

CANTERBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Real Grace, Real Love, Real Life
350 Overbrook Road
Birmingham, AL 35213
205-871-4695
www.canterburyumc.org

Christians believe that the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ gives them hope and cause for thanksgiving in the face of death. In this faith, we entrust those who have died to the infinite mercy and love of God.

—The Methodist Worship Book, England

Planning Ahead

This booklet is designed to encourage each of our members to participate in personal funeral planning as much as possible. Provisions are made by the pastors and the staff to assist in both practical and personal matters.

Not only is the information intended to be of help to the pastors and to families, but it allows individuals the opportunity of making crucial decisions about funeral plans prior to the event of death. Such pre-planning can relieve the burden of family members at the time of death of a loved one. Pre-planning can afford members the option of leaving clear instructions for family members regarding one's own preferences for Scriptures, hymns, music, and disposition of the body.

Since it is difficult to plan during times of emotional stress, we encourage you to review this material and discuss your preferences with family or friends. Fill out the information-gathering form included in the center of this booklet and return it to the church office. It will be placed in one's family file and kept confidential until needed.

Copies of this booklet are available at the church office. If you have questions, please contact one of the pastors at 205-871-4695.

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Funeral Ministry
CANTERBURY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
350 Overbrook Road
Birmingham, AL 35213

Canterbury United Methodist Church is a faith-filled, caring congregation. Our Christian commitment is to be present to one another, in the name of Jesus, in every phase of life's journey, from baptism, confirmation, and Christian life, to the hope of Resurrection with Christ.

The central doctrine of the Christian faith is the Resurrection. Christians affirm their common faith in their attitude toward death and in their witness of faith during this time. This booklet is recommended for study and reference for each member of the congregation to enhance our theological understanding of and preparedness for death; to aid us in the practical and personal preparations for death; to aid in funeral or memorial service preparations; and to assist loved ones at that time. The material is based on the United Methodist Book of Worship and outlines the specific policies and procedures of Canterbury United Methodist Church.

The Christian funeral should be a testimony to Our Lord Jesus Christ, drawing attention to Him, that the family may be comforted and non-Christian friends may come to Him through His grace. A Christian funeral can be a great climax to an earthly life that has been lived in trust and service to Jesus Christ.

MAKING PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS FOR FUNERALS

Parishioners are encouraged to prepare vital information for their families. Leaving such plans makes it easier for families to plan appropriately at the time of death. This form may be used for that purpose.

ARRANGEMENTS CHECKLIST

| | |
|---|--|
| Preferred Funeral Home | |
| Address | |
| | |
| Phone | |
| | |
| Cremation or Burial | |
| Cemetery, Columbarium or other Resting Place | |
| Address | |
| | |
| Phone | |
| | |
| Attorney Name | |
| Address | |
| | |
| Phone | |
| | |
| Location of Will | |

IN THE EVENT OF DEATH

Those who are bereaved need not face death in isolation from other Christians. They can and should be sustained and upheld by the Christian community.

When death has occurred, the clergy should be notified immediately in order that the pastor may help the bereaved in relating to the reality of death and the sustaining reality of the Christian community and the hope to which it witnesses. During office hours, please call 871-4695 and you will be connected you with a pastor. Should the death occur after hours or on weekends, call the pastoral care number 205-999-4887. If no one answers, leave a message and phone number and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

A worship service following the death of a loved one does at least two things: It enables us to face the reality of our mortality, and comforts us in the celebration of another reality—life after death in God. As one of our creeds declares, “In life, in death, in life beyond death, we are not alone. Thanks be to God!”

PASTORAL STAFF

The pastors of the church should be second only to the family to learn of the death of a church member. Our pastors also seek to know of those in our midst who are dying and in need of

comfort and counsel. In situations of death or impending death, the pastors, by being involved early, can help with the difficult transition decisions regarding funeral homes, disposition of the body, and funeral or memorial service arrangements.

VISITATION AND THE SERVICE

Visitations normally take place in the Parlor but can be held in Canterbury Hall if a large number of visitors are expected. Hours of visitation are to be determined by the pastor, the Director of Sanctuary Worship, and the family. Please be aware that not all times are available due to the many ministries taking place at the church and that dates and times for the Visitation and Service should not be announced or published until confirmed on the church calendar. Visitation may also be held at Canterbury other than the day of the service.

