

# The Funeral Customary

Church of the Good Shepherd  
Lexington, Kentucky

## A Funeral at Good Shepherd

The death of a member of the Church should be reported as soon as possible to, and arrangements made in consultation with, the Rector or his designee. No final plans can be determined without this consultation. Baptized Christians are properly buried from the church. In the Episcopal Church, a funeral is a celebration of resurrection. The service should be held after public notice is given, to allow the community of the faithful to gather in support. In some circumstances, all of the service can be read at the graveside. Only in the most unusual of circumstances should any part of the service be held in a funeral home.

We at Good Shepherd stand ready to assist you in making decisions for a beautiful and meaningful service. With that in mind, all arrangements for the funeral should be made in consultation with the officiating priest. Final decisions regarding the funeral, liturgy, music, and flowers is vested in the Rector of Good Shepherd. Keep in mind that it can be difficult to prepare for an early funeral on Monday (or early Tuesday on three-day weekends) because no preparation can be done the day before.

Funeral services held at Good Shepherd follow The Burial of the Dead liturgy and rubrics in the *Book of Common Prayer* 1979. The burial service at Good Shepherd can be very short and quiet with only a few members of the family present or it can be an occasion of great solemnity with a church filled with family and friends. Whenever possible the service is most appropriately set in the context of the Holy Eucharist. But it is understood that a shorter service without Holy Eucharist, even at graveside, is good for those with specific personal preferences and reasons – which we want to honor.

The following pages are designed to facilitate the planning of a funeral during a very difficult time and constitute the customs of Good Shepherd parish and her members. There are provisions in the *Book of Common Prayer* for the appropriate readings, psalms, and hymns for a funeral service. Please choose those that will make this service the right one for the celebration of the life of the departed and a fitting memorial in the hearts and minds of those who mourn.

## The Prayer Book Service

The Church of the Good Shepherd uses the *Book of Common Prayer* published in 1979 for its services, funerals included. The Holy Eucharist is customarily celebrated at

funerals. All baptized Christians present who are able to receive communion in their own Church will be invited to receive Holy Communion. The Prayer Book Service of The Burial of the Dead takes approximately 45 minutes to an hour, depending upon the number of people receiving communion. A sermon is preached at all funerals at Good Shepherd. Considering the solemnity of the occasion, the service cannot and will not be rushed. Eulogies are not part of our funeral liturgy. If families desire eulogies, they may be made by family and friends at visitation or at a reception following the funeral.

## Participating Clergy

The priest who has helped the family members prepare for the funeral is the appropriate priest to perform the burial rites. If an Episcopal priest other than one from Good Shepherd parish staff is desired to assist (or officiate), the permission and invitation of the Rector is required according to The Canon Law (Title III, Canon 21, Section 5a). The location of the funeral other than in the parish church changes nothing; non-parochial priests may only function with the permission and invitation of the Rector of the parish. Guest clergy (other than Episcopal priests and deacons) are invited from time to time to read the lessons, lead prayers, and/or preach. *The Book of Common Prayer*, the guidelines of which each priest at his ordination has sworn to uphold, is very specific about who may do what. These guidelines may not be violated in any way.

## Day of the Service and Arrival at Good Shepherd

You should arrive at Good Shepherd about 30 minutes before the service. When you arrive please gather in the Library. Bulletins will be provided. The family will be taken to their designated seating in the Church. If the family is to accompany the casket in Procession you will be escorted to the tower entrance. Five minutes before the service begins the officiating priest will join the family in the Library for a prayer and speak about the service. The family will be seated in the Church immediately after this prayer or will join the casket for the procession if the family will be processing in.

## Music at the Funeral Ceremony

The hymns from *The Hymnal 1982* and other sacred music express our belief in the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Secular and taped music are not allowed in services held at Good Shepherd, as there is a wealth of beautiful and appropriate sacred music that is suitable for use in the context of the Burial of the Dead. The funeral is a service of worship designed to involve the entire congregation, but solo vocal performances may be allowed. Should any outside choirs or instrumentalists be allowed, they must be approved by the church's organist/choirmaster. Hymns from *The Hymnal 1982*, *Lift Every Voice and Sing II*, and *Wonder, Love and Praise* are typically acceptable. In the case of choral music, texts must come from the Holy Bible, *The Book of Common Prayer* or the above-mentioned hymnals. The Canons of this Church give the final authority for the music used in any liturgical setting to the Rector of the parish in which

the liturgy occurs. It is ultimately the Rector's decision made in consultation with the parish staff and the parish customary that will be binding with respect to the propriety of any particular music selection.

**Music appropriate for The Prelude (20 minutes before the service) and music during Holy Communion**

Johann Sebastian Bach	Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring
Johann Sebastian Bach	Arioso
Flor Peeters	Aria
Harold Drake	In Green Pastures
Healey Willan	Soliloquy
Healey Willan	Prelude on "St. Anne"
Gordon Young	Prelude on "Slane"

**The Postlude**

Gordon Young	Recessional on "St. Anne"
George Frederick Handel	Air in F

**Congregational hymns appropriate for the Burial of the Dead:**

208 The strife is o'er  
314 Humbly I adore Thee  
324 Let all mortal flesh keep silence  
383 Fairest Lord Jesus  
473 Lift high the cross  
474 When I survey the wondrous cross  
562 Onward, Christian soldiers (not recommended for small funerals)  
608 Eternal Father, strong to save  
635 If thou but trust in God to guide thee  
645 The King of love  
662 Abide with me  
671 Amazing grace!  
680 O God, our help in ages past  
687 A mighty fortress is our God (not recommended for small funerals)  
690 Guide me, O thou great Jehovah  
691 My faith looks up to thee  
694 God be in my head  
707 Take my life  
708 Savior, like a shepherd lead us

**Readings from Scripture**

During the service, there will be a reading from the Old Testament, one or two psalms (read by the congregation as a whole) and/or a reading from the New Testament, and a reading from the Gospel. No additional lessons or readings other than those authorized by the *Book of Common Prayer* in the Rite of the Burial of the Dead may be used. A deacon,

priest, or bishop must read the Gospel. Lay readers (family members or members of the church) read from the Old Testament and the New Testament and lead the congregation in the reading of the psalm. If the family would like a family member or friend to read a lesson, please take into careful consideration the emotional state of that person in respect to the deceased. The readings should be done in a dignified and solemn manner with no more than one lector reading each lesson.

