



Memorial Services

At First Presbyterian Church of Wilmette, the content of the memorial or funeral service is the responsibility of the officiating pastor and is guided by the Directory for Worship in the *Book of Order* and the *Book of Common Worship*. Basic components include:

- Call to Worship
- Prayer of Invocation
- Readings from the Old and New Testaments
- Tributes and Remembrances (optional)
- Homily
- Pastoral Prayer
- The Lord's Prayer
- Music, hymns or solos
- Benediction

These components may vary somewhat. The officiating pastor shapes the order of service in consultation with loved ones and the previously expressed wishes of the deceased. The service is intended to be personal, while praising and thanking God that in life as in death, we are held securely in God's hands. Family and friends are invited to participate in the service when appropriate. A limited number of people may be invited to offer brief remembrances during the service, which is arranged in advance with the officiating pastor. Once the service has been planned, First Pres will print the worship bulletin.

Scriptures and Hymns

The following are a selection of particularly appropriate scriptures and hymns for use in the service or for your own personal reflections.

Old Testament Scripture

- Job 19:23–27 *I know that my redeemer lives*
- Ecclesiastics 3:1–15 *For everything there is a season*
- Isaiah 25:6–9 *God will swallow up death forever*
- Isaiah 40:1–11 *Comfort my people*
- Isaiah 40:28–31 *Those who wait for the Lord*

- Isaiah 43:1–3a, 18–19, 25 *When you pass through the waters*
- Isaiah 44:6–8 *I am the first and I am the last*
- Isaiah 55:1–3, 6–13 *Everyone who thirsts*
- Isaiah 61:1–4, 10–11 *The spirit of the Lord is upon me*
- Isaiah 65:17–25 *I create new heavens and a new earth*
- Joel 2:12–13, 23–24, 26–29 *Return to the Lord with all your heart*

The Psalms

- Psalm 23 *The Lord is my Shepherd*
- Psalm 27:1, 4–9a, 13–14 *The Lord is my light and my salvation*
- Psalm 42:1–6a *As a deer longs for flowing streams*
- Psalm 46:1–5, 10–11 *God is our refuge and strength*
- Psalm 90:1–6, 11–17 *Lord, you have been our dwelling place*
- Psalm 91 *You who live in the shelter of the Most High*
- Psalm 103 *Bless the Lord, O my soul*
- Psalm 106:1–5 *Give thanks to the Lord*
- Psalm 116:1–9, 15 *The Lord has heard my voice*
- Psalm 118 *Open the gates of righteousness*
- Psalm 121 *I lift up my eyes to the hills*
- Psalm 130 *Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord*
- Psalm 139:1–12 *O Lord, you have searched me and known me*
- Psalm 145 *I will extol you, my God and King*
- Psalm 146 *Praise the Lord, O my soul!*

New Testament Scriptures

- Matthew 5:1–12a *The Beatitudes*
- Luke 23:33, 39–43 *Remember me when you come into heaven*
- John 3:16–21 *For God so loved the world*
- John 11:17–27 *I know he will rise again in the resurrection*
- John 14 *Do not let your hearts be troubled*
- Romans 8:14–25 *All led by Spirit of God are sons and daughters*
- Romans 8:31–35 *Nothing can separate us from the love of God*
- Romans 14:7–9 *We do not live to ourselves*
- 1 Corinthians 15:20–26, 35–38, 42–44, 53–58 *Where, O death, is your victory?*
- 2 Corinthians 4:16–5:1 *A house eternal in the heavens*
- Philippians 4:4–9 *Rejoice in the Lord always*
- 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 *God will bring with him those who have died*
- Revelation 21:1–4, 22–25, 22:3–5 *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth*

Suggested Hymns

The following hymns, suitable for use at a funeral or memorial service, are found in the Presbyterian Hymnal.

*The King of Love My Shepherd Is
My Shepherd Will Supply My Need
Our God, Our Help in Ages Past
I'll Praise My Maker
Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound*

*Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah
Be Thou My Vision
My Faith Looks Up to Thee
We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight
Precious Lord, Take My Hand*

*For All the Saints
Abide with Me
Now Thank We All Our God*

*Eternal Father, Strong to Save
On Eagle's Wings*

Other Elements at the Service

Participation by Other Ministers: One of the pastors at First Pres will conduct the service. An invitation to assist in the service may be extended to clergy beyond First Pres. It is customary for the invitation to be extended through the officiating pastor.

Music at the Service: A musician for the service will be arranged through the officiating pastor. By request, a soloist or instrumentalist can be arranged. It is appropriate for worshippers to sing songs that affirm God's power over death, a belief in the resurrection, and the assurance of the communion of saints.

Floral Arrangements: The church office can provide names of florists who are familiar with the church. There are two pedestals for arrangements and/or our communion table in the chancel of the main sanctuary. The Chapel has a communion table for such an arrangement.

Expressions of Sympathy and the Obituary: Often people request that in lieu of flowers, expressions of sympathy be directed to a memorial fund or a specific charity organization.

Livestream: First Pres is able to live stream the memorial service with advanced notice. The livestream is available via link to our YouTube channel and can be viewed from any computer/tablet/smartphone with a provided link.

Reception: The memorial committee of First Pres can organize a reception consisting of light fare, coffee and tea, either in the Lounge (accommodates 50 people) or Wallace Moore Fellowship Center (accommodates 350 people) following the service. (Please consult fee schedule and policies document for more information)

After the Service

All Christians are called to care for one another in daily living, sharing joys and sorrows. The church offers care to people in the special needs and crises of their lives through prayer, visits, and other acts which express love and support for those who are sick and their households.

When death comes, the church seeks to offer the ministry of presence, of shared loss and pain, of faith and hope in the power of the resurrection, and of ordinary acts of care and love. The church continues special pastoral care during the times of grief and adjustment.