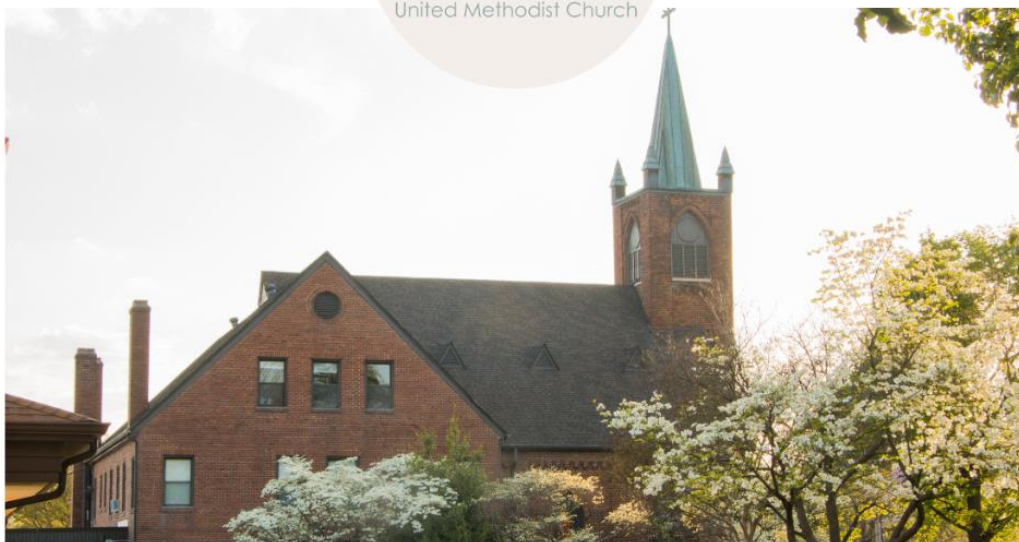


# FUNERAL POLICIES & PLANNING GUIDELINES



Forest  
Hill

United Methodist Church



**Forest Hill United Methodist Church**

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## **Funeral Services**

The death of a loved one is a difficult experience. We grieve the loss of one who has been close, but we do not sorrow as those who have no hope (1 Thess 4: 13). It is our desire and privilege to minister to the families of our congregation in their time of need. It is through the Word of God that we have hope at the time of the death of a loved one (Romans 15: 4).

This policy is provided to assist our families in planning and providing a Christian funeral at Forest Hill UMC. All members of Forest Hill are encouraged to use the church building for funeral services. The Main Sanctuary, the Historic Sanctuary, and Columbarium are available for funeral services. The sanctuaries are also offered for the funeral services of Christians whose membership is in another church. There can be alternative methods for the conducting of services at the time of death. These could include a private graveside service for family members as soon after death as possible and/or a public service conducted at the church. The pastor will be happy to meet with the family to plan any funeral worship arrangements.

## **Date and Time of Funerals**

Dates and times for funerals at Forest Hill UMC must be arranged in consultation with the family of the deceased, the pastoral staff, and calendar approval by the church office. Services can be arranged during the week Monday through Friday. Saturdays are reserved for worship preparation and Sundays may be considered by pastoral staff depending on the calendaring of worship.

*As a note: All graveside services must conclude before sunset.*

## **Who Will Officiate?**

Pastoral ethics require a Forest Hill UMC pastoral staff member conduct all funeral services held at the church, unless another United Methodist pastor is invited by the acting pastoral leadership of the church to share in the funeral. Forest Hill UMC pastoral staff must approve any requests for an outside pastor or layperson to officiate or assist in the service. Because all services that take place at Forest Hill are worship, it is important that the theology preached and message proclaimed is given by United Methodist clergy.

A funeral service held in the church is a service of worship, celebrating the deceased's life and the promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ. Consequently, all parts of the service are to be consistent with the present worship practices of the church. The family may suggest other items to be included in the service, with the approval of the pastor.

