

Guidance for the Family

*I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord.
Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live
and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.*

John 11:25-26

We are deeply sorry for your loss. Please know your church family is surrounding you with our love and prayers during this difficult time.

No matter when the death of a loved one occurs, it is always a time of loss. In the midst of the initial pain of loss, it is difficult to sort out the details necessary to plan a funeral or memorial service. This booklet, along with the planning checklist, is intended to prepare for either a funeral or memorial service. It is our intent that families might know all of the decisions that need to be made and who is asked to make them.

Christians and Death

The resurrection is a central doctrine of the Christian faith and shapes our attitudes and responses to the event of death. Death brings loss, sorrow, and grief. In the face of death, Christians affirm with tears and joy the hope of the gospel. Christians do not bear bereavement in isolation, but are sustained by the power of the Holy Spirit and the community of faith. The church offers a ministry of love and hope to all who grieve.

Notify the Church

Please call the church to notify us of the death and to help you plan the service. The difference between a memorial service and a funeral is the presence of the casket in the church. If a casket is present, this is a funeral service. If a casket is not present, or if the deceased is cremated with interment (burial) of remains, it is called a memorial service. Interments may take place before or after a memorial service. The interment with a funeral always takes place after the service.

Service

The session of Johns Creek Presbyterian Church encourages members and all related families to hold funerals or memorial services in our chapel. The use of church facilities is provided without charge.

Music is an important part of your funeral or memorial service. Our music director and our pastors are here to help you choose hymns and other music, including soloists, if any. We invite you to think about whether there are particular hymns or passages of scripture that are important to you, your family, or the deceased that should be part of the service.

Arrangements for vocal and instrumental music are made through the pastor with the cooperation of the music director. The fee for the organist is \$150.00; an honorarium for the pastor is at the discretion of the family.

Meet with the Pastor

The pastor will call to arrange a meeting with family members to discuss the elements of the service which are under his/her direction.

Services may be held on any day; the pastor will need to

confirm availability with the church calendar and will coordinate these times with you and the funeral home. He/she will assist you in determining the appropriate venue for all services and will ask if there will be calling hours at the funeral home.

If the service is to be a memorial, the ushers are volunteers and they will be arranged by the funeral team coordinator. Let the pastor know if there are any friends, family members, or church members who may want to usher or assist with the service.

The church will provide a guest register for a memorial service, at your option.

Reception

If requested, a reception may be held following the service. The receptions coordinator will provide information regarding various reception options and will work as a liaison between the family and other church groups offering to provide reception assistance.

House Sitter

Please determine if you would like to have a church member at your home during the service until your return. This person will, at your instruction, accept phone calls and deliveries and make notes of them for your reference. The funeral coordinator will make these arrangements.

Flowers and Candles

If you wish flowers to be part of the service, please have them delivered to the church. It is customary to select two arrangements for placement in the chapel. Additional arrangements may be placed in the area designated for the reception. Candles are limited to two on the communion table.

Memorial Gifts

Please inform the pastor if memorial gifts are requested to be made to the church memorial fund or other charitable organization in lieu of flowers.

American and Christian Flags

During funeral or memorial services, the American and Christian flags may be placed in the chapel or other place of worship. The flags will be placed on the floor level in front of the chancel with the Christian flag on the congregation's right and the U.S. flag on the congregation's left. If a casket is present during a service, it will not be draped with any type of flag. It may be covered with a pall or with flowers.

Personal Displays

If the family wishes to display a picture of the deceased and/or other personal items, they may do so in the narthex, the welcome center, or at the reception, but not in the chapel.

Funeral Preferences

Members of Johns Creek Presbyterian Church are encouraged to submit preferences concerning their own services on the occasion of their death. This information is confidential and will be filed for use only by the family and the pastor. A funeral and memorial service preferences form is available in the church office. We hope that this information will be helpful.

From A Declaration of Faith

Death often seems to prove that life is not worth living,
that our best efforts and deepest affections go for nothing.

We do not yet see the end of death.

But Christ has been raised from the dead,
transformed and yet the same person.

In his resurrection is the promise of ours.

We are convinced that the life God wills for each of us

Is stronger than the death that destroys us.

The glory of that life exceeds our imaginations
but we know we shall be with Christ.

So we treat death as a broken power.

Its ultimate defeat is certain.

In the face of death we grieve.

Yet in hope we celebrate life.

No life ends so tragically

that its meaning and value are destroyed.

Nothing, not even death, can separate us
from the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory
through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

1 Corinthians 15:57

Funeral and Memorial Service Guidelines



Non Nobis Solum
"Not for us alone"

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