

The Christian Funeral: Preparing and Planning for Death

Christ has promised: *"I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you."* (John 14:18)

The scriptures promise that nothing can separate us from the love of God, not even death. (Romans 8:39) Country Club Christian Church stands ready to plan a service designed to comfort those who mourn and hold in grateful memory a loved one. To that end, we have provided a list of scripture readings and hymns, as well as answers to frequently asked questions. In addition, we have provided a list of books related to grieving that might be helpful now and in the future.

List of Suggested Scripture Readings

The Bible has much to say about God's promises related to death and resurrection. The following are passages that Christians have found meaningful in funeral services. If you have a favorite passage not listed here, be sure to visit with the clergy about other possible readings.

Old Testament

Isaiah 25:6-10 God will swallow up death forever.

Isaiah 40:28-31 Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength.

Psalms 23 The Lord is my shepherd.

Psalms 46:1-5, 10-11 A very present help in trouble; be still and know that I am God.

Psalms 90:1-10, 12 You have been our dwelling place in all generations; teach us to number our days.

Psalms 91 The one who dwells in the shelter of the Most High.

Psalms 103 Bless the Lord, O my soul.

Psalms 121 I lift up my eyes to the hills.

Psalms 139:1-12 Where shall I go from your spirit?

New Testament

Matthew 5:1-12a The Beatitudes, "Blessed are those who mourn..."

John 6:37-40 I will raise them up on the last day

John 11:38-44 Lazarus raised from the dead

John 14:1-6, 25-27 Let not your hearts be troubled

Romans 6:3-9 Baptized into Christ's death, raised to live with him

Romans 8:31-39 Nothing can separate us from the love of God

1 Corinthians 15:51-58 Death is swallowed in victory

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 The comfort of Christ's coming again

1 John 3:1-3 We are children of God

Revelation 21:1-4 A new heaven and a new earth; death will be no more

List of Suggested Hymns from *Chalice Hymnal*

Our hymnal contains many of the great hymns of the faith, including some more appropriate for the Christian funeral. If you do not see a favorite hymn, please directly contact the designated musician which will be provided to you by the clergy.

Amazing Grace! No. 546

Christ the Lord Is Risen Today No. 216

Fairest Lord Jesus No. 97

For All the Saints No. 637

For the Beauty of the Earth No. 56

Great Is Thy Faithfulness No. 86
Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty! No. 4
I Was There to Hear Your Borne Cry No. 75
In the Bulb There Is a Flower No. 638
Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee No. 2
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling No. 517
Precious Lord, Take My Hand No. 628
There Is a Balm in Gilead No. 501
When I Survey the Wondrous Cross No. 195
What Wondrous Love Is This No. 200

Frequently Asked Questions

In a time of grief, persons often have many practical concerns. If you have questions not addressed here, please be sure to ask the clergy person from our church.

How do we determine the date/time of the service?

Please contact the clergy of the church who will check the availability of the worship space, reception space, parking space and clergy/musicians prior to confirming the time/date of the service. The main number is 816-333-4917.

How will bulletins be prepared?

The church will prepare and print a standard funeral bulletin. Information, such as participants, scripture readings, music titles and composers, photo, etc., must be received by the church at least 48 hours before the service. If the family prefers to print its own bulletin, please include the church information as follows: church logo (will be provided in jpeg, png or eps format by the church Communications office), and name and title of Country Club Christian Church clergy and musicians.

Can we have guest musicians for the service?

Country Club Christian Church has a staff of professional musicians who are here to counsel and serve. One of our music staff will provide the service music or delegate duties to a reliable sub. If a guest soloist (vocal or instrumental) is requested, please discuss this with the staff musician. An additional fee for the staff musician may be charged if extra rehearsal time is required. If you wish to have a referral for a soloist, our staff is glad to facilitate. Guest soloists are required to provide legally purchased PDF copies of their music (in the key they wish to perform) to our music staff by 48 hours prior to the service. Failure to do this may result in an additional fee.

Can another minister participate in the service?

Yes, the officiating minister at the church may invite another minister to assist in the service with readings, prayers or personal remarks. The officiating minister at Country Club Christian Church will deliver the message or homily/sermon.

What about flowers?

If a funeral home is involved, flowers may be delivered to the church and will be held until a representative from the funeral home arrives to arrange them. If no funeral home is being used, the church funeral guild will work with the family to arrange and display flowers. Families are encouraged to consider asking for donations to a cause or charity in lieu of flowers.

Our loved one served in the military. How can we acknowledge their service?

We support military honors at the graveside or the cemetery.

Who will help with logistics the day of the service?

If there is no funeral home personnel at the service, we can invite members of the funeral guild to assist with welcoming guests and distributing bulletins.