## **Obituaries and Notice to the Congregation**

Obituaries are submitted by the family to be posted by the funeral home or the local newspaper. For **active members\*** (see footnote on pg. 4), a notice to the congregation will be sent from the church office upon publication by the funeral home or local newspaper. Please let the church office know when this information is public, so that we are able to inform the congregation.

## **Structure of the Funeral Service**

A funeral service held in the church is a service of worship, celebrating the deceased's life and the promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ. Consequently, all parts of the service are to be consistent with the present worship practices of the church. Generally, the outline for the funeral and burial service will take on a traditional form. The family may request other items to be included in the service, with the approval of the pastor.

## **Remembrances**

There are moments in a funeral for specific remembrances and thanksgivings by family and friends. Experience teaches us that two to three speakers with a combined total length of 10 to 15 minutes is sufficient. To ensure that remembrances are effectively communicated, it is advised that individuals prepare their remarks in writing. This approach allows a clergy member to assist in delivering the message should the speaker experience emotional distress or be unable to continue. We request that the personal words reflect the goodness and Christian virtues of the person.

## **Funerals for Non-members and Inactive Members**

Conducting funerals for people who have no connection with the church is a normal part of the ministerial obligation. However, the Forest Hill UMC pastoral staff shall have discretion to determine if they or the church will participate.

## **Funeral Music**

Only music appropriate to a worship service shall be used. Forest Hill UMC music staff will participate unless otherwise arranged between the pastor and family. Sacred or Christian music is appropriate. Pre-recorded instrumental and accompaniment music, soloists and solos, anthems, and guest musicians must be approved by Forest Hill UMC pastoral staff. The use of congregational hymns is encouraged and may be selected by the pastor in consultation with the family during the service planning process. The pastor must approve all songs selected for the service, including video presentations. In cases where an outside organist/pianist is desired, permission must be secured from the pastor. Additional musicians or soloists may be utilized.

## **Video Presentation**

Please refer to the following policies regarding digital pictures, video, and the use of multimedia. Videos can be shown before the service or during visitation in the Main Sanctuary. We cannot show video in the Historic Sanctuary.

**Photos:** If church staff are to compile photos into a slideshow, digital files must be given 48 hours before the funeral. Appropriate photo file formats include: JPEG, JPG, HEIC.

**Videos:** We will need the completed video file at least 24 hours ahead if you wish to play a video. Appropriate video file formats include: MP4 and MOV. *We do not operate Windows Systems, so formats like AVI or BMP are not compatible.*

**Unacceptable Formats:** We will not accept: Powerpoint or Google Slides, AVI or BMP., photographs which require scanning.

**Submission:** All files should be submitted via USB flash drive or Google Drive file shared with the church office email ([foresthillumc@gmail.com](mailto:foresthillumc@gmail.com))

*Please note that we do not live stream funeral services.*

## **Decorations and Flowers**

Families may choose to have the casket or urn displayed in the Sanctuary, as well as certain mementos or photographs of the deceased and their family. The following guidelines would be applicable in these situations:

- Any displays or pictures must be appropriate to a worship setting.
- No nails, tacks, staples or screws shall be put in the walls or attached to the pews.
- All decorations must be removed within 3 hours of the conclusion of the service.
- No furniture shall be removed from the church building.

Photos and displays may be arranged in the Narthex. Flowers, a portrait, and the casket or urn are typically placed in the front of the Sanctuary, with careful attention to not obscure the altar, cross, or altar candles. Flowers may be arranged by the funeral home or family. Pastoral staff may review all placements in the Sanctuary.

## **Closed Casket**

All caskets must be closed for the burial service, but may be open during the viewing (or preceding the viewing, for the family only), if desired. When closed, a pall may be used to cover the casket. The casket will remain closed throughout the service.

## **Nursery**

The church does not provide a nursery for funeral services. If needed, the family is responsible for securing and paying an attendant.

