



Planning a Funeral

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
ROCK CREEK PARISH

ST. PAUL'S
ROCK
CREEK

If you are reading this for the first time during a time of grave illness or loss, please accept our sympathy. We promise to do all that we can to help you in the love and spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ. We extend our prayers to you and your family during this time of grief.



Where to Start

FIRST: CONTACT THE CLERGY

When a person is near death, the Minister of the Congregation should be notified in order that the ministrations of the Church may be provided.

— *Book of Common Prayer (BCP), 462*

We are here to assist you and your family in your time of need. Our clergy will support you pastorally in response to the death of a loved one, help you with decisions, and advise you as you prepare for a funeral service. Please contact the parish office at 202.726.2080. If the Rector is out of the office, or it is after office hours, you may leave a message and we will return your call as soon as possible. Members of the parish should call the Rector on his cell phone 410.908.5625.

SECOND: MAKE ARRANGEMENTS WITH A FUNERAL HOME

The funeral home acts as a liaison between your family and the church, and will work out many of the service details with the church office. The funeral home staff and the Rector will work with you to set the date and time of the service. Except in cases of urgent pastoral necessity, funerals are not conducted on any Sunday, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, or the day before Easter. Rock Creek Cemetery does interments between 10 a.m. and 2:30 p.m., Monday through Saturday only.

This brochure will help you plan a funeral service within the liturgy of the Episcopal Church and help you understand how funerals are conducted at St. Paul's Church, specifically. Suggested readings and hymns are available at the end of this booklet.

Funerals and Service Details

It is assumed that in requesting the services of a priest of the Episcopal Church, families accept the worship practices of the church in which the priest is ordained to serve. It is also assumed that the funeral service will take place in the church. If special circumstances warrant, a service may be conducted in a funeral home or at the graveside. Consider the following in planning the service:

- Burial Office Rite I or II
- Holy Communion
- Scripture Readings
- Sermon, eulogy, or other speakers
- Hymns and other music
- Readers, ushers, and pallbearers
- Bulletin or service program
- Altar flowers
- Reception or other opportunity to greet guests

In the Episcopal Church, a funeral is primarily an act of worship. The Book of Common Prayer (BCP) states that “Baptized Christians

are properly buried from the church” (BCP, 468).

Options for burial include:

- Burial service from the sanctuary, the preferred option for Church members
- Simple burial service said at the graveside
- Burial service from the funeral home, which is strongly discouraged for parish members

Either the body or cremated remains are usually present at the funeral. Under extraordinary circumstances, the funeral may be held with neither the body nor the ashes present. The BCP unequivocally states, “The coffin is to be closed before the service, and it remains closed thereafter.” (BCP, 490)

The Rector is expected to officiate at all worship services of the parish, including funerals and burials. If you wish to have a guest clergy officiate at your loved one's funeral, please speak to the Rector so that an invitation may be extended

directly to the cleric. Unless St. Paul's Church's clergy is out of town or otherwise engaged, the Rector will assist the guest clergy during the service.

Time Of Service

“Baptized Christians are properly buried from the church. The service should be held at a time when the congregation has opportunity to be present” (BCP, 468). It is best to schedule the funeral service when the greatest number of people can attend—when it works best in the parish calendar and in the clergy schedule. Funerals are public services of the Church, to which everyone is invited.

The Reception Of The Body

The body (or cremains) is received by the clergy 30 minutes before the service at St. Paul's Church. Please let the funeral home know of this need. We ask that the body or cremains not arrive before this time unless arrangements have been made for a viewing to be no longer than 1 hour in duration.

Scripture Lessons

Lessons from the Holy Scripture are read at funeral services.

At funerals without the Holy Eucharist, two lessons are usually read, with a psalm read between them. At funerals with the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, two or three lessons, separated by a psalm and/or hymn, are usually read.

When two lessons are used, the first may be from either the Old Testament or New Testament. The second lesson is from the New Testament, either an Epistle or Gospel. When three lessons are used, the first is from the Old Testament and the second is from the New Testament, excluding the Gospel. Family members may read the first two lessons and/or the psalm. At the Eucharist, the priest always reads a Gospel lesson. Options for appropriate readings are listed later in this booklet.

Remembrances

In addition to the funeral sermon that the clergy will preach, you may wish to include remembrances, also known as eulogies. You may choose one or

two family members or friends to give a short (5–7 minutes) tribute to the deceased.

