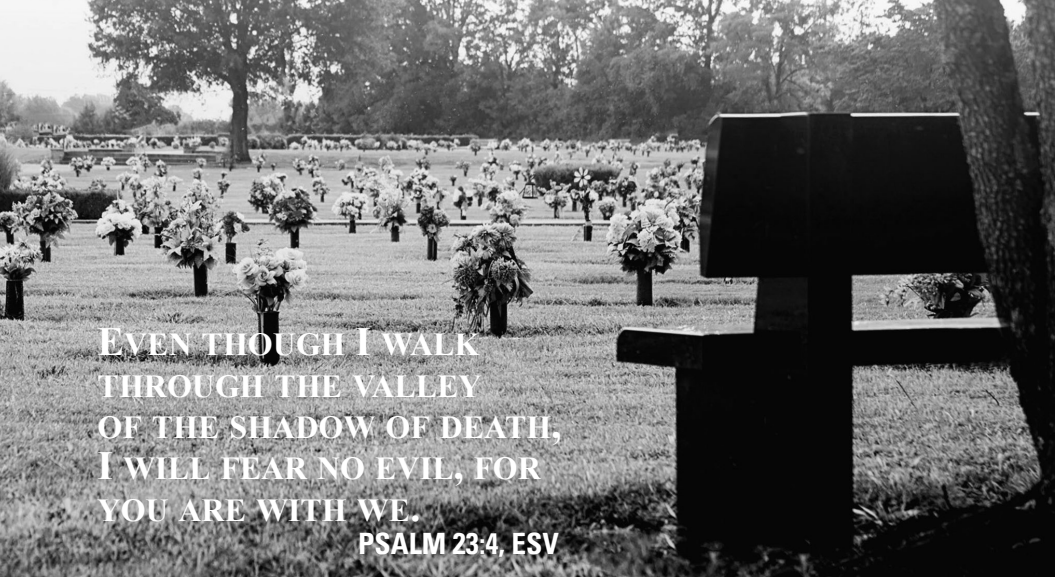
Many third-party vendors will produce a video collage of pictures for you. We can only display such videos from a DVD or Blu-Ray during visitation outside of the sanctuary. If video is something you would like during the visitation, please let the pastor know. One popular way of presenting visuals is to have a memory table set up for the visitation. Families can then set various items in addition to photos for people to enjoy. Specify with the pastor if you would like a memory table set up.

INTERMENT

A final resting place for the deceased can be arranged in two ways. You may wish to have a local cemetery plot for a casket; or if your loved one is cremated you may choose a columbarium niche. The funeral home can help with either of these arrangements off site. St. Andrew's also provides a columbarium and a memorial plaque on site. If a church member wishes to be remembered on our memorial plaque or have their cremains placed in a niche, a separate policy is available from the church office. This arrangement is one of the few that should not be handled by the pastor, but directly with the columbarium committee.



The graveside service or placement in a columbarium can take place before or after the worship service. A graveside setting can also suffice for the entire funeral. You have the option to open this event to all family and friends, or to keep a more intimate setting with only invited family and guests.



**EVEN THOUGH I WALK
THROUGH THE VALLEY
OF THE SHADOW OF DEATH,
I WILL FEAR NO EVIL, FOR
YOU ARE WITH ME.**

PSALM 23:4, ESV

POSSIBLE ARRANGEMENTS

Several basic templates have emerged over the years here at St. Andrew's that serve families well. Use these as suggestions and the start of a conversation with the pastor.

Morning or early afternoon funeral —> graveside —> family returns to church for a meal. Visitation can be held the night before, or 60-90 minutes prior to the start of the worship service.

Graveside service —> worship at church —> visitation after the service —> eat meal at church

Private graveside —> wait for days or weeks as necessary —> hold memorial service on a day most convenient for family

CHANGES

Arrangements often need adjustments during the days leading up to a funeral or memorial service. Please keep the pastor informed of any changes. There may be as many as twenty people working on a funeral or memorial service. Keeping the pastor up-to-date facilitates communication for the rest of the team serving you and helps the experience run more smoothly for the bereaved family.

FEES

The conduct of a funeral is part of the ministry of St. Andrew's. We do not charge funeral facility fees for members of St. Andrew's.

Cleaning fees are charged at the following rates:

Members, Monday through Friday; no charge.

Members, Saturday; \$50, \$65 if there is a meal.

Non-members, Monday through Friday; \$75, \$150 if there is a meal.

Non-members, Saturday; \$125, \$200 if there is a meal.

Please pay to Smith Janitorial Service, P.O. Box 25145, Charlotte, NC 28229-5145.

Please provide an honorarium for any organist, pianist, or guest pastor. The family should consider paying \$150 to these individuals. Arrangements with other musicians, soloists, or band members should also be considered. The church will provide the payment if the family cannot afford it.

ESTATE PLANNING

Your family can have a lasting impact on the ministry of St. Andrew's by remembering the church in your will. The United Methodist Foundation of Western North Carolina can provide information about planned giving. You can contact them through their website, <http://www.umfwnc.org>.



FUNERAL CHECKLIST:

What is the date and time of the funeral?

Do you want a visitation? If so, would you like it on a different day, or the same day as the funeral? If on the same day, would you like it before or after the funeral?

Would you like the meal at church or at home? How many people do you expect?

What Scripture would you like, or would you like the pastor to choose?

What music would you like? Will there be any special musicians?

Who will speak or read at the service?

What, if any, visual representation would you like at the visitation?

Where will the body or cremains be placed?
Who will be invited to the interment?

What fees will be paid?



*This guide was approved by the Administrative Council
on October 14, 2018.*