## **Memorials**

In certain circumstances, the family might request a contribution to the church or a charitable organization in lieu of flowers. The church will not manage, receive or distribute designated funds for an outside institution. Undesignated funds and funds designated for an established project ministry or an endowment at Forest Hill UMC will be received by the church. Funds designated for a project or ministry not previously established will be designated for such only with approval of the pastor and business administrator.

## **Fees**

If the deceased is an **active member\*** (see footnote on pg. 4) of Forest Hill UMC, there is no fee for the use of the facilities. For all other individuals, additional fees will be assessed. Those who have been members of Forest Hill UMC but now are considered inactive members will pay the same fees as non-members. Fees are payable (by cash or check made payable to "Forest Hill United Methodist Church") on or prior to the day of the funeral. Normally, honorariums for the pastor, pianist, or musicians and sound techs are paid following or immediately preceding the service.

**The following fees apply:**

	<b>Active Member</b>	<b>Non-Member or Inactive Member</b>
Use of Sanctuary	No Fee	\$200
Use of Fellowship Center	No Fee	\$100
Pastor	Pastoral Honorarium*	Pastoral Honorarium*
Pianist/Organist	Staff Honorarium*	\$200
Sound System Operator	\$100	\$100
Video Operator	\$50	\$50

***\*Active Member:** For the purposes of this policy, active members are defined as those members of Forest Hill United Methodist Church who regularly attend church services and contribute to the church, as they generally provide regular financial and personal support for the church. These privileges are also extended to the following:*

*1. Homebound members.*

*2. Faithful attendees of the church who attend regularly but who have not officially joined the church as an official member and...*

*3. Those who have served as former pastors of the church.*

***\*Pastoral Honorarium** There is no fixed fee for the services of the Forest Hill UMC Pastoral Staff. However, it is customary to give an honorarium to the officiating minister. Checks should be made payable to the individual minister.*

***\*Staff Honorarium:** If the family has made arrangements with an available musician and/or soloist, typical honorariums for them range from \$100 - \$200 per person. Checks should be made payable to the individual musician(s) or soloist(s). All checks should be given to the Forest Hill UMC Church office, who will deliver or mail checks to the individuals involved in the service.*

## Sample Bulletin for Funeral Service

For suggested hymns as well as Scripture readings, please see the following page. The front of the bulletin is reserved for the following: the title: *A Service of Death and Resurrection*, an image of a cross, the deceased person's name as well as date of birth and death, and the location of the service.

### ENTRANCE

Prelude

† The Word of Grace

† Processional Hymn \_\_\_\_\_

The Greeting

Prayer

† Hymn \_\_\_\_\_

### PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

Old Testament \_\_\_\_\_

New Testament \_\_\_\_\_

Remembrances

† Hymn \_\_\_\_\_

† Gospel Reading: John 14:1-4, 18-19, 25-27

Homily

### COMMENDATION

Prayers of Commendation and Thanksgiving

The Lord's Prayer

### SENDING FORTH

† Hymn \_\_\_\_\_

† Dismissal with Blessing

† Postlude

Information regarding the receiving of family and friends

### Suggested Scriptures

<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Description</u>
Genesis 15:15	Abraham's death
Genesis 49:1, 29-33; 50:1-2, 12-14	Jacob's death and Joseph's response
Exodus 15 (UMH 135)	Canticle of Moses and Miriam
Joshua 3:14-4:7	Crossing over Jordan
Job 1:21	Job's faith
Job 14:1-12a	We are of few days.
Job 19:25-27	My Redeemer lives.
Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31	A good woman
Isaiah 25:1, 6-9	God will swallow up death.
Isaiah 26:1-4, 19	Your dead shall live.
Isaiah 35:1-6, 10	Zion restored
Isaiah 41:8-10, 13	Do not fear.
Isaiah 57:14-19	Poem of consolation
Isaiah 61:1-4, 10-11	The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.
Isaiah 66:10-13	As a mother comforts, so does God.
Ezekiel 34:11-16	Shepherd of Israel
Ezekiel 37:1-14, 21-28	These bones can live.

