

TABERNACLE COMMUNITY BAPTIST CHURCH



Funeral POLICY

2500 WEST MEDFORD AVENUE MILWAUKEE, WI 53206 // (414)562-1129 // REV. DON DARIUS BUTLER, PASTOR

PROTOCOL FOR THE FAMILY OF THE DECEASED

Upon the death of a family member please follow this protocol:

1. Contact Pastor Butler:
 - 615.414.5720
 - butlerdd@tcbchurch.comor Church Administrator Starlet Lever:
 - 414.562.1129 ext. 100
 - slever@tcbchurch.com
2. Contact your local funeral director
3. Contact other relatives and friends of the deceased.

Funeral service times must be arranged with the pastor in consultation with the family and Funeral Director. In planning the funeral liturgy, we ask that the family choose a designated spokesperson, who will work with the pastor. The family spokesperson will be responsible for contacting all family participants in the Liturgy and communicating the standards and protocols of Tabernacle to them.

IMPORTANCE OF THIS GUIDE

The death of a loved one, even under the “best” circumstances, is never an easy time. In the midst of your own grieving, trying to comfort and help family members, dealing with a host of practical issues, and managing various and sometimes conflicting expectations, planning for a funeral can be a challenge. These guidelines are intended to assist members of our congregation to plan a “home-going” celebration that is meaningful, inclusive, pastorally sensitive, and respectful of our Christian beliefs and practices.

THE FUNERAL LITURGY

As an assembly of Christian believers, we are invited to focus our lives on the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and by seeking the liturgy of a Christian Funeral, you declare your belief that God has created each person for eternal life and that Jesus, the Son of God, by his death and resurrection, has broken the chains of sin and death that bound humanity.

In order to facilitate the preparation of the funeral liturgy we carefully prepared this overview. It will take you through the different ritual segments and will give you basic guidelines by which to abide in order to ensure that your funeral will be of the highest liturgical, theological, and artistic quality.

PURPOSE OF THE FUNERAL LITURGY

In the wake of death of a Christian, the church community gathers to celebrate the Christian funeral in order to:

1. "offer worship, praise, and thanksgiving to God for the gift of life which has now been returned to God, the author of life and the hope of the just;
2. minister to the sorrowing and to console them "with the comforting Word of God and the gathering of the community.
3. celebrate the hope of resurrection

The celebration of the Christian Funeral is rooted in the Sunday assembly. It is an action of the entire church in whose presence we celebrate the life of the deceased and pray for all those who mourn his/her loss. Because the Christian funeral is worship, it is, above all, congregational. And because it is congregational, every effort should be made to enable the assembly to participate in a full and active manner.

MUSIC FOR THE FUNERAL LITURGY

Remember that the Christian funeral is a worship celebration, therefore, one of the basic principles that should underlie your selection of music is whether the music is indeed worship music. Popular songs and secular music, no matter how meaningful they may be to you or your loved one, have no place in the liturgy. They may be sung during the visitation at the funeral home or at the repast.

All visiting musicians, organists, soloists, ministers or others involved in the funeral Liturgy must be approved by the pastor and/or Minister of Music & Worship before being invited to participate in the service. Any special requests should be directed to the pastor and/or Minister of Music & Worship as soon as possible.

GUIDE FOR THE LITURGY OF A CHRISTIAN FUNERAL

PRELUDE

As the family and friends gather for the funeral, the musicians will play a variety of music to assist the people in their prayer.

PROCESSIONAL

Ministers will process with the family from the narthex to the front of the sanctuary for the final viewing. During this time a hymn is sung.

THE GATHERING

The officiating minister greets the family and all those present, and invites them to participate in every aspect of the liturgy.

HYMN OF TRIUMPH

The hymn celebrates the decedent's ultimate victory over death. The congregation is asked to stand, with the exception of the bereaved family. The hymn text should be printed in the funeral bulletin.