The following readings are those authorized for the service of The Burial of the Dead:

**Old Testament:**

Isaiah 25:6-9 (He will swallow up death in victory)

Isaiah 61:1-3 (To comfort all that mourn)

Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33 (The Lord is good unto them that wait for him)

Wisdom 3:1-5, 9 (The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God)\* *from the Apocrypha*

Job 19:21-27a (I know that my Redeemer liveth)

**New Testament:**

Romans 8:14-19, 34-35, 37-39 (The glory that shall be revealed)

I Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-44, 53-58 (Raised in incorruption)

II Corinthians 4:16-5:9 (Things which are not seen are eternal)

I John 3:1-2 (We shall be like him)

Revelation 7:9-17 (God shall wipe away all tears)

Revelation 21:2-7 (Behold, I make all things new)

**Psalms:**

Psalm 23, Psalm 27, Psalm 42:1-7, Psalm 46, Psalm 90:1-12, Psalm 106:1-5, Psalm 116, Psalm 121, Psalm 130, Psalm 139:1-11.

(Rite I versions of these may be found on pages 471 through 479 of the *Book of Common Prayer*. Rite II versions of these are found on pages 585 through 808.)

**Gospel:**

John 5:24-27 (He that believeth hath everlasting life)

John 6:37-40 (All that the Father giveth me shall 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)

## Flowers at the Service

Family members are responsible for securing appropriate altar flowers for the service. Good Shepherd has a working relationship with many local florists familiar with our flower guidelines. Beautiful containers are available for them to use for the flower arrangements with permission. The casket or urn (if one is present), instead of being covered with a blanket of flowers, is covered with a pall. The pall is the vestment of the

Church and is used to cover every casket/urn placed in the nave for the Burial service. Floral sprays and decorations sent by family and friends will not be displayed in the church. A small number may be displayed in other areas, such as the tower entrance, the Concourse, the Loggia and in the Undercroft if a reception follows. However, floral arrangements such as these should more appropriately be sent to a family member's home or to the funeral home. The flowers and candles used in decorating the Church become the property of the Church.

The color for altar hangings and clergy vestments is always white for funerals, because the liturgy for the dead is an Easter liturgy. It finds all its meaning in the resurrection. Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we, too, shall be raised.

## Service Leaflets

It is our policy that service leaflets, if desired, be produced in-house. A photograph may be used in the service leaflet if a photograph of sufficient quality is provided. Digital photographs are preferred.

## Guest Book

Good Shepherd does not provide a guest book for congregation members to sign. In most cases, this is provided by the funeral home.

## Receptions

From time to time the Undercroft or Concourse/Loggia area may be used for a brief reception following the funeral, if sufficient advance notice is given that this is to take place. Finger foods and other refreshments appropriate to the time of day may be served. This reception should be kept brief. If a longer event is desired, it should be arranged for another time and place.

## Ushers

Ushers at a Good Shepherd funeral fulfill two important responsibilities: the seating of guests, and the ushering of the congregation to the altar rail to receive Holy Communion. If a large congregation is expected, conscientious ushers will expedite the seating of guests and reduce both congestion and noise from the tower entrance. It is the custom in this Church to remain silent in the nave before a service of the Church, allowing the congregation a quiet moment of reflection before the service begins. Good ushers model and facilitate such a silence, enhancing the service and its solemnity. Volunteers from Good Shepherd can be scheduled to serve as ushers.

## The Procession

As for all the services of the Church, all the lay ministers, clergy, and members of the family of the deceased may enter in an appropriate liturgical procession from the back of

the Church. The family members may also be seated prior to the service in reserved pews near the west door. This will be explained and discussed by the officiating priest in the course of preparations for the funeral.

## During the Service Itself

The congregation stands at the beginning of the procession and is seated after the opening prayer. The congregation will be invited to stand, sit, and kneel as full participants in the service following the rubrics of *The Book of Common Prayer* and will be invited to receive communion at the appropriate time and place.

No photography is to take place during the service.

## Reserved Seating

Pews will be reserved at the front of the church for family members and pallbearers. Please let the priest know ahead of time how many family members and pallbearers will be seated in the reserved area.

## Cremation

Cremation is an acceptable practice within the Episcopal Church. Many cemeteries in the area have facilities for the interment of ashes. A resurrection pall is used to cover urns containing ashes.

## Memorials

Good Shepherd's Memorial Fund provides opportunities for people to make contributions to the Church in memory of a departed loved one. Unlike operating monies used to pay salaries and utilities, the Memorial Fund is spent on making the Church more beautiful and enhancing our worship of God. Contributions can also be made to the Organ Fund or Building Fund. Like all gifts to Good Shepherd, memorial contributions are tax deductible. Acknowledgements are always sent to family members of the deceased noting that a gift was given, and by whom. The amount of gift is never mentioned.