

Funerals at the Chapel of the Cross

Planning
Guide

January 1, 2021

Please note that, for the time being, we are operating under the guidelines of the Diocese of North Carolina concerning gathering limits, music and more.

The Burial of the Dead

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 liturgy, therefore, is characterized by joy, in the certainty that “neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

This joy, however, does not make human grief unchristian. The very love we have for each other in Christ brings deep sorrow when we are parted by death. Jesus himself wept at the grave of his friend. So, while we rejoice that one we love has entered into the nearer presence of our Lord, we sorrow in sympathy with those who mourn.

Preparing for Death

Communicants and baptized members are encouraged to make their wishes for burial known in advance, using a personal information form from the parish office. This should be completed in consultation with a member of the clergy and is kept on file by the church staff.

Planned Giving

The Book of Common Prayer states that “the Minister of the Congregation is directed to instruct the people, from time to time, about the duty of Christian parents to make prudent provision for the well-being of their families, and of all persons to make wills, while they are in good health, arranging for the disposal of their temporal goods, not neglecting, if they are able, to leave bequests for religious and

charitable uses.” A brochure on planned giving, so vital to the ministry of the Chapel of the Cross, is available in the parish office.

At the Time of Death

A priest should be called, even in the middle of the night, when the person is near death so that the office of Ministration at the Time of Death (Litany for the Dying) may be read (BCP, p.462). This comforting office may be read by the priest with members of the family or friends immediately after the person has died if it has not been possible earlier. To reach the pastoral care line after hours dial 919-929-2193 and follow the prompts.

Planning the Service

The pastoral office of the Burial of the Dead is that of the Church, not of any individual priest; members of the clergy staff will officiate at the Burial Office according to availability. In instances in which a pastoral relationship has been established between a particular priest and the deceased, a request for that person will be honored if possible.

If a priest has not already been called, the parish office should be notified as soon as possible following death. Arrangements for the funeral and burial (including time and place) should be made only in consultation with a cleric.

A funeral in the Episcopal Church is a service of public worship and follows the liturgies of the Church; that is, *The Burial of the Dead*, Rite I or II, (BCP, p.469 or 491).

At the burial service, relatives and friends may read lessons and prayers and present the bread and wine at the offertory if a

Eucharist is part of the service. Biblical passages to be read at the service are selected from the Lessons appointed in the Prayer Book for the Burial Office. The Officiant may preach a homily (a brief sermon based on the Scripture readings). At the Chapel of the Cross, it is not customary that the family or friends of the deceased should preach. Please discuss with the clergy any particular requests you may have. Normally the cremated ashes or the body of the deceased is present at the funeral. A pall is used to cover the container for the ashes or the coffin, which is kept closed. At the time the body or ashes are delivered to the church, the Officiant offers prayers (BCP, p.466).

Music

The Director of Music and Organist usually plays the organ at funerals. If the not available, the service of another competent organist can be arranged by the parish. Additional musicians and soloists can be arranged through the Director of Music, at additional expense. There are many hymns that fit well into a burial service; they are listed in the readings and hymns guide. Congregational hymns are limited to those found in hymnals and supplements approved for use by the Episcopal Church.

Flowers

Flowers are at the altar and are arranged by the altar guild. Other flower arrangements delivered to the church from family and friends will be placed in Parish Hall for the reception or in the parlor where the family gathers prior to the service. Sometimes the funeral home places sprays of flowers on the casket. Chapel of the Cross removes the spray and

replaces it with a pall prior to the casket entering the church. The paschal candle is used at all burial services as a reminder of the connection between Christian death and the Easter mystery.

The Holy Eucharist

The celebration of the Eucharist at the funeral of a regular communicant of the parish is highly appropriate. "For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (I Corinthians 11:26).

Burial

When possible, the Officiant will accompany the body or ashes to the place of burial for the Committal. Communicants and their families can be buried in the churchyard. Ashes are poured directly into the ground. The names of those buried in the churchyard may be engraved on the memorial plaque in the memorial garden. The officiant will specify where the ashes are to be buried in the churchyard. If other family members would like to have their names adjacent to their loved ones' name, all names must be engraved at the same as the name of the deceased, and paid for at the time of engraving. We will add the death date upon burial. It is not our practice to leave blank spaces on the Memorial Stones.

Obituary Notice

Newspaper notification is usually handled through the funeral home or cremation service. Details concerning the funeral service should be checked with the officiating priest before submission to the press. The notice should specify whether the service is a funeral or requiem Eucharist, and the place of burial. The

phrase “memorial service” is not used. If the family desires for memorials to be made to the Chapel of the Cross, the obituary should specify The Chapel of the Cross.

Funeral Reception

The funeral reception guild coordinates receptions following funerals at the Chapel of the Cross. The reception is \$250 and includes standard reception fare either purchased or prepared by the guild and served by volunteers. Costs for receptions of more than 150 persons will incur additional charges for food, which will be invoiced.

Alternatively, families may use an outside caterer from the list of approved caterers. In that case, expenses are arranged between the family and the caterer. The AV system in the parish hall is available for slide shows during the reception; slides should be burned onto a DVD or loaded onto a laptop. It is advisable for either be brought to the church prior to the funeral for set-up. For all receptions, families will be contacted by the parish life and worship coordinator, Ellen Cole, or a member of the Funeral Guild.

Concerning Fees

The Burial of the Dead is an important part of our life together as a Christian community. Should funeral fees present genuine financial hardship please speak to the officiating priest.

The church accounting office will prepare an invoice within a week of the service. Fees may be paid with a check made out

to the Chapel of the Cross, with funeral expenses in the memo line. To pay online or with a credit card, contact the church office.

- Honorarium for the organist (\$300)
- Burial in the Memorial Garden and engraving on the memorial plaque (\$500)
- Altar Flowers (\$150)
- Preparation and printing of the funeral bulletin (\$100)
- A reception for up to 150 persons (\$250)
- A tax deductible donation to the discretionary fund of the officiating priest (\$225 suggested minimum)

Families are asked to pay soloists and additional musicians directly; otherwise this expense will be added to the invoice. Families are also asked to provide a guest book.

Memorial Gifts

Memorial gifts may be made to the parish in lieu of flowers. If the family desires for memorials to be made to the Chapel of the Cross, the obituary should specify The Chapel of the Cross. All memorial gifts will be used in accomplishing the mission and ministry of the Chapel of the Cross and are tax-deductible. All checks should be made out to the Chapel of the Cross, with the deceased’s name in the memo line. Memorial gifts may also be made online or through the Church Life app (online, choose “one time gift” under “sustaining our church” and select “memorial fund”). Contact the church office at 919-929-2193 or visit thechapelofthecross.org for more information.