

Westminster Presbyterian Church

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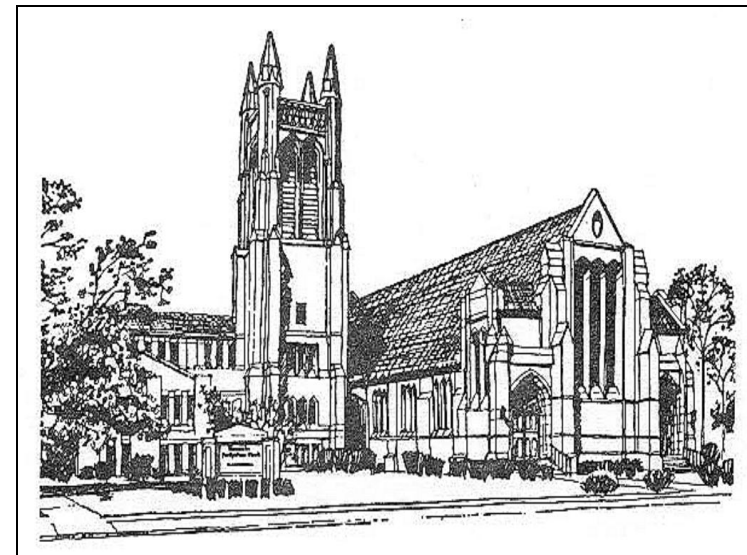
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**THE CHRISTIAN FUNERAL
and
OUR WITNESS TO
THE RESURRECTION FAITH**

A GUIDE FOR PLANNING



Westminster Presbyterian Church

Walnut at Edwards Street

Springfield, Illinois 62704

Approved by Session: 4/17/96

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THE MEMORIAL GARDEN
AT WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Springfield, Illinois

The Memorial Garden at Westminster Church will provide a resting place for the saints who have worshipped here. This is a reflection of the New Testament concept of the "communion of saints" which emphasizes the church's ongoing relationship with those who have gone before us. The Memorial Garden is a place where people can go to remember and celebrate the joys of life with their loved ones.

The Memorial Garden at Westminster Church will be a place of peace and repose for the remains of those who have expressed a desire to be interred within the garden wall.

The Memorial Garden at Westminster Presbyterian Church is found in the shadow of the church's noble tower on the front lawn. Embraced by the arms of the church, the garden walls contain secure niches for cremated remains. Niches are uniformly inscribed with names and the years of birth and death.

Paved paths and benches offer opportunity for private meditation. The center piece of the garden, a traditional Celtic Cross, reminds us of our Christian heritage.

Eligibility

Members of Westminster and their immediate families shall be given priority for use of the Memorial Garden for the interment of remains. The Memorial Garden will also be made available to "friends of the church" upon approval of the Session. The term "immediate family" includes spouses, parents, and children of church members. The church specifically reserves the right to approve all applications.

THE RESURRECTION FAITH

“The resurrection is a central doctrine of the Christian faith and shapes Christians’ attitudes and responses to the event of death. Death brings loss, sorrow, and grief to all. In the face of death, Christians affirm with tears and joy the hope of the gospel. Christians do not bear bereavement in isolation but are sustained by the power of the Spirit and the community of faith. The Church offers a ministry of love and hope to all who grieve.

Because it is difficult under emotional stress to plan wisely, the session should encourage members to discuss and plan in advance the arrangements which will be necessary at the time of death, including decisions about the Christian options of burial, cremation, or donation for medical purposes. These plans should provide for arrangements that are simple, which bear witness to resurrection hope, and in which the Christian community is central. The session is responsible for establishing general policies concerning the observance of services on the occasion of death.”

In accordance with this statement from the “Directory for Worship” of the Book of Order, the Session of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Springfield, Illinois, commends the following suggestions to you to be read and pondered now, and then to be kept for guidance and help on those occasions when death comes within your family.

A funeral planning section is included in this pamphlet. Westminster maintains a confidential file for those who wish to submit service plans to the church office or pastoral staff.

WHEN WE CONSIDER DEATH AND ITS AFTERMATH

1. As stewards of God, we are responsible to God for the use we make of all that God gives us. It is a responsibility not only for the years of life, but also at the time of death. Therefore, a properly drawn will is an instrument by which we fulfill our stewardship. In this way, we make adequate provision for our families and for strengthening the service of the Church of Jesus Christ in which we continue as members through the communion of the saints. The Support and Endowment Committee of Westminster can provide information and resources for such preparation.
2. A Christian funeral should reflect Christian conviction and bear Christian witness. Therefore, those responsible for decisions in arranging it should be less concerned about social custom and more concerned about the meaning and intent of our Christian faith in what we do at this time.
3. In the days and weeks following death, friends of the bereaved family may comfort them by making their Christian love felt in simple ways of kindness and concern. A brief call, a note of sympathetic understanding, and a thoughtful and helpful act of service can mean much in sharing the burden of sorrow.
4. Good stewardship includes informed decisions about living wills, power of attorney for health care, and organ donation. Excellent materials are available on request in the church office for those who wish to engage in this type of planning.
5. Christians face the fact of death with neither sentimental nor morbid attitude. We prepare for it both in the world of daily affairs and in the realm of the spirit. We live in the hope that belongs to those who are members of the community of the resurrection of faith.