Places for registration will be arranged and registration books are often provided by the Funeral Director. Should the funeral home not provide a registration book, the church has a few extras. In that case, the pages on which guests have signed in will be given to the family. Tables are available for the display of pictures and DVDs may be shown on a TV provided by the church. DVDs may not be shown and photographs may not be taken during the service. Canterbury has a wonderful team of hostesses who will be present at the visitation. They will attend to any needs the family may have as well as guide visitors to the Sanctuary or Chapel or other places as needed.

LOCATION OF SERVICE

The church is the appropriate place for a Christian funeral or memorial service. Here is where we worship every Sunday, baptize our children, celebrate marriage, and gather at the Lord's Table. Here we are surrounded by symbols of our faith. The building itself provides a concrete reminder that we are surrounded by a "cloud of witnesses," supported by both the love and grace of God, and the concern and compassion of the family of faith. The sanctuary and chapel are both available for the services. When considering a worship venue, the chapel seats approximately 140 and the Sanctuary approximately 1000.

A service where the body of the deceased is present is called a funeral. A memorial service is when the body of the deceased is not present.

Service Options:

- Funeral service at the church; the body is present. A brief graveside service usually follows.
- Memorial service at the church; the body is not present. A graveside service may precede or follow this service.
- Graveside service only.
- Columbarium service only.
- Military or fraternal services will be held in places other than the sanctuary.

THE FUNERAL AS A WORSHIP SERVICE

The service will be under the direction of a pastor currently on the Canterbury staff with others properly invited to participate as requested. Burial of the casket or inurnment of the urn in the Canterbury Columbarium may take place before or after the service, or can be done at a later date. The service, which should be conducted with dignity and simplicity, is a witness to God's

love given to all people, a love which strengthens and supports even in the midst of grief. It is a witness to God's promises in Jesus Christ, as attested by hope that Christ has gone to prepare a place for the children of God.

Use of a standard United Methodist liturgy places the service in the context of worship. The funeral or memorial is called a service of worship because it is a liturgical service to glorify God and to console the living. Although thankfulness is to be expressed to God for the life and witness of the deceased, the focus of worship is upon God. Although outside clergy may have a part of the service, even offering the sermon or homily, a current clergy person on the Canterbury staff must have a part in the service.

USE OF THE COLUMBARIUM

Interment of the ashes may be held before or after the memorial service or at a later date.

Appropriate scripture and prayers will be arranged with the pastor. People may process from the sanctuary or chapel to the columbarium, or just gather informally.

Arrangements for purchasing a niche in the columbarium are made through the Director of Sanctuary Worship at 205-874-1536.

DISPOSITION OF THE BODY

Burial, cremation or body donation are options within the Christian tradition. A casket or urn need not necessarily be present and separate interment is an appropriate option.

A SUGGESTED ORDER OF WORSHIP

A standardized bulletin for the service is provided with one of twelve available crosses on the cover. These crosses appear on page 10 in the Appendix. The cross is chosen by the family. The minister and the Director of Sanctuary Worship will assist the family with details regarding the bulletin. (A guide for planning the service is in the Appendix of this document.)

Order of Worship

I. PRELUDE AND OTHER MUSIC

The church organist is available for funeral and memorial services. The organist will provide suitable sacred music to be selected by the family and pastor. Instrumentalists and vocalists may also be used through the family's arrangement and coordination of the organist.

II. GATHERING WORDS

Prayer and the reason for coming together is expressed. Here the pastor not only speaks of celebrating the life of the one who has passed away but reminds the congregation that in this service, the people will "praise God and bear witness to our faith".

III. HYMNS

Those assembled join in the singing of hymns as an expression of their common faith. Hymns should be chosen which affirm the Christian faith, celebrate the life of the deceased and offer consolation to those who grieve.

IV. SCRIPTURE AND OTHER READINGS

The scriptures are a rich resource for the funeral service. Passages which have special meaning to the family or which were special to the deceased may be chosen in consultation with the pastor. The 23rd Psalm is almost always read. Selected verses from John 14 and Isaiah 40 are also a common part of the service.

V. CREEDS

Creeds have served the Church for generations as a powerful means of reaffirming the basic beliefs of the Christian faith. It is appropriate to include the use of traditional creeds in the funeral or memorial service. The Apostles' Creed is one of the most common creeds used.

