

Heavenly Prep:

A Workshop for End-of-Life Planning

"I'm convinced that nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ Jesus our Lord: not death or life, not angels or rulers, not present things or future things, not powers or height or depth, or any other thing that is created."

ROMANS 8:38-39

How do I want the end of my life to be? As Christians we know that our dying, just as our living, is within the providence and care of God. We do not have a choice in the God-given certainty of our deaths, but we do have choices about how we face that reality and plan for that transition. How do we best claim and practice the presence of Christ and the hope of resurrection at the end of life? There will be many different answers to that question, as we are called to many different roles and responsibilities in life and therefore hold many different aspirations and expectations for our lives. In turn, at the end of our lives, we have many different aspirations and expectations for our dying. If we are to be responsible to our beliefs, our hopes, and our aspirations, we must think about our goals for medical care and treatment as our lives draw to a close. This is not simply a matter of expressing our freedom as Christians before God. Advance care planning is also a gift we can give to our families and others entrusted with our care who need to know what kinds of care will be meaningful and fulfilling to us.

Abiding Presence: Living Faithfully in End of Life Decisions
By PC(USA)

We pray this resource is a gift to you!

Though details in this packet refer to FPC Covington, most preferences can be used as a guide in expressing your wishes even if you are not a member of FPC Covington. Speak to your pastor about how these details may be implemented at your church.

If you are a member of FPC Covington, we ask that you bring a copy of your packet to our church office to be put on in a confidential file. We are also able to copy it for you in the office.

Please note that this is intended to be a guide. Your expression of wishes in this packet is not legally binding and should not be used as replacements for other official end of life planning.

Funeral Planning Guide and Worksheet

The Christian Funeral Service - Witness to the Resurrection

This service is a gathering of family and friends, who form a community of hope. A funeral or memorial service is a rich opportunity to recall the promises of God through Christ. Because of Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection to new life, each time we gather to worship upon the death of a loved one, we do so in the context of God's promise. Every funeral includes praising God in Christ who is our hope and our salvation, even as we remember the deceased and give thanks to God for the time shared with that person.

Christians view death as another step in our life as children of God. Yet, Christians also experience death as a time of loss when sorrow, grief, and bereavement are both natural and appropriate. These two truths inform the Christian funeral service and guide the church in its ministry to those who have lost a loved one to death, affirming with both joy and tears the promise and hope of the Good News of Jesus.

A funeral or memorial service should be comforting to those who mourn as well as bear witness to our faith in Jesus Christ. The concern of gathered friends does minister to our grief but, above all else, a funeral is a service of worship to God. There, in God's presence together, we witness to our faith in the communion of saints, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. In doing so, the assurance of God's love and salvation in Christ become a ministry, especially to the bereaved. Since a funeral is a service of worship, all that takes place should be consistent with this principle.

Our Funeral Planning Guide and Worksheet is designed to:

- ♦ to provide a tool for planning for the future when your life on this earth ends
- ♦ to support and guide families making plans upon the death of a loved one.

In the first days following a loved one's death, the family makes an average of 200 decisions. During such an emotional, stressful and demanding time, plans that have been made earlier lighten the load after death.

If you've not made advance plans, this guide will be helpful to you as you arrange for services and burial of your loved one.

This guide will walk you through a series of questions. Your responses can be marked on the worksheet at the end. The pastor is available to discuss any items with you. When you are finished, please share your worksheet with a family member or friend who will act on your behalf after your death. It would also be helpful to contact the pastor to share your worksheet so that it can be held in safekeeping for the future.

Funeral Planning Worksheet

When planning your funeral, or a funeral for a loved one, there are many choices to make. Facing some of those choices now will make the process less demanding for your

loved ones later. This Funeral Planning Worksheet will lead you through a variety of decisions. After death, the Senior Pastor of FPC will meet with family members and review your worksheet to form the funeral or memorial service.

This worksheet may be used by:

- ♦ an individual making their advance plans known
- ♦ a family planning the funeral of a loved one nearing death or recently deceased.

Please supply as much information as you wish to share on any parts of the worksheet.

Guide for a Service in Witness to the Resurrection of

Full Name: First, Middle (Maiden), Last

Date Completed: _____

For the Person Making Advance Plans:

When you have completed this worksheet, please consider sharing it with your pastor. Your information will be kept in a confidential file. It will be used in consultation with your family or whomever you have directed to carry out these wishes upon your death.

Also, after completing the worksheet, consider telling someone you trust about it. You may wish to discuss with them what you have written to be certain that it is clear. Consider providing copies:

- ♦ to your Family
- ♦ to a Funeral Director
- ♦ to your Church
- ♦ to someone you trust with a note that says,
 - *I have recorded my desires regarding my death and burial. I keep this information in the following place: _____ (i.e. on file at the church, with my will, etc.). At the time of my death, I ask that you use this information to provide guidance for my family and my church in making arrangements for the funeral I desire. Although this information is being left for safekeeping, I understand that it is not legally binding or enforceable. This worksheet does not make the church or anyone obligated or responsible for the execution of these instructions.*

For Family Members Making Plans for the Funeral of a Loved One Nearing Death or Recently Deceased:

Please use this worksheet to assist with plans that will honor your loved one's expressed wishes or desires and will reflect his/her values. If you haven't already contacted a Funeral Director, please consider doing so now. The professional services, compassionate care, and guidance they provide will greatly assist you in the days ahead. FPC is able to refer you to Funeral Directors, they know well and hold in high regard.

When death occurs, please contact the church office. If the office is closed, you may leave a message or contact a pastor directly.