Purchase and Cost

Persons desiring to reserve space in the Garden will complete an application form provided by the Memorial Garden Committee. The purchaser will be given a copy of the Garden policies at the time of application. The money contributed to participate in the Garden is a set price consisting of the actual cost of the interment, the inscription of the niche, and a donation to the Garden fund for its care and maintenance. Any donation received over and above the actual cost is a donation to the Garden fund and is eligible for tax benefits.

Memorial Garden Fund

All monies received in payment for the right to use space in the Garden will be used for the primary purpose of the construction, perpetual care, maintenance, expansion and administration of the Garden.

The Memorial Garden Committee consists of five members elected by the Session and nominated by the Garden Committee. The committee will manage the Garden and will maintain the records of all purchases as well as record the identity and specific location of ashes deposited in the Garden.

Please contact the church office for additional information.

WHEN DEATH COMES

1. Call the church immediately. In the ensuing days the pastoral staff will be sharing the experience and responsibility with you in many ways. Pastoral guidance can be most useful in easing your burden, assisting in decisions and making this time holy and significant. The pastoral staff will also wish to be engaged in ministry to the terminally ill and their families.

2. Call the funeral director to take charge of those preparations and arrangements for which he/she is responsible. It is wise before such an occasion arises to select a director carefully and to visit with this person about your preferences.

OUR PRAYER FOR TRUST

O God in whom we live and move and have our being,
so fill our hearts with trust in you
that by night and by day,
at all times and in all seasons,
we may without fear or distress commit ourselves
and those dear to us to your steadfast love
in this life and the life to come.
Living or dying we are yours
through him who is the resurrection and the life
Amen.

HYMNS FOR FUNERALS AND MEMORIAL SERVICES

(From *The Presbyterian Hymnal*, used at Westminster)

210	Our God, Our Help in Ages Past
261	God of Compassion, in Mercy Befriend Us
555	Now Thank We All Our God
339	Be Thou My Vision
170	The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want
478	Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven
260	A Mighty Fortress is Our God
171	The King of Love My Shepherd Is
114	Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain
118	The Day of Resurrection!
119	The Strife is O'er
457	I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art
438	Blest Be the Tie That Binds
371	Lift High The Cross
543	Abide With Me
383	My Faith Looks Up to Thee
280	Amazing Grace
379	My Hope is Built on Nothing Less
376	Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
464	Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee
138	Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty
526	For All the Saints
527	Near To the Heart of God

FUNERAL RECEPTIONS AT WESTMINSTER

The Pastoral Care Committee helps to organize receptions in conjunction with funeral services scheduled at Westminster. There are three options for families planning receptions:

Luncheon Reception This reception provides a light luncheon from a selected menu. The suggested donation for this reception should be at least \$2 per person for the number of anticipated guests.

Cookie Reception This reception provides homemade cookies served with a selection of beverages. The suggested donation for this reception is \$25.

Professionally Catered Reception If neither of the above receptions meets the family's needs, a third option is to hire a caterer. A list of possible caterers may be obtained through the Funeral Reception Coordinator. If this option is chosen, the family is responsible for all arrangements with the caterer.

The suggested donations in Options 1 and 2 are at the discretion of the family, which may choose to donate more or less than the listed amounts. The services of the Pastoral Care Committee will be provided to Westminster members without regard to donations made to offset cost.

SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR FUNERALS AND MEMORIAL SERVICES

Job 19:23-27	I Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38
Isaiah 40: 1-11, 28-31	42-44, 50, 53-58
Isaiah 40: 28-31	2 Corinthians 4:16-5:1
Ecclesiastics 3:1-15	I Thessalonians 4:13-18
Psalms 23	Revelation 21:1-4, 22-25, 22:3-5
Psalms 46:1-5, 10-11	Matthew 5:1-12a
Psalms 90:1-10, 12	Luke 23:33, 39-43
Psalms 103	John 3:16-21
Psalms 121	John 11:17-27
Psalms 139:1-12	John 14:1-6, 25-27
Romans 8:14-23	Romans 14:7-9, 106-12

WHEN FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS ARE TO BE MADE

1. **In consultation with your pastor and the funeral director**, set the time of the funeral or memorial service. In a memorial service the casket is not present. Services are not held on the Lord's Day, except in cases of absolute necessity.
2. **Flowers are appropriate as tokens of love and esteem.** However, it is wise to avoid elaborate display. If you prefer not to have all expressions of sympathy and respect in the form of flowers, it is desirable immediately to designate a memorial fund opportunity to which friends may give. Gifts to the Westminster Memorial Fund will be acknowledged through the church office to both donors and families of those remembered.
3. **Whether or not to have a "viewing" at the funeral home** is a matter of personal choice. Such a meeting with friends may be helpful in the comfort it offers. The casket may be closed, if desired, in which case those visiting are coming to make a call to express their sympathy. When visitations are held in Westminster's Parish Hall, they are not to include open casket viewing and are subject to availability in light of the church's busy schedule.
4. **The brief committal service at the grave** is structured to minister to the needs of the family. All those attending the funeral need not come to this final intimate act at which scripture is read and prayer is offered. Committal services in Westminster's Memorial Garden may include all who have come for the service in the church. Those present bear witness, in the face of death, to their belief in the resurrection to eternal life.

