

# Funerals at St James Episcopal Church

## St James Episcopal Church

4 St James Place  
Essex Junction, Vermont 05452  
802.878.4014  
www.stjamesvt.org  
office@stjamesvt.org

**Revised September 2018**

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*Give rest, O Christ, to your servants with your saints, where sorrow and pain are no more, neither sighing, but life everlasting.*

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## Concerning Burial Services

The death of a member of the Church should be reported as soon as possible to, and arrangements for the funeral should be made in consultation with, the Minister of the Congregation.

Baptized Christians are properly buried from the church. The service should be held at a time when the congregation has opportunity to be present.

The coffin is to be closed before the service, and it remains closed thereafter. It is appropriate that it be covered with a pall or other suitable covering.

If necessary, or if desired, all or part of the service of Committal may be said in the church. If preferred, the Committal service may take place before the service in the church. It may also be used prior to cremation.

A priest normally presides at the service. It is appropriate that the bishop, when present, preside at the Eucharist and pronounce the Commendation.

It is desirable that the Lesson from the Old Testament, and the Epistle, be read by lay persons.

When the services of a priest cannot be obtained, a deacon or lay reader may preside at the service. At the burial of a child, the passages from Lamentations, 1 John, and John 6, together with Psalm 23, are recommended.

It is customary that the Presider meets the body and goes before it into the church or towards the grave.

The anthems at the beginning of the service are sung or said as the body is borne into the church, or during the entrance of the ministers, or by the Presider standing in the accustomed place.

*-Book of Common Prayer, p. 490*

## **Notes:**

*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.*

*The liturgy, therefore, is characterized by joy, in the certainty that "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

*This joy, however, does not make human grief unchristian. The very love we have for each other in Christ brings deep sorrow when we are parted by death. Jesus himself wept at the grave of his friend. So, while we rejoice that one we love has entered into the nearer presence of our Lord, we sorrow in sympathy with those who mourn.*

*-Book of Common Prayer, p. 507*

At death, we give our lives back to God. For many persons of faith, death is a coming home, the culmination of a journey from home to home. Death is a fact of life. Talking about death, knowing what to expect, can lessen our fear of it, help us to accept its reality and die in peace and dignity when it is time. Christians believe that death is a bridge between this life and the next, but no matter how strong our faith is, we still need help when we are told that we, or someone we love is going to die.

*-From Chrysalis by Val Hillsdon-Hutton, Forward Movement Publications, Cincinnati, OH (1998).*

## CONSIDERATIONS ABOUT DEATH

### DISPOSITION OF THE BODY

There are three basic options for the disposition of the body, all fully acceptable in the tradition of the Episcopal Church:

- **Donation** of the body to science and/or parts of the body for transplant.
- **Burial** or entombment of the body.
- **Cremation**, with several options for the disposition of ashes.

1. **Donation:** ask your physician for arrangements for donation of the body or donation of organs for transplant. This must be arranged prior to death. **Donate Life** at <https://donatelifevt.org/> can provide further information.
2. **Burial:** The body may be buried in a cemetery or entombed in a mausoleum. Funeral homes can provide the information needed, as well as costs.
3. **Cremation:** Cremation reduces the body to ashes. Ashes may be disposed of in several ways, including burial, placement in a columbarium, or scattering.

**St James Episcopal Church** has a **Memorial Garden** for the placement of ashes. Within the Memorial Garden there are two options:

1. Ashes may be placed within the walled comingled garden. The name of the deceased is engraved on one of the large stones. A spouse or loved one of a person interred in this area who plans to have his/her own ashes similarly interred, may have his/her name inscribed on the stone at the same time the deceased's name is inscribed. The cost, which covers upkeep of the garden, is \$500.00 for current parishioners, \$750.00 for others, and does not include the price of the stone engraving. Please call the parish office for more details.
2. Ashes may be placed within a five-foot square individual plot outside the walled comingled garden. Location of the plot is determined using the Memorial Garden Plan which was surveyed by a licensed surveyor. If there is any cost for further surveying, that will be covered by those requesting the interment. There is one brass plate per plot. Plates are placed flush and centered on the plot. All plates are of uniform size, design and composition and purchased through the church office. The Parish Administrator will provide a copy of the design to those requesting these spaces. The cost, which covers upkeep of the garden, is \$500.00 for parishioners, \$750.00 for others and does not include the price of any necessary survey and brass plate. Please call the parish office for more details.

An urn for ashes at the funeral may be used but is not a requirement. However, St James does not allow urns to be interred along with ashes in the Memorial Garden. Only the ashes themselves are placed into the ground.

