

St. Simons Presbyterian Church

205 Kings Way, St. Simons Island, GA
(912) 638-2220



Witness to the Resurrection

“So then, whether we live or whether we die,
we are The Lord’s”

Romans 14:8

Information Booklet

Witness to the Resurrection

In Baptism each Christian shares in Christ's dying and rising, and receives the promise of eternal and abundant life in him. We understand the Christian funeral to be the completion of Baptism. In the face of death, we affirm with tears and joy the good news of the gospel and the hope of the resurrection. We do not grieve in isolation, but are sustained by the power of the Holy Spirit and the community of faith.

Book of Order: W-4.0701

Service for Church Members

Funeral services in the sanctuary and cremation interments in the church's Memorial Garden are limited to members and former members of St. Simons Presbyterian Church and their immediate family.

When Death Happens

The family is encouraged to stay in close contact with the church pastor before, during and after their loved one's death. Through early involvement during this time of transition, the pastor will be able to support and provide guidance on such issues as funeral home selection, disposition of the body, interment and planning a service of Witness to the Resurrection.

When a loved one dies, the first step is to notify the pastor or the church office. A pastor will contact the family and begin the process of planning a service of the Witness to the Resurrection.

Planning the Service

The family meets with the pastor and, when appropriate, members of the staff (e.g., Director of Music) to set the date, time and location of a service of the Witness to the Resurrection. While the service is often held soon after a death, the pastor is understanding to the needs of the family and the travel arrangements of relatives and friends. We ask that the service be scheduled for 11AM or 2 PM on weekdays if possible. The date and time to be coordinated with the church's calendar. The church's sanctuary is most frequently used for the service. The number of family members will be estimated to set the appropriate number of pews aside.

A graveside service without worship in the sanctuary is also appropriate. The pastor will assist you in planning if you need.

Disposition of the Body

If the casket is present in the sanctuary, it is always closed. Viewing the body may take place at the funeral home. The body of ashes may or may not be in an urn however only ashes are interred. If the body of ashes are interred in the St. Simons Presbyterian Church's Memorial Garden, a brief service shall usually be held in the garden before the service in the sanctuary. A brass plaque with the name, date of birth and date of death will be attached to Memorial Wall as soon as possible after the interment. If ashes are interred in the church's Memorial Garden, there is a fee to cover

the preparation for the service, upkeep of the garden and cost of the brass plaque. Details are provided in a separate brochure.

Family Gathering

Before the service the family and friends gather in the parlor. An usher is available to assist the family with any special needs. Before the service, the pastor will meet with the family, offer a prayer and then lead the family to the sanctuary.

The Service

The service of Witness to the Resurrection is a worship service of prayer, scripture reading, music, remembrances, and a homily by the officiating Pastor from St. Simons Presbyterian Church. The purpose of the service is to glorify God and give thanks for the life of the departed. The church provides an organist, ushers, bulletins and a guest book. The family provides an estimated attendance number for printing the orders of worship and for preparations for a reception after the funeral. Fraternal, civic, or military ceremonies, if any, shall occur at some other time and place apart from the sanctuary.

Flowers

When the service is in the sanctuary, the family is responsible for providing an arrangement for the chancel which will be placed by church staff. If a reception follows, the church will provide the flowers for the reception table. Other flowers/gifts that arrive for the family will be placed in the Social Hall and Gathering Space. With the exception of the flowers provided for the reception table, the family is responsible for the removal or distribution of the flowers.

Music

Music is an important part of the service and can include organ music before the service, hymns, solos and music played as the family enters and leaves the sanctuary. The Director of Music consults with the family to discuss and choose music for the service.

Reception

Upon request, the Hospitality Ministry Team (HMT) offers members and their immediate family a complimentary reception after the service. It is a time meant to express the love and support among family and friends.

Pictures and mementos can be displayed in the reception only. The church has the capability to display photos on a screen if the family provides a photo DVD or USB honoring their loved one. Music is not played during the reception and outside catering is not an option. The HMT team leader or a pastor is available for consultation.

The reception is held in one of the church's gathering rooms, and generally lasts 1 to 1½ hours. There are areas for receiving lines and tables to display memorabilia. The HMT provides a floral

centerpiece at the reception as well as skirted tables draped with white, linen tablecloths. Cups, plates and napkins are used in a self-serve buffet style. Limited seating is available.

The menu varies but usually includes “light” finger food (e.g., cookies, tea sandwiches, fruit), which is served on attractively garnished platters. “Presbyterian Punch” and water are available. No alcohol is served.

Honorariums

Honorariums are appropriate for the staff members involved including musicians, sexton, and pastor(s). The pastor can suggest ranges remembering it is not required nor expected.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written:

*“For your sake we face death all day long;
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”*

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Romans 8:35-39

Approved by Session January 2023

FUNERAL SERVICE CHECKLIST

Information on Deceased

Full Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Date of Death: _____

Family Contact Name: _____

Family Contact Phone(s): _____

Family Contact Email: _____

Service

Date: _____ Time: _____

Interment of ashes before service: Y N

Service in sanctuary	Y	N
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Service at graveside	Y	N
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Number of family (reserved seating in sanctuary): _____

Number of guests expected: _____ (needed to print
bulletins and planning reception)

Family is responsible for providing flowers in the chancel.

Family provides photo of deceased for bulletin (optional).

<u>Reception</u>	Y	N
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Memorabilia table needed	Y	N
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USB photo presentation	Y	N
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Pastor/Office Follow Up

- Place funeral date/time on church calendar
- Inform staff of funeral plans
- Inform HMT leader of funeral plans
- If interment, notify Facilities Maintenance Coordinator to prepare Memorial Garden
- Set time with Pastors and Director of Music Ministry to meet with family to plan service.
- Director of Communications emails congregation
- Notify Director of Congregational Life if family is providing photo USB.