WHEN THE NATURE OF THE FUNERAL SERVICE IS CONSIDERED

1. Remember the funeral service is an act of worship. Its purpose is to glorify God, who is Lord of life and death, to commend the dead to God's love and mercy, to mark with our love and respect the completed mortal life of the deceased, to comfort the sorrowing with the Word of God, and to witness to our faith in Jesus Christ who is the resurrection and the life.
2. The appropriate place for the funeral service of a Christian is in the church of which he or she has been a member. The significant moments of a Christian's life from baptism to burial should take place where the setting, symbols, and associations are directed toward the God who created us, loves us, and receives us.
3. The content of the funeral or memorial service is guided by our *Directory of Worship* and our *Book of Common Worship*, and is the responsibility of the officiating minister. The general order includes the reading of appropriate passages of scripture, the offering of prayers, the singing of hymns, and the benediction.
4. The singing of hymns, which are strong affirmations of our Christian faith, is appropriate and helpful in the service when enough worshipers are present. All music shall be consistent with the biblical affirmations of God's power over death.
5. During Christian services, conducted by the pastoral staff of Westminster Church, in the church or elsewhere, the casket is to remain closed and covered by a pall or simple spray of flowers. "We look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal" (2 *Corinthians 4:18*). When viewing is desired immediately prior to a funeral service at the church, the open casket may be arranged for this purpose in the East Narthex. The casket will be closed ten minutes prior to the beginning of the service.
6. If it is desired that a minister of another church conduct or assist in conducting the service, it is proper to notify the Westminster Presbyterian Church officiating minister immediately that he/she may extend the invitation on behalf of Westminster to the guest participant.
7. The Christian service of witness to the resurrection should be considered complete in itself, and another hour and place beforehand should be appointed for any fraternal or civic rite.

8. Some families may prefer that committal of the body be prior to the congregational service of worship, in order that worshipers may center their thoughts on God, our refuge and strength, rather than on the physical remains of the deceased. First, a brief graveside service of scripture and prayer is held for the family. Then the family and congregation go to the church sanctuary for the service of worship. This practice was followed by the early American Protestants.
9. Since the resurrection of the body is a certain hope for all who put their trust in Jesus Christ, there is no reason to reject methods of disposal of the body other than burial; therefore, cremation or the donation of the body or parts of the body for medical use or research are Christian possibilities for those who desire to do so.
10. **There is no fee to church members for the use of the church or the services of the pastoral staff.** The fee for the professional services of the organist is \$150.00 and may be paid directly to the church or through the funeral home. If a soloist is used, the fee is \$75.

Additional fees for non-members services will be as follows:

a. Use of sanctuary	\$400.00
b. Use of Parish Hall	\$200.00
c. Professional services of the pastoral staff	\$150.00
d. Services of the organist	\$150.00
e. Services of the custodian(s)	
Funeral service	\$ 65.00
Committal service	\$ 40.00

11. Recordings on CD of the sanctuary service can be made upon request. One CD recording of the service will be provided to the family at no charge. Additional copies of the tape are available for \$2 per CD.
12. Photographs of the deceased may be arranged in Narthex areas or Parish Hall but are not to be used in services in the sanctuary.
13. Westminster Church will arrange for a meal for the family or reception for worshipers the day of the service. A meal for the family may be served at the church or delivered to the home for family members to serve themselves.

FUNERAL PLANNING

**(When completed, please return this form to: Westminster Presbyterian Church,
533 S. Walnut St., Springfield, IL 62704)**

*The information given below indicates my desires regarding the
arrangements for my funeral.*

Date _____ Signature _____

NAME _____
First Full Middle Name Last

ADDRESS _____ Phone _____

Names and addresses of family members who are to receive copies of the service plans:

SERVICE PLANS

Type of service (see description of service options) _____

Funeral establishment preferred _____

Crematory preferred, if cremation is desired _____

GENERAL NOTES

1. Instructions on place, type, and time of religious service:

2. Preference of "visitation" and/or "viewing:"

3. Preference regarding flowers and memorial gifts:

4. Special request for the service:

5. Scripture readings requested (see attached list):

6. Hymns and/or special music to be used (see attached list):

7. Disposition of ashes following cremation:

8. General statements regarding financial arrangements for funeral costs:

9. Statements regarding donated organs:

10. Please send me information concerning the following:
____Preparation of a will ____Including your church in your will
____Living will ____Power of attorney for health care
____Organ donation ____Liturgical resources for funeral services
____Westminster Memorial Garden

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NAME _____

First

Full Middle Name

Last

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