Pall

A pall is provided by the Church to cover the casket or the container of ashes. The pall reminds us of the white garment of baptism and that the promises of baptism are fulfilled at our death. Flowers or a flag may be placed on the casket once the casket leaves the church.

Military, Fraternal, Or Other Honors

Customarily, military or other honor services are not included in the church service. Military honors and fraternal rites may be done at the graveside service.

The American Flag

In the event of military honors, the casket will be taken outside of the Church and the pall will be removed. The American or other national flag may be placed on the casket, and appropriate honors performed. The flag ceremony is appropriate at the cemetery for all veterans, but must be provided by the Armed Forces.

Floral Arrangements

The church does not provide flowers for a funeral service. However, the family is welcome to order flowers for the altar if desired. There is one pedestal at the altar for floral arrangements. Additional arrangements are not permitted inside the altar area. If a repast is to be held in St. Paul's Center, additional arrangements may be placed there. Please keep in mind that a casket spray is not appropriate for the funeral service, as the casket will be covered by a pall during the service.

Additional Participants

Please let the Rector know if additional clergy needs to be invited and s/he will be happy to invite other Christian ministers to assist. Assisting ministers or an officiating minister should be invited only by the Rector and not by the family. In the absence of the Rector, another Episcopal clergy, furnished by the Church, will preside.

Guest organists are generally not allowed. St. Paul's Church's Music Director reserves the right of first refusal. In the event that the Music Director is

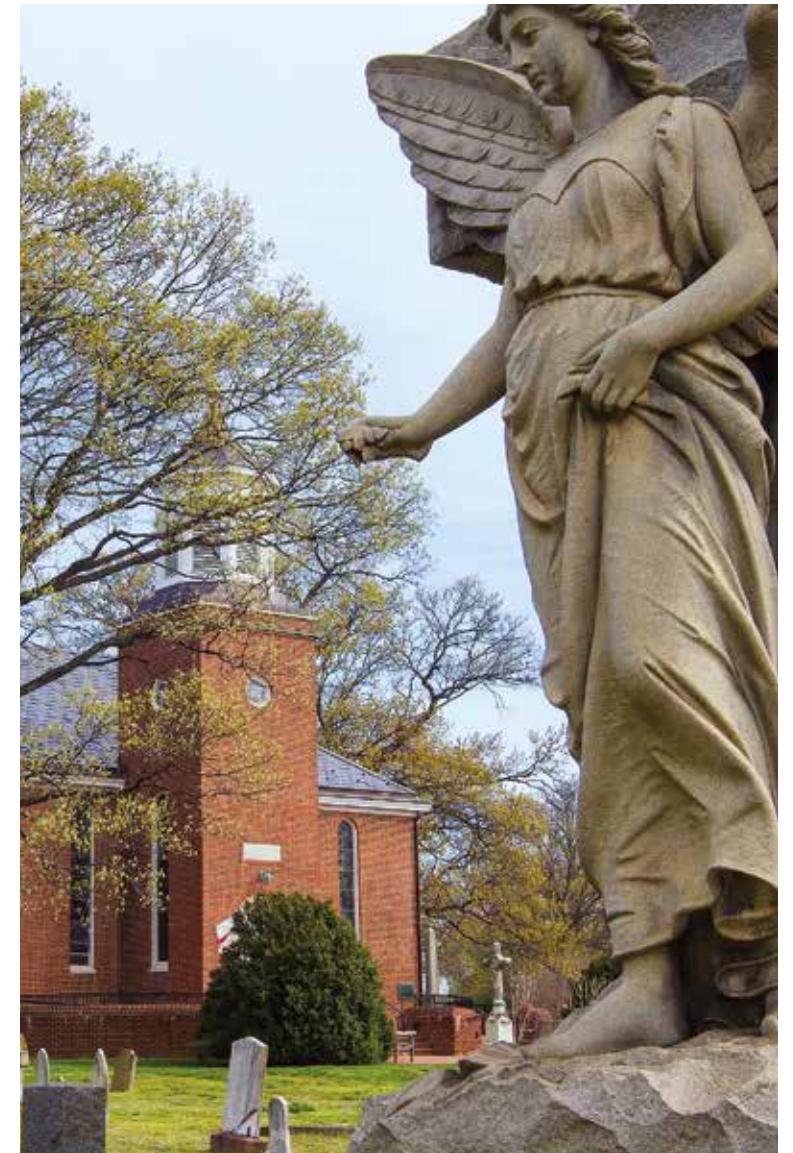
available, but the family elects to use another organist, the Music Director is still entitled to compensation (bench fee) at the rate listed in this booklet. Participants who are not employed by St. Paul's Church must be paid directly by those requesting the service.