"Blessed Assurance"
"Come and Go With Me"
"Hold to God's Unchanging Hand"
"I'll Fly Away"
"Just Over in the Gloryland"
"On Jordan's Stormy Banks"

"Standing on the Promises"
"Sweet By and By"
"The Solid Rock"
"Victory in Jesus"
"When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder"
"When We All Get to Heaven"

THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

A member of the clergy (either an associate minister of Tabernacle, or a clergy member of the family) offers a prayer of thanks to God for the life and witness of the deceased.

SUNG RESPONSE

This song responds to the prayer of thanksgiving with a certain assurance that the Lord has heard our petition. It is sung with the congregation seated.

"Abide With Me"
"Be Still, My Soul"
"Close to Thee"
"Come, Ye Disconsolate"
"Father, I Stretch My Hands To Thee"
"God Leads Us Along"
"He Touched Me"

"Lord, Keep Me Day By Day"
"More Love to Thee, O Christ"
"My Jesus, I Love Thee"
"Precious Lord, Take My Hand"
"Steal Away to Jesus"
"Sweet Hour of Prayer"
"Zion Is Calling Us"

EXPRESSIONS OF SYMPATHY

In the wake of death, friends send condolences and other encouraging notes to the family. The family should choose four cards to be read, along with resolutions and others commendations. The church clerk will read all expressions of sympathy, including a resolution from Tabernacle, and return them to the family following the funeral service.

REMEMBERING THE *DECEDENT'S* EARTHLY JOURNEY

Tabernacle's funeral liturgy does not allow for open remarks. Instead, the family should choose up to four relatives, friends, colleagues, neighbors, or fellow churchmen to pay tribute to the life of the decedent. Speakers will be afforded 3-4 minutes to offer their remembrances.

(CHORAL) MUSIC OF WITNESS

Tabernacle's choirs are available for evening and weekend services. For daytime services during the week, vocalists (either from Tabernacle or ones selected by the family) will render the music. *Please note that families must contract musicians independently.*

A READING FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT*

This reading is obligatory and is proclaimed by a deacon of Tabernacle. To help you in the selection of the readings we have provided you with suggested passages. It is not appropriate to replace this or any of the readings with secular prose or poetry.

_____ Isaiah 25:6-9 The Lord will swallow up death forever

_____ Isaiah 61:1-3 To comfort those who mourn

_____ Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33 The Lord is good to those who wait for him

_____ Job 19:21-27a I know that my Redeemer lives

_____ Other

A READING FROM THE PSALTER*

This reading is a Psalm of your choice, to be read by a lector of your choice.

_____ Psalm 23 The Lord is my shepherd

_____ Psalm 25 To you, O Lord, I lift my soul

_____ Psalm 27 The Lord is my light and my salvation

_____ Psalm 42 My soul is thirsting

_____ Psalm 63 My soul is thirsting for you, O Lord my God

_____ Psalm 91 On Eagle's Wings

_____ Psalm 103 The Lord is kind and merciful

_____ Psalm 122 I rejoiced when I heard them say: let us go to the house of the Lord

_____ Psalm 143 O Lord, hear my prayer

_____ Other

A READING FROM THE EPISTLE*

This reading is proclaimed by a lector of your choice.

- _____ Romans 8:14-19, 34-35, 37-39 Nothing can separate us from the love of God
- _____ 1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-45, 53-58 The body raised in glory
- _____ 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:9 Things unseen are eternal
- _____ 2 Timothy 4:6-8 I have fought the good fight
- _____ 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 I do not want you to be ignorant about those who died
- _____ Revelation 7:9-17 God will wipe away every tear
- _____ Revelation 21:2-7 Behold, I make all things new
- _____ Other

A READING FROM THE GOSPEL*

A minister of Tabernacle proclaims this reading.

- _____ John 5:24-27 He who believes has everlasting life
- _____ John 6:37-40 All that the Father gives me will come to me
- _____ John 10:11-16 I am the good shepherd
- _____ John 11:21-27 I am the resurrection and the life
- _____ John 14:1-6 In my Father's house are many mansions
- _____ Other

**All scriptures and lectors' names should be printed in funeral bulletin.*

MUSIC OF PREPARATION

This selection prepares the congregation for the proclamation of the gospel. The pastor selects the appropriate music.

