

## WHAT ABOUT THE FAMILY FUNERAL MEAL?

The Women of the Church (WOC) are willing to provide a meal in your home for your family members on the day of the funeral. If circumstances prevent the meal being served in your home, the Small Dining Room in Jackson Hall may be used as an alternative site for up to 32 immediate family members at no charge. Someone from the WOC will contact you about this.

## WHAT ABOUT VISITATION?

Visitations are commonly held the day before the service in a funeral home. If you wish, and scheduling permits, this time of greeting friends can be held in the Atrium or Jackson Hall depending on availability. Refreshments (hors d'œuvres, beverages, etc.) can be ordered and paid for by the family. These arrangements can be made by our kitchen staff or by an outside caterer. Alternatively, if scheduling permits, a similar reception may be held following the services.



*Prepared by  
First Presbyterian Church  
Pastoral Care  
Ministries*

## IN THE EVENT OF A DEATH, WHAT MUST I DO?

1. Call the pastoral care phone number **513-7931** to reach the minister. He can help you notify family members if you need assistance. He can bring comfort and help to you and can notify those in the church who can come to your aid.

2. Call the funeral home of your choice. Later, they will ask you to come and meet with the funeral director and make choices about the service and burial times. The pastor may accompany you if needed.

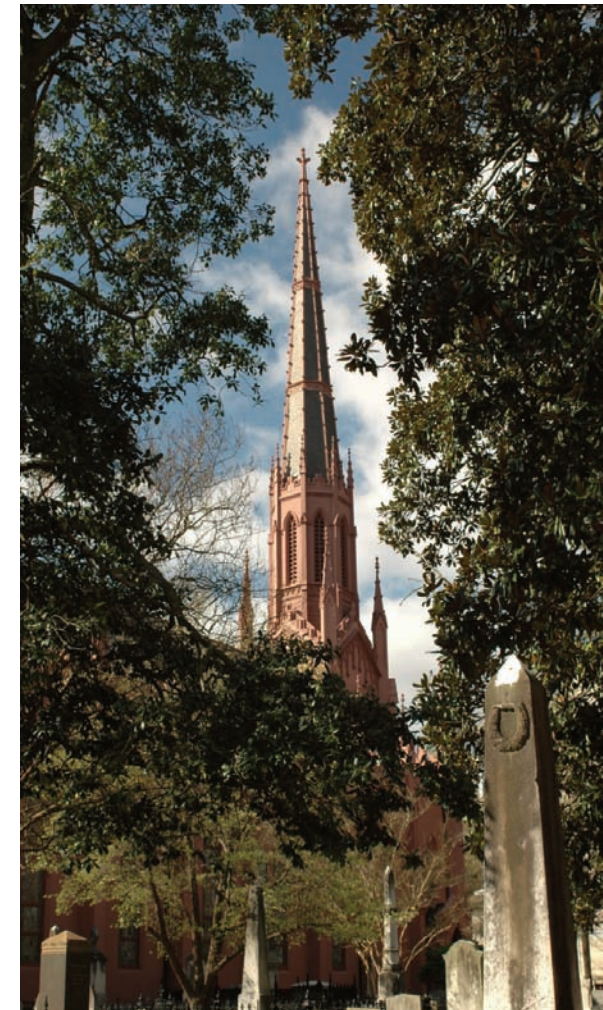
3. Select a final resting place if you have not already done so. Keep in mind the coming generations who will be interested in the life and character of your loved one.

4. Put your trust in God to help you through this painful time. The following passages will help you to experience the Lord's help, comfort and strength.

Psalm 1	John 14:1-6
Psalm 23	I Corinthians 2:9
Psalm 24	II Corinthians 5
Psalm 27	Romans 8:35-39
Psalm 34	I Peter 1
Psalm 57	Revelation 22
Psalm 139	

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## Bereavement Planning Guidelines

## INTRODUCTION

We have prepared some brief answers to questions we often ask when we lose a loved one and a funeral must be planned. It may be helpful to read over these notes just now before any need arises. This may help you to have some things already in mind when you find yourself having to make many practical decisions and plans at a time when you feel least able to make them and uppermost in your mind is the loss of a beloved family member or friend.



## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A SERVICE?

A funeral service is one of God's ways of bringing us comfort when we are mourning. The Scriptures, prayers and hymns, the recollections and meditations in the company of family and friends can help to support and strengthen us in our sorrow. We can give thanks to God and remember all that our loved one has meant to us. Our children and grandchildren can learn about the life of someone they especially loved. It can be a very memorable moment in their lives. The service can also be an important transition point for us as we begin to look forwards. It can bring a sense of gratitude for the past and courage for the future as we begin to cope with our loss.

## WHERE SHOULD A FUNERAL TAKE PLACE?

Your church, where many happy experiences have taken place, is a natural and appropriate place to celebrate, take comfort and remember our loved one. The Sanctuary seats 900 and the Chapel seats 120 and are open to you without any charge.

In many ways it may be preferable to a funeral home simply because the building carries so many associations of our lives together. Graveside services are sometimes preferred for brevity and



simplicity, and may be the expressed wish of the deceased. Remember as you think about this that often weather conditions may create an inconvenience and there may be limited accessibility for those with mobility challenges. In making some of these decisions it will be helpful to have some sense of what will be wisest and most helpful to your family. Simplicity and comfort are often important considerations.

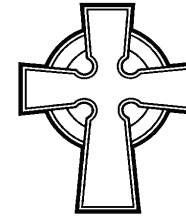
## IS A GRAVESITE IMPORTANT?

Yes, God's people have used burial places from the most ancient times. God Himself buried Moses. The place of burial may eventually be marked by an appropriate memorial. It can be a comfort to loved ones to be able to go to the grave from time to time.



## WHAT DO I SAY WHEN FRIENDS COME TO CALL ?

Thank them sincerely for their kindness. They may not feel they really know what to say. Receive their hugs and handshakes as comfort from the Lord for your strengthening. Don't be afraid to talk about your family member who has died. That will help visitors in turn to tell you things that will encourage and comfort you. Their kind words about your loved one can bring encouragement and even thankful joy for the blessings the Lord has given you.



## HOW LONG WILL DEEP SORROW LAST?

Be patient with yourself. Don't be afraid to cry or tell God how you feel. Seek him in prayer and ask for his comforting help. It may be months before you feel like yourself again, but that is not unusual. If the sorrow persists in a deep and agonizing way, beyond that point, it would be important to speak to one of the pastors and find some special help. Bereavement counsel and support is available.

One important thing to ask the Lord to help you to do is to stick to your ordinary routines as much as you can. That can be a day to day challenge. But it will help you as you begin to come to terms with a new period in your life.