Flowers (artificial, planted or otherwise), flags and other items are not permitted to be placed anywhere within the Memorial Garden.

**It is important that plans be made for the disposition of the body, or at least wishes be made known, before death. An important part of Christian commitment is to make appropriate preparations for our death.**

## **WILLS AND DIRECTIVES**

**Will:** a written document directing what will happen to one's estate. With a will, an individual has a clear say about who receives the estate, rather than the state making the determination. When making out a will, please remember St James Episcopal Church.

**Treatment Directive (or Living Will):** a written document stating how you wish to be treated if you become incapacitated by illness, injury or old age. It is extremely important that your health care providers and family members know of your living will and have copies available in the event of sudden illness.

**Proxy Directive:** a written instrument by which a person appoints someone as an agent giving him/her the authority to act in the person's place for matters related to health care.

**VISITATION:** Family members and friends may desire an opportunity to visit the immediate family after a death. This can be done by a **formal visitation time** in either a funeral home or church, **before the funeral** when family members are present. This is a time when extended family members, parishioners, and friends can express sympathy personally. A time to connect with the family could also be had during a reception following the funeral service.

At St James, the sanctuary can be used as a respectful place for visitation prior to the funeral. Either the body or container of ashes may be placed before the altar, and people can visit the immediate family. If a casket is present, the casket is **closed**. If family members wish to have a viewing of the body, a funeral home would be a more appropriate place to do this. The Paschal Candle is lit as a sign of Resurrection in a visitation in the sanctuary.

**FUNERAL SERVICE AND PLANNING:** A burial service from the sanctuary is the preferred option for Church members and strongly recommended. For non-members a service could take place from a funeral home. Another option for member or non-member is a simple burial service said at the graveside or in the Memorial Garden.

The **Burial of the Dead** service comes from the Book of Common Prayer. Scripture Lessons are read, a homily (brief sermon) given, and prayers are said for the deceased and their family. **Eucharist** (Communion) is strongly encouraged for members of the parish, with participation open to all. **Hymns** may be sung, and **music** played. The casket or container/urn of ashes is usually present. *Appendix A* is a form to help with funeral liturgy planning.

**It is important that the family meet with the Priest or Minister in charge prior to the funeral so that the service can be planned**, musicians contacted, bulletins printed (if desired) and persons who are part of the service invited to participate. **To accomplish all that goes into a funeral, at least 3 days (or more) are generally necessary to plan and prepare.**

At St James, we have a tradition that if family members or close friends wish to speak briefly about the deceased (giving a eulogy), then they do so before the homily. Please let the Priest know if this is desired when you meet to plan the service.

Funerals are public services of the Church, to which everyone is invited.

#### **TIMES OF SERVICE**

It is best to schedule a service when the greatest number of people can attend, and when it works best in the parish calendar and for the clergy. Weekday services may start at 11:00 a.m. at the earliest. Funerals are not usually held on Sundays. The burial of a body (with casket) can happen at a later time. Interment of ashes can happen separately from the funeral service, for example if winter weather and ground conditions do not permit interment. In the latter case, the family or loved ones are responsible for keeping the ashes until the time of interment.

#### **MUSIC**

Music appropriate for a funeral focuses on God. A guideline is music appropriate for a Sunday morning Church service – hymns, songs of praise, etc. The Priest and Director of Music have final authority in the selection of music for a funeral. *Appendix B* contains several hymn suggestions.

#### **FLOWERS**

Flowers may be placed on the retable (shelf) behind the altar and should fit on it. Other flowers that do not fit there may be placed elsewhere at the discretion of the Priest and Altar Guild. It is not appropriate to have flowers or other decorations placed on a casket, as it is covered with a pall for the service. Pictures of the deceased may be displayed if desired, either in the entryway of the church or parish hall if there is to be a reception.

#### **PALL**

A pall covers a casket or container of ashes. This is provided by St James. A flag or flowers may be placed on the casket once the casket leaves the church.

## **MILITARY or OTHER HONORS**

Military or other honor services may be held after the funeral service. In the event of military honors, the casket or ashes are taken outside of the Church, the pall removed, the American or other national flag placed on the casket, and then appropriate honors offered. This can happen at the place of interment as well but would be led by a member of the military.

## **PALL BEARERS**

It is appropriate when a casket is present to have six to eight persons escort the casket from the funeral hearse to its resting place in the sanctuary, and then from the hearse to the place of interment. There may also be honorary pallbearers for cremated remains (ashes). Pallbearers may be women or men.

## **RECEPTION**

A reception for the family may be held in the Parish Hall, depending upon availability. There is a charge for custodial care for the reception. Food and beverages are provided by family and friends or a caterer. **No alcohol** may be served.