Christian Worship Service Plans

To be completed in advance of death.

Who is this service being planned for? (Include full name)

Location of Service

☐ First Presbyterian Church

☐ Funeral Home

☐ Cemetery (graveside only)

☐ Other

Time of Service

☐ Morning

☐ Afternoon

Visitation/Reception (check all that apply)

☐ None

☐ Visitation before the service at FPC

☐ Visitation before the service at the Funeral Home

☐ Reception following the service in the FPC Fellowship Hall with punch and cookies organized by the FPC Deacons

☐ Reception following the service in the FPC Fellowship Hall with additional/alternate refreshments provided by the family

☐ Other

Will the Remains Be Present at the Service?

☐ No

☐ Yes, ashes in an urn

☐ Yes, open casket

☐ Yes, closed casket

Display Items to be On or Near the Casket/Urn

- ☐ Floral spray and/or additional flower bouquets
- ☐ Bible
- ☐ Photograph
- ☐ Cross
- ☐ Flag (for Military Honors)

Photo Slideshow

- ☐ I would like a photo slideshow to play in the FPC Narthex to be viewed as people enter and exit
- ☐ I would like a photo slideshow to play in the FPC Fellowship Hall to be viewed during the visitation and/or reception
- ☐ I would like a photo slideshow to play at the Funeral Home.
- ☐ No slideshow

Remembrances to Be Shared During the Service

- ☐ No (clergy only)
- ☐ Yes, I would like the following person to speak:

Readers

I would like the following person(s) to read at my service (please include relationship)

Reading and Music Preferences

Bible Readings

_____ The pastor who officiates may
choose the readings

_____ My family will choose the readings

_____ I have chosen the readings as
indicated in the following list

Suggested Readings:

Circle or write in reading preferences

- ◆ *Old Testament*
 - Job 19:23-27
 - Isaiah 40:1-11
 - Isaiah 40:28-31
 - Isaiah 65:17
 - Psalm 23
 - Psalm 46:1-5, 10-11
 - Psalm 90:1-10, 12
 - Psalm 121
 - Psalm 130
 - Psalm 139:1-12
- ◆ *Gospels*
 - Matthew 5:1-12a
 - Luke 23:33, 39-43
 - John 11:17-27
 - John 14:1-6, 25-27
- ◆ *New Testament*
 - Romans 8:14-23, 31-39
 - Romans 14:7-9, 10b-12
 - 1 Corinthians 15:20-58
 - 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:1
 - 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
 - Revelation 21:1-4, 22-25, 22:3-5
 - Revelation 22:1-5

Other Readings Selected:

Congregational Hymns

_____ The pastor who officiates may
choose the hymns

_____ My family will choose the hymns

_____ I have chosen the hymns as indicated
in the following list

Suggested Hymns:

Circle or write in hymn preferences

- ◆ "I Know That My Redeemer Lives!"
- ◆ "Love Divine All Loves Excelling"
- ◆ "O God, Our Help In Ages Past"
- ◆ "For All The Saints"
- ◆ "The King Of Love My Shepherd Is"
- ◆ "Lift High The Cross"
- ◆ "Great Is Thy Faithfulness"
- ◆ "A Mighty Fortress"
- ◆ "My Faith Looks Up To Thee"
- ◆ "My Hope Is Built On Nothing Less"
- ◆ "Amazing Grace"
- ◆ "How Great Thou Art"
- ◆ "This Is My Father's World"
- ◆ "What A Friend We Have In Jesus"

Other Hymns Selected:

Special Music

_____ I would like the church organist to play

_____ I would like the FPC Choir to sing

_____ I would like the following person(s) to
sing or play an instrument_____

_____ **Music Selections** (with pastor approval)

Funeral Home

Preferred Company

Specific arrangements in advance at the funeral home of your choice are encouraged.

Have Pre-Arrangements Been Made?

_____ Yes

_____ No

Disposition of the Body

_____ Embalm body

_____ Cremate body shortly after death

_____ Cremate body shortly after service

Eligible for Military Honors

_____ No

_____ Yes (please provide details)

Cemetery

_____ I have made arrangements for my burial. Name/location of cemetery:

_____ I have not made official arrangements for my burial. Recommendation:

Desired Expressions of Sympathy

_____ Flowers

_____ Memorial gifts in lieu of flowers to the following organization:

Pall Bearers (if needed)

Obituary

Full name (including maiden and/or middle name):

Date and location of birth:

Parents' names (including mother's maiden name):

Marital status, marriage date, and name of spouse:

Names of children:

Additional next of kin:

Personal History

On a separate page, record additional information including place(s) of residence, special events, hobbies/interests, schools attended and degrees received, accomplishments, memberships, employment history, volunteer activities, military service, etc. Include as many full names, city of residence, birth and death dates, etc. as possible. All this information is important to your family.

This information does not need to be prepared in paragraph form.

Important Documents and Advisors

It is important that survivors be able to locate vital records and important documents. Before your death, you should have a current will/living trust and related health care directives which express your wishes on important personal, financial, medical, and charitable issues for your survivors. **Please remember that this form is meant to be a reference guide for your loved ones and is NOT a legally binding document.** If you need information regarding estate planning, planned giving, and/or the inclusion of a Christian preamble for your will, please consult your legal or financial advisor.

Location and Date of Will/Living Trust

Location of My Living Will

Attorney/Will Preparer Contact

Financial Power of Attorney Contact

Medical Power of Attorney Contact

Executor of Will/Estate Contact

Guardian (for Minor Children) Contact

Life Insurance/Policy Number

Organ Donor?

Additional Information (ex: location of safe combinations, website passwords)