Reception

A reception or repast for the family may be held at St. Paul's Center, depending upon availability. Arrangements may be made with the Parish Administrator. Please see Events Planning at St. Paul's Church.

Parishioners

Persons considered "active parishioners" are those who attend services regularly (unless prevented because they are homebound), are visited regularly by the priest of the parish, and contribute financially to the support of the parish. Others are invited to have their funerals at St. Paul's Church, with the understanding that there are expected expenses beyond those asked of active parishioners.



Funeral Fees and Donations

Active members* of St. Paul's Episcopal Church are not charged a fee for the clergy or use of church facilities for any sacrament of the Church, including Holy Eucharist in the context of the service of the Burial of the Dead. However, a contribution to the parish (for use and utilities) is always appreciated.

St. Paul's Church incurs costs each time a funeral is performed, including custodial, administrative, and altar costs.

The salaries parish employees receive from the church cover normal scheduled services and program events, but do not take into consideration occasional services and the building use these services involve. Active members are invited to make a donation to the church to offset the expenses and recognize the extra time given by parish employees to the funeral.

In addition to providing the clergy, organist, and sexton, St. Paul's Parish Administrator will prepare a bulletin for members.

Non-members are charged the following fees, as established by the Vestry. Fees may be adjusted or waived at the discretion of the Rector. If you have a financial concern, please talk to the Rector. St. Paul's will not deny anyone a Christian burial, regardless of denomination, due to financial hardship.

	Non-Member
Clergy	\$300
Director of Music	\$250
Sexton	No charge
Church	\$800
St. Paul's Center	Please inquire

* An active member is understood to be a person who was regular in worship, having attended services for at least 12 months (unless prevented because of health); contributed to the financial support of St. Paul's Church; or was visited on a regular basis by the clergy at the time of their death.



St. Paul's Center is available for use after the service and has a separate fee schedule.

Scripture and Hymns

SCRIPTURE

Old Testament (choose one):

Isaiah 25:6-9 (*He will swallow up death forever*)

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*)

New Testament (choose one):

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 (*The imperishable body*)

2 Corinthians 4:16-5:9 (*Things that are unseen are eternal*)

I 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*)

Psalms (choose one, or substitute a hymn):

Psalm 23 (*The Lord is my shepherd*)

Psalm 42:1-7 (*As the deer longs for the water-brooks*)

Psalm 46 (*God is our refuge and strength*)

Psalm 90:1-12 (*Lord, you have been our refuge*)

Psalm 121 (*I lift up my eyes to the hills*)

Psalm 139:1-11 (*Lord, you have searched me out and known me*)



Gospels (choose one):

John 5:24-27 (*He who believes has 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 mansions*)

HYMNS

The hymns listed below are considered especially suitable for a Service of Christian Burial, although other hymns may be substituted. Please pick two or three hymns for use during the service, and note that there is no hymn at the procession into the church; instead, verses from the Book of Job are recited by the officiating cleric. The organist will play both a prelude and postlude in addition to the hymns.

Hymnal

- 208 “The Strife is o’er”
- 287 “For all the saints”
- 304 “I come with joy”
- 324 “Let all mortal flesh keep silence”
- 376 “Joyful, joyful we adore thee”
- 390 “Praise to the Lord”
- 397 “Now thank we all our God”
- 423 “Immortal, invisible”
- 473 “Lift high the cross”
- 482 “Lord of all hopefulness, Lord of all joy”
- 624 “Jerusalem the golden”
- 645/6 “The King of love my shepherd is”
- 680 “O God, our help in ages past”
- 688 “A mighty fortress is our God”
- 690 “Guide me, O thou great Jehovah”
- 711 “Seek ye first the kingdom of God”

Lift Every Voice and Sing

- 20 “When we all get to Heaven,”
- “Sing the wondrous love of Jesus”
- 60 “How great Thou art”
- 184 “Blessed assurance”
- 188 “It is well with my soul”
- 189 “Great is Thy faithfulness”
- 190 “He’ll understand, and say ‘Well done’”
- 191 “His eye is on the Sparrow”
- 196 “Leaning on the everlasting arms”



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