VI. WITNESS OF FAITH

A brief meditation or witness of faith, praising God for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and the promise of a resurrection for all Christians can be included in the service, if the pastor and family desire. The homily can also offer words of thanksgiving for the particular gifts of the deceased. Thanks may be offered by family members and other ones who grieve.

While the service is *about* the loved one, it is *for* the family. As much as possible, family members' preferences and desires for the service will be honored. In planning the service, it is very helpful if the family is prepared with the following information:

1. Are there any particular hymns that were meaningful to your loved one or to the surviving family members?
2. Are there any particular passages of scripture that were meaningful to your loved one or to the surviving family members?
3. What stories about your loved one would you like to share? If someone at the service never met your loved one, what would you want that person to know about the one you have lost?
4. Would you like a soloist at the service and if so, what would you like them to sing?

CASKET OR URN

If present, the closed casket should be placed during the service in the front of the sanctuary. If the body has been cremated, the urn, if present, should be placed on an appropriate stand in full view of the congregation.

PALL

A "pall" is a large cloth covering for the casket or urn. The pall is a symbol of the fact that in Christ we are "clothed" in grace. In Christ, we put off the old self and put on a new creation. A pall, in covering the casket or urn, symbolically expresses the Christian's conviction that all persons are equal in the eyes of God.

Because the proper object of the service is the worship of God and the consolation of the living, it follows that the body of the deceased is not necessary to the service. The casket, if present during the service at the church, shall be closed at all times and will be covered with a pall in order that the attention of those present may be directed to the service. The church has a pall available for use.

PASCHAL CANDLE

The Paschal candle stands at the head of the casket during the service. The candle, symbolic of God's gift of grace bestowed upon us in baptism, has been used since ancient times to remind God's people that we are, through the life, the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, delivered from darkness and into the light of God's eternal love. Death and Resurrection are the basic meanings of baptism. Physical death marks the final and complete baptism in which, by the power of God, we are delivered into God's eternal kingdom. If there is no casket, the Paschal Candle will be lit in its usual place.

FLOWERS

Flowers are not a requirement for a service. If family and friends wish to have flowers, they will work directly with their chosen florist.

- The Sanctuary and the Chapel need little adornment. There is beauty and reverence in simplicity, and the spirit of worship is served by restraint in the use of flowers.
- No more than two arrangements of flowers may be placed in the Sanctuary or the Chapel with NO artificial flowers or greenery. Arrangements placed on each side of the Altar should be no higher than the top of the cross (30 inches from the top of the pedestal to the top of the cross in the Chapel and 40 inches from the floor to the top of the cross in the Sanctuary). They should not hang over the Altar where they are a fire hazard for the candles and may soil the fair linen. The Altar may not be changed; nothing can be moved or removed from the Altar.
- Altar floral arrangements must be in Canterbury's containers or appropriate containers supplied by the florist. Plastic saucers as bases are not acceptable.

Flowers are provided by the family or on their behalf; additional arrangements should be placed in the room where the Visitation is held (normally the Parlor). Family and friends are urged to take arrangements with them when possible. While the church does not recommend one florist over another, we can offer contact information on a number of florists from which to choose.

It is also appropriate to request that in lieu of flowers, a memorial gift be made to the church, one of its ministries, or to some other worthy charity.

FEES

There is no charge for using the church facilities for a funeral or memorial service.

If the service is in the Chapel or Sanctuary, the organist receives a fee of \$150.00 for providing the music. For services in the Sanctuary or in Canterbury Center, the sound operator receives a fee of \$100.00. If the family wishes for the service to be livestreamed on-line, the sound operator fee is \$200. Instrumentalists or vocalists other than the organist receive \$100 per person. These fees are the responsibility of the family of the deceased. If this is a financial burden, please let the pastor know. All of these fees should be paid before the service.

Honorariums are not required but are often given to clergy, the Director of Sanctuary Worship, or other staff members who have been involved with the planning and presentation of the service. An honorarium for the minister or other church staff members is at the family's discretion. Normally, envelopes with all fees are given to the Director of Sanctuary Worship before the service to be distributed,

Should the family wish for the church to provide food or cloth table coverings for the Visitation, there are fees for these services. The family will need to work directly with the church’s Director of Hospitality Ministries (874-1544) to arrange for these services.

