

## FUNERAL POLICY

We believe that death has been conquered by God in Jesus Christ through our Lord's resurrection. It is our conviction that we share in the blessings and benefits of his victory over the grave. We also affirm that at death the believer goes to the presence of God, with whom we shall abide eternally. These convictions are grounded in the gracious love of God. Therefore, as Christians we commend to God's care those who believe in Him will be raised to life eternal. The Christian funeral should witness to this faith.

The Christian funeral is an act of worship. *The Book of Orders* says. "The church offers a ministry of love and hope to all who grieve." (W4.10001) The proclaiming of the Word of God should be central. The Pastor(s) should apply the message of the Word for comfort, hope and healing.

In all we do, we should lift up Jesus Christ and bear witness to his resurrection.

### **Practical considerations that contribute to worship:**

1. The sanctuary is the most appropriate place for the funeral of a church member.
2. The casket should not be opened for viewing within the sanctuary as this does not contribute to the worship of God and may distract from the primary purpose for which we gather.
3. FPC owns a pall made by our church women. We encourage families to cover the casket with this cloth in the sanctuary.
4. The use of recorded music during the funeral service **is not** permitted in the sanctuary. The pastors and music directors will help with music selections.
5. Former pastors or associate pastors may only lead in funeral services at FPC with the approval of the current pastor. (See PCUSA Book of Order 2009/2011, section G-14.0630.)

## FUNERAL CHECK LIST

**In the event of a church member's death, the following guidelines should be followed:**

1. Pastor – Works with the family members and funeral home director to determine the best time for visitation and service.
2. Pastor -- Notifies the Director of Music and Church Organist of the date/time of service. The Pastor will forward any special requests of the family regarding music and place of service.
3. Pastor -- Notifies the family that there is a pall for the casket if desired.
4. Administrative Assistant – Notifies the Pastor and/or Associate Pastor **immediately** – even in the event of being out of town. The Church Secretary should have the information as to their locations or whereabouts.
5. Administrative Assistant – With the pastor's guidance, prepares an order of worship for all funerals in the sanctuary.
6. Administrative Assistant -- Notifies the Sexton with date/time, and any special arrangements for the sanctuary.
7. Administrative Assistant – Notifies the Volunteer Ushers with the date and time of service. Ushers are requested to be on hand 30 minutes before the service.
8. Administrative Assistant – Notifies both the Chair of Pastor's Aides to contact the appropriate Food Guild so food can be scheduled and the Chair of Worship Committee.
9. Administrative Assistant for Clerk of Session -- Records the death in the permanent records of the church.
10. Administrative Assistant - Suggested fees for organist (\$150) and pastor honorarium (over \$150) to families as needed. Fees are not required to be paid. If organist's fee is not paid by the family, the church pays the fee.