## **WHO IS A PARISHIONER?**

Persons who are considered active parishioners are those who attend church regularly (unless prevented from doing so by illness) and contribute financially to the church and their immediate family. With permission of the Minister in charge, other are invited to have funerals at St James, with the understanding that there are expected costs beyond those asked of active parishioners.

## **FEES**

No one will be excluded from the ministry of the church for financial reasons. The financial charges serve as guidelines. All fees should be paid at the time of the funeral or before. Checks should be made to St James Episcopal Church. Please complete *Appendix C* and attach it to your check. The Parish Office will disburse the funds.

For parishioners, there is no fee for use of the sanctuary, or clergy. However, a contribution to the parish (for use and utilities) and the Priest's Discretionary Fund (for Outreach use) would be appreciated.

## **QUESTIONS?**

Please contact the Priest or Parish Administrator if you have questions.

## FUNERALS AT ST JAMES EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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### FORM TO ACCOMPANY PAYMENT

*Please complete this form and attach it to your check.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

	<u>Parishioners</u>	<u>Non-Parishioners</u>	<u>Treasurer's Use Only</u>
Use of Church	Contribution	\$450.00	4052-01
Use of Parish Hall	Contribution	\$200.00	4052-01
Clergy	Contribution	\$250.00	4xx0-75
Altar Guild <i>(cost of flowers not included)</i>	\$25.00	\$25.00	4050-02
Organist <i>(soloist – additional)</i>	\$150.00 \$75.00	\$200.00 \$75.00	4xx0-75
Bulletins	\$50.00	\$50.00	4054-02
Interment in Comingled Memorial Garden <i>(stone engraving not included*)</i>	\$500.00	\$750.00	4080-07
Interment in Individual Plot <i>(brass plate not included*)</i>	\$500.00	\$750.00	4080-07

*\*Contact the Parish Administrator for information on additional costs.*

*Please return completed form along with payment to the Parish Office, or mail to: St. James Episcopal Church  
Attn: Parish Administrator  
4 St. James Place  
Essex Jct., VT 05452*

**2018**

**APPENDIX A**

**FUNERAL LITURGY PLANNING FORM**

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Funeral Director if desired \_\_\_\_\_

Do you desire Calling Hours in a Funeral Home?                      Yes                      No

Do you desire Visitation at the Church before the service?                      Yes                      No

Name, phone number, email of family member(s) to contact \_\_\_\_\_

Is a bulletin desired?                      Yes                      No

If "Yes" would you like to attach an example?                      Yes                      No

Would you like to attach a photo of yourself?                      Yes                      No

Who will give final approval after it is made? \_\_\_\_\_

Is a reception desired?                      Yes                      No

If "Yes" at St. James or elsewhere?                      St. James \_\_\_\_\_                      Somewhere else \_\_\_\_\_

If a Member of St. James, would you like to remember St. James in your estate planning or have you made plans to do so?                      Yes                      No

If "Yes" would you contact from the Senior Warden or member of the Finance Team to discuss details of your wishes?                      Yes                      No

If already deceased:    Date of Death                      \_\_\_\_\_  
                                  Cause of Death if known                      \_\_\_\_\_  
                                  Place of interment                      \_\_\_\_\_





## APPENDIX B

### HYMN SUGGESTIONS (OTHERS MAY BE CHOSEN)

#### Opening Hymn:

For all the saints	Hymnal #287 (verses 1-4)
The strife is o'er	Hymnal #208
Praise my soul the king of heaven	Hymnal #410
O God our help in ages past	Hymnal #680

#### Hymn Before the Gospel:

Amazing grace	Hymnal #671
I come with joy to meet my Lord	Hymnal #304
I sing a song of the saints of God	Hymnal #293
All things bright and beautiful	Hymnal #405

#### Offertory Hymn:

The King of love, my shepherd is	Hymnal #645, 646
Alleluia give thanks to the risen Lord	Hymnal #178
I am the bread of life	Hymnal #335
Give thanks for life	Wonder, Love, and Praise #775

#### Communion Hymn:

You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord	Wonder, Love, and Praise #810
In remembrance of me	Lift Every Voice and Sing #149
Let us break bread together	Hymnal #325
Take my life and let it be	Hymnal #707

#### Recessional Hymn:

Light high the cross	Hymnal #473
Now thank we all our God	Hymnal #396,397
Jerusalem, my happy home	Hymnal #620
For all the saints	Hymnal #287 (verses 5-8)
Lord of all hopefulness	Hymnal #482
Joyful, joyful we adore thee	Hymnal #376