SCHEDULING THE SERVICE

The church is closed or has limited availability for scheduling funerals on the following days, as noted:

| | |
|---|--|
| New Year’s Day Martin Luther King Day Presidents’ Day Memorial Day Fourth of July Labor Day Veteran’s Day | The church is closed on the “observed” holiday duration, usually meaning a three-day weekend; funerals will not be scheduled before 1:00 pm on a Tuesday following such a weekend — i.e. a funeral following Memorial Day weekend would be scheduled no earlier than 1:00 pm on the Tuesday after Memorial Day. |
| Holy Week/Easter | The Thursday, Friday and Saturday prior to Easter Sunday are not available for funeral services, and the church is closed on the Monday following Easter Sunday. |
| Thanksgiving Day Weekend | The church closes at noon on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving Day and remains closed through the Saturday following. |
| Christmas Holidays | Christmas Eve and Christmas Day are not available for funerals. Scheduling is difficult during the days approaching Christmas Eve as are several days between December 26 and January 2. The church staff will work with you the best they can but please be aware of the limitations that the church calendar must work within. |

Because of the many activities that take place at Canterbury, we ask that dates and times for the Visitation and Service not be announced or published until confirmed on the church calendar. Services are not held on Sundays or before noon on Mondays. Generally, morning Visitations and services should not be held before 10:30 while afternoon Visitations and services should be scheduled for 2:30 or later.

WHERE TO FIND HELP TO DEAL WITH YOUR GRIEF...

Our church offers Stephen Ministry to anyone who requests it. It is especially helpful in supporting those who have lost loved ones. If you are interested, please contact Rev. Sheryl Thornton. She can be reached through the church office at 205-871-4695.

APPENDIX

Checklist:

- Notify church
- Select venue for service
- Select dates / times for service and visitation
- Select pastor(s)
- Select musicians
- Decide whether or not you want soloists
- Select speakers, if any
- Select pall bearers if needed
- Meet with pastor(s) and Director of Sanctuary Worship
- Select hymn/songs
- Select scripture passages
- Select florist for altar flowers
- Place obituary notice
- Obtain guest book for service
- Coordinate use of photos for visitation, if any
- Coordinate military honors, if any

Service Worksheet

Desired Service Location:

- Sanctuary Chapel Other

Casket or Cremation: _____

Burial Location: _____

Pastor(s) Preferred: _____

Musician(s) Preferred: _____

Singer(s) Preferred: _____

Song(s) for Singers: _____

Other Participants: _____

Full Legal Name of Person Whose Life is Being Celebrated:

Date of Birth: _____ **Date of Death:** _____

Name by Which Person Was Most Commonly Known:

Date of Memorial Service or Funeral: _____

The Order of Worship

(This template is a planning guide for the service. Not every element must be used and any appropriate substitution is acceptable. Additional scripture passages and suggested hymns are listed following this template.)

Crosses that are available for the cover of the bulletin:



Prelude

Gathering, The Word of Grace, and Greeting

Hymn

Prayer (prayed by all)

O God, who gave us birth, You are ever more ready to hear than we are to pray. You know our needs before we ask, and our ignorance in asking. Give to us now Your grace, that as we shrink before the mystery of death, we may see the light of eternity. Speak to us once more Your solemn message of life and of death. Help us to live as those who are prepared to die. And when our days here are accomplished, enable us to die as those who go forth to live, so that living or dying, our life may be in You, and that nothing in life or in death will be able to separate us from Your great love in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

Old Testament Lesson

Isaiah 40:28-31

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Word of Witness (if desired)

Hymn or Solo

Gospel Lesson

John 14: selected verses

Homily/Sermon

Prayers of Commendation and Thanksgiving

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Affirmation of Faith

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; the third day He rose from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Hymn

Dismissal with Blessing

Postlude/Recessional

Additional Scripture Readings (from *The Book of Worship of the United Methodist Church*)

Old Testament

Genesis 15:15 Abraham's death

Genesis 49:1, 29–33; 50:1–2, 12–14 Jacob's death and Joseph's response

Exodus 15 (UMH 135) Canticle of Moses and Miriam

Joshua 3:14–4:7 Crossing over Jordan

Job 1:21 Job's faith

Job 14:1–12a We are of few days.

Job 19:25–27 My Redeemer lives.

Proverbs 31:10–13, 19–20, 30–31 A good woman

Isaiah 25:1, 6–9 God will swallow up death.

Isaiah 26:1–4, 19 Your dead shall live.

Isaiah 35:1–6, 10 Zion restored

Isaiah 41:8–10, 13 Do not fear.

