

Trinity Episcopal Church

Funeral Guidelines

Funerals in the Episcopal Church are sacramental rites, and celebrated liturgically through the use of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer (BCP) only. The following guidelines are to assist you in your planning.

In case of a death in the family, call the Rector first. He or she will assist in dealing with the funeral director, writing the obituary, keeping costs low and providing ongoing pastoral care and counsel.

Schedule a funeral when the greatest number of family and friends can be present. We recommend holding the service in the evening or on a Saturday. Always check with the Rector before scheduling a service.

The body of your loved one is normally present for the Burial Rites. Cremation is practiced in the Episcopal Church and is a wise choice, but either the body or the cremains should be at the service.

We encourage your family to hold the Vigil, commonly called a wake, in the Church and suggest that you hold it the evening before the funeral service.

Funerals are celebrations of a life and are conducted strictly according to the texts and rubrics of the *Book of Common Prayer*. While the funeral liturgy is firmly fixed by the *Book of Common Prayer*, the family or other person planning the service may select the Biblical readings and lectors for the funeral service and they may make suggestions about the music. This is usually done in consultation with the Rector and Minister of Music.

The Church offers two options for funeral services in the Church. You may choose “The Burial of the Dead” with the Eucharist or opt for “The Burial of the Dead” without communion. However, the funeral of a communicant of the Church should include a Eucharist whenever possible. Please choose between the Rite I Service for the Burial of the Dead starting on page 469 of the BCP and the Rite II Service for the Burial of the Dead starting on page 491 of the BCP. The Rector *may* also do a brief Vigil Service (BCP p. 466).

A funeral is a service of worship so all music must conform to Prayer Book requirements. Please select hymns from among those authorized by the Church and request only anthems or other performed music that is in agreement with Scripture. All plans for music at a funeral and/or vigil held at Trinity Church must be made in consultation with Trinity’s Minister of Music whose name and number may be secured from the parish office at 896-9884.

Under the terms of Trinity's contract, the parish musician has the right of first refusal for any service held in the Church. Therefore, if the Trinity musician is available and the family of the deceased wishes to have organ music for the funeral and/or vigil, he/she will be the organist. If Trinity's organist is available and your family desires another organist, the parish musician is still paid her/his full stipend. If your family wishes to have musicians in addition to an organist, you must consult with the Minister of Music.

The family of the deceased must consult with the Altar Guild as soon as the Funeral and Vigil arrangements are made. The name and phone number of the Director of the Altar Guild may be secured from the parish office at 896-9884. Flowers, pew candles, and other decorations are under the direction of the Altar Guild. Avoid excessive floral display; two bouquets on the reed table are sufficient.

The coffin is to be closed from the beginning of the service and is covered with a funeral pall. Flowers are never placed atop the pall. The national flag may replace the funeral pall if appropriate.

Pallbearers are selected by the family of the deceased. The family in consultation with the Rector may also appoint people to read a lesson, a Psalm, or serve as oblation bearers.

The family of the deceased may choose to include a notice in the obituary indicating that you prefer that specific charities or other funds receive donations, instead of receiving floral arrangements. Donations made in memory of the deceased person provide benefits which long outlast cut flowers and are a wonderful way to remember a loved one. Trinity Church Memorial Fund, administered by the Parish, or the deceased's favorite charity are appropriate suggestions for memorial contributions.

Fraternal rites are not appropriate at an Episcopal funeral service. If they occur they must be held before the Church's funeral service, preferably at the meeting place of the fraternal organization.

Fee Schedule:

Pledging Members:

A suggested donation of \$200 to the Rector's Discretionary Fund is appropriate.

Non-pledging Members:

Use of the Church - \$250

Rector's Discretionary Fund - \$250

Altar Guild - \$50

Non-Members:

Use of the Church - \$500

Rector's Discretionary Fund - \$500

Organist fee for all is \$200 for the service.

Trinity does not rent its buildings for funerals of other traditions.