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

At the center of the funeral liturgy is the proclamation of the gospel, the sharing of the word of hope. As the under-shepherd of the flock of Tabernacle, it is the pastor's prerogative and duty to offer the eulogy for members in his care. In special circumstances, however, the pastor may defer to another cleric, particularly a relative of the deceased.

MUSIC OF AFFIRMATION

This selection is a response to the proclamation of the gospel and an affirmation of our eternal security. The pastor and family select the music.

THE PRAYER OF CONSOLATION

A minister of Tabernacle offers a prayer that commends the family to the grace of God for comfort and healing.

THE COMMENDATION

Through the recitation of scripture, the officiating minister commends the deceased unto the mercy of God, in certain hope of resurrection. This prepares the congregation for departure to the cemetery or crematorium.

THE RECESSIONAL

This is the formal egress from the sanctuary at the conclusion of the funeral liturgy.

"Come and Go With Me"

"Going Up Yonder"

"I'll Fly Away"

"Soon and Very Soon"

"We'll Understand It Better By and By"

"When We All Get to Heaven"

Requests for changes to the funeral liturgy must be made by the family spokesperson and requires the pastor's approval. The final draft of the liturgy and bulletin should be confirmed with the pastor via email at least 24 hours prior to the funeral service. Any change made after the pastor's final approval will not be honored in the service.

THE CELEBRATION OF LIFE & CHRISTIAN WITNESS

PRELUDE

ENTRANCE OF FAMILY & PARTING VIEW

Clergy and Family

THE GATHERING

The Reverend Don Darius Butler

HYMN OF TRIUMPH

THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

SUNG RESPONSE

EXPRESSIONS OF SYMPATHY

Mildred Green, Church Clerk

REMEMBERING THE *DECEDENT'S* EARTHLY JOURNEY

(CHORAL) MUSIC OF WITNESS

A READING FROM THE *OLD TESTAMENT*

A READING FROM THE *PSALM*

A READING FROM AN *EPISTLE*

A READING FROM THE *GOSPEL*

MUSIC OF PREPARATION

PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Pastor Butler

MUSIC OF AFFIRMATION

THE PRAYER OF CONSOLATION

THE COMMENDATION

THE RECESSIONAL

PROTOCOL FOR FUNERAL SERVICE AND GRAVESIDE RITES

Any activities to take place before the funeral service, such as family visitation or special memorial rites conducted by social or fraternal organizations, must conclude no less than fifteen minutes prior to the commencement of the funeral service. Military rites, if applicable, may be conducted at the graveside immediately after religious rites have been completed.

Graveside Rites will include:

- Reading of Scripture
- Prayer
- Committal of Body
- Final Benediction

FUNERAL REPAST MEAL

Tabernacle offers a repast meal as a ministry to the family and out of town guests. The family spokesperson should confirm with the church office at least three days (72 hours) before the funeral, so appropriate arrangements can be made. An estimate of relatives and guests for the repast meal will be sought during the planning meeting with the pastor. (Please note that there is a capacity limit for repast meals.) For Tabernacle members, the use of the facilities, preparation and serving of food, and cleanup for funerals are provided without charge to the family. Non-member families must contract with the church for use of facilities, ministerial and musician services and food services.

In your time of grief and bereavement, may you find comfort in the One who knows and has the answers to all of your many questions...

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.

PSALM 23:4

PROVIDING HOPE IN TIME OF GRIEF

Jesus Christ has given us the victory. In sorrow, there is rejoicing. In death, there is life. In suffering, there is victory in Jesus Christ. The Tabernacle Fellowship stands ready to assist bereaved families. At this time of loss, the members of Tabernacle Community Baptist Church extend our heartfelt sympathy, prayers, and support. May the peace of Christ be with you!