Isaiah 57:14–19 Poem of consolation

Isaiah 61:1–4, 10–11 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.

Isaiah 66:10–13 A mother comforts, so does God.

Ezekiel 34:11–16 Shepherd of Israel

Ezekiel 37:1–14, 21–28 These bones can live.

Micah 6:6–8 What does the Lord require?

Zephaniah 3:16–20 Restoration of Israel

Psalms

Psalm 27 (UMH 758) Devotion and deliverance
Psalm 34 (UMH 769) Thanksgiving for deliverance
Psalm 40 (UMH 774) Thanksgiving for deliverance
Psalm 71 (UMH 794) Deliverance from evil
Psalm 77 (UMH 798) Deliverance from trouble
Psalm 84 (UMH 804) How lovely is your dwelling place.
Psalm 118 (UMH 839) Thanksgiving for deliverance
Psalm 126 (UMH 847) Prayer for deliverance
Psalm 143 (UMH 856) Prayer for deliverance

Gospels

Matthew 5:1–12 The Beatitudes
Matthew 6:19–21 Do not lay up treasures on earth.
Matthew 11:25–30 Come to me all who labor.
Matthew 25:31–46 As you did it to one of the least
Matthew 28:1–10, 16–20 Go make disciples.
Mark 16:1–8 Jesus goes before you.
Luke 1:67–75 (UMH 208) Canticle of Zechariah
Luke 12:22–40 Do not be anxious; be ready.
Luke 24:1–12 The empty tomb
John 3:13–17 God's gift of eternal life
John 5:19–29 Whoever hears and believes has life.
John 6:30–40, 47–51 Jesus the bread of life
John 10:1–18, 27–30 Jesus the Good Shepherd
John 12:20–36 Unless a grain of wheat dies
John 15:1–17 The vine and the branches
John 16:12–22, 33 Sorrow becomes joy.
John 20 Jesus' resurrection

Epistles

Acts 10:34–43 Peter's sermon on the resurrection
Romans 5:1–11, 17–21 Peace with God through faith
Romans 6:3–11 Dying and rising with Christ
Romans 14:7–9 Lord of the dead and the living
2 Corinthians 5:1–11a, 14–20 At home in the Lord
Ephesians 3:14–21 Know the love of Christ.
Philippians 3:7–21 The power of Christ's resurrection
Colossians 3:1–17 Raised with Christ
1 Thessalonians 4:13–5:11 Concerning those who sleep
2 Timothy 4:6–8, 17–18 I have fought the good fight.
Hebrews 11–12 The saints of God
1 John 3:1–3 We shall be like God.
Revelation 14:1–3, 6–7, 12–13 Blessed are the dead in the Lord.

Hymns

| | |
|-----|--|
| 700 | Abide With Me |
| 378 | Amazing Grace |
| 163 | Ask Ye What Great Thing I Know |
| 451 | Be Thou My Vision |
| 369 | Blessed Assurance, Jesus is Mine |
| 557 | Blest Be the Tie That Binds |
| 141 | Children of the Heavenly Father |
| 318 | Christ Is Alive |
| 407 | Close to Thee |
| 709 | Come, Let Us Join Our Friends Above |
| 400 | Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing |
| 710 | Faith of Our Fathers |
| 711 | For All the Saints |
| 129 | Give to the Winds Thy Fears |
| 64 | Holy, Holy, Holy |
| 77 | How Great Thou Art |
| 707 | Hymn of Promise |
| 103 | Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise |
| 488 | Jesus, Remember Me |
| 133 | Leaning on the Everlasting Arms |
| 57 | O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing |
| 143 | On Eagle's Wings |
| 159 | Lift High the Cross |
| 733 | Marching to Zion |
| 368 | My Hope Is Built |
| 66 | Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven (stanzas 3, 4) |
| 328 | Surely the Presence of the Lord is in This Place |
| 395 | Take Time to Be Holy |
| 545 | The Church's One Foundation (stanzas 1, 5) |
| 303 | The Day of Resurrection |
| 116 | The God of Abraham Praise |
| 504 | The Old Rugged Cross |
| 480 | O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go |
| 247 | O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright (stanza 3) |
| 518 | O Thou, in Whose Presence |
| 184 | Of the Father's Love Begotten |
| 308 | Thine Be the Glory |
| 153 | Thou Hidden Source of Calm Repose |
| 526 | What a Friend We Have in Jesus |