



GREENVILLE ARP CHURCH
Associate Reformed Presbyterian

FUNERAL & MEMORIAL POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The death of a Christian is a time of sorrow for the family due to the immediate loss of the earthly presence of a loved one. But it is also a time of supreme assurance that the work of Jesus Christ through His perfect life, sacrificial death and resurrection has conquered sin and death. A Christian shares in Christ's victory over death. Therefore death, though painful because of separation, is not the total tragedy it is for those without hope. Assurance is also found in the knowledge that the loved one has been ushered into the very presence of a loving and sovereign God. A sense of loss and grieving is a natural reaction to the loss of a loved one, and Christians are encouraged actively to grieve. Often circumstances surrounding a death are painful and difficult to understand, and Christians are encouraged actively to seek God's face and find consolation in His eternal love, sovereign will, and comforting truth. Memories of a loved one may be painful initially, but should be embraced as one is able, for within the Christian context these memories can be a source of future comfort and consolation. Since grieving will continue long beyond the funeral service, the family is encouraged to continue actively to seek comfort from the Holy Spirit, the Word and from pastors and fellow believers.

PASTOR NOTIFICATION

When a loved one has died, one of the pastors should be notified as quickly as possible so he can offer support and consolation and also assist the family and funeral home in planning an appropriate Christian funeral service. The Condolence Committee should also be notified as soon as reasonable (Ann Nichols currently).

UPDATED 01/2023

WORSHIP SERVICE

A Christian funeral is a worship service focused on praising and glorifying God for His great love for us and goodness to us. While the life of the deceased will be remembered, the focus is on the worship of God. When a service of worship is held, it should be conducted by a minister and shall be under the authority of the Session when held at the Greenville Associate Reformed Presbyterian church. Ministers outside of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian denomination will need prior Sessional approval.

CHURCH USE

It is encouraged that a Christian funeral be held in the church whenever possible. The church is where a Christian is baptized, makes a profession of faith, partakes of Communion, has instruction in the Word and enjoys fellowship with other believers, so it is an appropriate context where this final witness to their faith is made. In the presence of death, Christians witness to their faith that God, in Jesus Christ, has conquered death and raises His people from death to life eternal. For those desiring to have a graveside service in lieu of a service in the sanctuary, that is also deemed appropriate. The pastors can plan that service in consultation with the family

CASKET

The casket should be closed during the worship service so that the attention of the worshiper can be directed toward the Author of Salvation.

EULOGIES

Worship of God is the central focus of a memorial or funeral service, and it is our desire that all that is done during the worship service is worshipful and reverent. Eulogies in special praise and recognition of the deceased containing interesting stories and anecdotes are often not consistent with reverent worship. If one desires to present a eulogy which is felt to be consistent with this attitude of worship, it should be submitted in writing to one of the Pastors in advance for prior approval. A decision can then be made on the appropriate place for inclusion in the worship service. A printed insert in the bulletin may also be appropriate. Other eulogies may more appropriately be delivered at the reception of friends or at the graveside committal service.

MUSIC

Since the focus of a memorial or funeral service is on the worship of Almighty God, sacred music, appropriate for the worship of God should be used. The use of secular readings or music is usually inappropriate. The Pastor and the Director of Music will guide the selection of appropriate music and literature.

FLOWERS

Flowers are not required, and simplicity is more appropriate than lavish display so they do not distract from the purpose of worship.



PICTURES & PHOTOGRAPHY

It is not appropriate to display pictures of the deceased in the sanctuary during the service. Photo displays of the deceased are encouraged, and more appropriately placed in the reception area.

CIVIL/ MILITARY

Since the focus of a memorial or funeral service is on the worship of Almighty God, any fraternal, civic, or military rites are to be conducted separately from the church worship service. They may be conducted at the funeral home or cemetery.

COMMITTAL

Interment with appropriate Scriptures and prayers may be properly done either before or after the service.

FEES

Certain fees are recommended and typically given as honorariums. Suggested amounts are shown to the right for church members. Should a funeral for a non-member be approved by the Session, these fees should be increased by 50%.

NOTE: The family should not pay these honorariums or fees to the funeral home. Fee payments should be made directly to the church office and can be combined into one check. The church office will insure that the fees are distributed accordingly.

Primary Minister (suggested)	\$200
Secondary Minister(suggested)	\$150
Organist	\$150
Custodian	\$100
Sound/Video Tech, if needed	\$100
Vocalist/Instrumentalist	\$50



FUNERAL CHECKLIST

- Minister Contacted and submitted information
- Service Plans discussed
- Funeral Home visit by Minister & family, if desired for planning
- Organist contacted
- Music plans submitted
- Bulletin information submitted
- Information regarding a Lunch or Reception Communicated
- Estimate of Number for Lunch or Reception
- Usher requests
- Flowers
- Visitation
- Honorariums *(The family should be reminded to pay funeral fees to the church office, not the funeral home.)*

GREENVILLE ARP CHURCH FUNERAL/MEMORIAL SERVICE REQUEST FORM

Name of Deceased: _____

Pastor: _____ Pastor's Phone: _____

Home Church: _____

Funeral Home: _____ Funeral Director's Phone: _____

Funeral Director Email: _____

Requested Date of Service: _____

Service Start Time (generally not later than 3:00pm): _____

Anticipated length of service: _____ minutes

Is there a Meal to be served? YES NO If yes, how many? _____

Is there a light reception planned (only if there is not a meal). YES NO

Does the family wish to have the service recorded? YES NO

Does the family wish to have the service live streamed? YES NO

Family Contact Person: _____ Phone: _____

Family Contact Email: _____

Prior to call back:

Reviewed by Pastor _____ YES NO

Organist contacted and available: YES NO

Director of Music contacted if necessary: YES NO

Custodian Available? YES NO

Sound/Video Tech Available? YES NO