Micah 6:6-8	What does the Lord require?
Zephaniah 3:16-20	Restoration of Israel
Psalms 27 (UMH 758)	Devotion and deliverance
Psalms 34 (UMH 769)	Thanksgiving for deliverance
Psalms 40 (UMH 774)	Thanksgiving for deliverance
Psalms 71 (UMH 794)	Deliverance from evil
Psalms 77 (UMH 798)	Deliverance from trouble
Psalms 84 (UMH 804)	How lovely is your dwelling place.
Psalms 118 (UMH 839)	Thanksgiving for deliverance
Psalms 126 (UMH 847)	Prayer for deliverance
Psalms 143 (UMH 856)	Prayer for deliverance
Acts 10:34-43	Peter's sermon on Jesus' resurrection
Romans 5:1-11, 17-21	Peace with God through faith
Romans 6:3-11	Dying and rising with Christ
Romans 14:7-9	Christ, Lord of the dead and the living
2 Corinthians 5:1-11a, 14-20	Away from the body, at home in the
Ephesians 3:14-21	Lord Bow before God; know the love of Christ.
Philippians 3:7-21	The power of Christ's resurrection
Colossians 3:1-17	Raised with Christ
Thessalonians 4:13-5:11	Concerning those who sleep
Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18	I have fought the good fight.
Hebrews 11-12	The saints of God
1 John 3:1-3	We shall be like God.
Revelation 14:1-3, 6-7, 12-13	Blessed are the dead in the Lord.
Matthew 5:1-12	The Beatitudes
Matthew 6:19-21	Do not lay up treasures on earth.
Matthew 11:25-30	Come to me all who labor.
Matthew 25:31-46	As you did it to one of the least
Matthew 28:1-10, 16-20	Jesus' resurrection: Go make disciples.
Mark 16:1-8	The open tomb: Jesus goes before you.
Luke 1:67-75 (UMH 208)	Canticle of Zechariah
Luke 12:22-40	Do not be anxious; be ready.
Luke 24:1-12	The empty tomb
John 3:13-17	God's gift of eternal life
John 5:19-29	Whoever hears and believes has life.
John 6:30-40, 47-51	Jesus the bread of life
John 10:1-18, 27-30	Jesus the Good Shepherd
John 12:20-36	Unless a grain of wheat dies
John 15:1-17	The vine and the branches
John 16:12-22, 33	Sorrow becomes joy.
John 20	Jesus' resurrection

### Suggested Hymns

<b>77 How Great Thou Art</b>	395 Take Time to Be Holy
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103 Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise  
129 Give to the Winds Thy Fears  
133 Leaning on the Everlasting Arms  
**140 Great Is Thy Faithfulness**  
141 Children of the Heavenly Father  
143 On Eagle's Wings  
153 Thou Hidden Source of Calm Repose  
163 Ask Ye What Great Thing I Know  
303 The Day of Resurrection  
308 Thine Be the Glory  
314 In the Garden  
315 Come, Ye Faithful, Raise the Strain  
318 Christ Is Alive  
322 Up from the Grave He Arose  
368 My Hope Is Built  
**377 It is Well with My Soul**  
**378 Amazing Grace**  
383 This Is a Day of New Beginnings

407 Close to Thee  
480 O Love That Will Not Let Me Go  
488 Jesus, Remember Me  
496 Sweet Hour of Prayer  
504 The Old Rugged Cross  
510 Come, Ye Disconsolate  
512 Stand By Me  
520 Nobody Knows the Trouble I See  
526 What a Friend We Have in Jesus  
557 Blest Be the Tie That Binds  
57 O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing  
654 How Blest Are They  
**700 Abide with Me**  
704 Steal Away to Jesus  
**707 Hymn of Promise**  
709 Come, Let Us Join Our Friends Above  
710 Faith of Our Fathers