Can memorial gifts be made in honor of my loved one?

Yes. Memorial gifts will go into the church's endowment (undesignated), which are used to support the church now and into the future. The Endowment Trustees disburse the funds according to the Declaration of Trust approved by the official Congregational Board. If donations are requested for a specific church

ministry, please contact Rachel Clement (rachelc@cccckc.org), Director of Finance in advance. If you list a variety of causes as options for friends and family, such as your loved one's alma mater, a health-related 501(c)(3), or an animal shelter, the gifts should be made payable to the organization and sent to them directly.

It is recommended that a statement regarding memorial gifts be listed with the obituary and the service bulletin. Examples:

Memorial donations may be made to Country Club Christian Church.

Can there be an open casket?

Yes, if the funeral home personnel are here to assist.

In cases of cremation, what options are there for scattering the remains?

Our church has a columbarium where members and other persons associated with the congregation may be interred. Please contact the church office for information regarding fees and availability.

Can the church host a service after the reception?

Receptions can be held before or after the service, or even the day before the service. The date and time will need to be checked against the church calendar before confirming. Smaller receptions (example: cookies and punch) can take place in the church parlor. A larger reception could be held in the church Social Hall. A kitchen is adjacent to the Social Hall. The family is responsible for any food, catering arrangements, and any associated costs. We do not have staff or a funeral guild to assist.

Is it possible to display photos and other memorabilia at the reception?

Yes, we can set up tables and have easels available.

Can we show a slideshow?

The church has a screen in the parlor and in the Social Hall where a slideshow could be shown during a visitation or reception. Please contact the church to find out the format that would be required to interface with the provided technology equipment.

Can the service be recorded?

Country Club Christian Church has the capacity to record and/or privately livestream funerals and memorial services.

All requests for streaming and recording must be submitted to Paul Cutelli (paulc@cccckc.org), Director of Technology, for review in advance; all final amendments and needs for taping must be determined on a timeline at the direction of the Director of Technology.

As necessary, the party(s) involved in the event will meet and discuss the needs for said event with the staff person tasked with operating the streaming/recording equipment, including but not limited to scenes for the video and special needs for audio.

All performers of any kind must be both aware of the recording and consent to being broadcasted.

The staff person operating the streaming/recording devices will schedule the recording and secure the stream upon request, providing the event coordinators with the necessary url to access the online broadcast.

AT TIME OF EVENT

The staff person from the church will be present at the tech booth in the balcony throughout the entirety of the event, troubleshooting as necessary for the recording. Any assistance outside of this scope of work, including custodial and administrative tasks, is considered extra and can result in an additional cost on a time and materials basis.

Any occurrences during the event which might be classified as "ad lib" will not be accounted for; the staff person will stay true to the predetermined video plan for scenes throughout the event.

FOLLOWING THE EVENT

Within 24 hours of the stream/recording, the facilitating staff person or Director of Technology will make available an unedited MP4 file of the event accessible publicly online through Google Drive. If the event coordinators elect to have editing done to the video file, the requested materials will be available within

one week of the event.

ERRORS IN ENCODING OR RECORDING

As recording and streaming is contingent upon the connectivity of the Internet, in the case that there is a local area outage or some other failure in the audio/video technology which would compromise the ability for the church to stream/record the event, all costs associated with said service would be refunded.

What are the expenses involved?

Facility Charges	
Sanctuary, Chapel, Narthex, Parlor*	\$300
Social Hall	\$200
Kitchen	\$150
Recording/Livestream	\$300 first hour/\$100 each subsequent hour
Post-production work	\$60/hour
Honorariums	
Officiating	
Minister – suggested range	\$250-\$500
Organist – suggested range	\$250-375
Pianist – suggested range	\$250-375
Singers/instrumentalists	\$200

*Includes set-up, service bulletin, beverage service (coffee, tea, water), easels, tables, funeral guild (ushers)

One check can be made to the Country Club Christian Church to cover the total expense based on the summary of expenses provided above.

Resources on Grief

When the funeral is over, the grieving process continues. This can be an especially hard time after family and friends leave. The following resources are recommended in hopes they help you on the journey ahead:

Nicholas Wolterstroff, *Lament for a Son*

Ann Weems, *Psalms of Lament*

C. S. Lewis, *A Grief Observed*

Alan Wolfelt, *Understanding Grief: Helping Yourself Heal*

John Claypool, *Tracks of a Fellow Struggler*

Jerusha Hull McCormack, *Grieving: A Beginner's Guide*

Stephanie Ericsson, *Companion Through the Darkness: Inner Dialogues of Grief*

Harold Bloomfield, Melba Colgrove, and Peter McWilliams, *How to Survive the Loss of a Love*