

## **FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

4 Clinton Street

Delhi, NY 13753

(607) 746-2155

### **CHURCH POLICY & GUIDELINES FOR FUNERALS, MEMORIAL SERVICES AND CELEBRATIONS OF LIFE**

#### **PASTOR**

In the absence of the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Delhi, another pastor may officiate pending approval of Session.

If you wish to have another pastor assist in the funeral service, this must be discussed with the pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Delhi and approval given by the Church Session.

#### **ORGANIST**

It is expected that the church organist or an approved replacement will play for all church funerals. If a family desires to invite a particular friend to play the organ, this may be done with the approval of the church organist and the pastor. Music should be appropriate for a service of Christian Worship. Final approval will be given by the organist and the pastor.

#### **DECORATIONS**

Decorations are acceptable if in keeping with the dignity of the ceremony. Flowers must be in clean, rust-free, leak-proof containers. Artificial flowers are permitted. Decorations must be in place at least 30 minutes before the service is scheduled to begin. The family is responsible for the removal of all flowers and decorations after the funeral service is completed. If it is the wish of the family, the flowers may be left for the Sunday Worship Service. Please let the church office know if you will be leaving flowers.

#### **BUILDING USE**

Smoking, alcoholic beverages and other abusive drugs are not permitted in the church building or on the church grounds. It is the responsibility of the family to inform attendees of all aspects of this funeral policy.

If the use of the church building is desired for a luncheon, please contact the Building Use Committee or the church office for a Building Use Request Form. Building use is scheduled on a first-come, first, served basis.

#### **DEFINITION - FUNERAL**

A funeral usually takes place soon after the death and often includes a burial or cremation ceremony. A memorial service, on the other hand, can take place at a later date and is generally a less formal affair. If the deceased was religious, the funeral is often held in a place of worship and follows specific rites and traditions. A memorial service may include some religious aspects but is more flexible. You can also have a secular memorial service.

### **DEFINITION – MEMORIAL SERVICE**

A memorial service is an event that takes place after someone's death when people gather to remember them. It can take place at a funeral home, a place of worship, a private venue, or even at home. You can choose to have the memorial service wherever you feel most comfortable. Typically, a memorial service includes readings, eulogies, and music to honor the life of the deceased.

### **DEFINITION – CELEBRATION OF LIFE**

A celebration of life is similar to a memorial service but it's intended to be a more joyful event where you celebrate who the person was and what they meant to everyone. Attire for a celebration of life may range from casual to formal depending on the event, but rarely adheres to the traditional black clothing found at funerals. If someone would rather have a celebration of their life than a funeral or memorial, they often state this in their end-of-life documents or simply express this wish to their family before they die.

### **CELEBRATION OF LIFE VS. FUNERAL**

A celebration of life and a funeral are at opposite ends of the spectrum. A celebration of life, while still emotional, is a joyful event that can be structured however you like. A funeral, on the other hand, is always somber and serious. It usually has a set order, follows traditions, and has a more formal feel.

Revised Sept 11, 2023

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**DONATIONS AND FEES FOR FUNERALS, MEMORIAL SERVICES AND  
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**CURRENT MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH:**

Sanctuary	No Charge
Pastor	\$150.00
Organist	\$150.00
Custodian (for church)	\$25.00
Dining Room	No Charge
Custodian (for use of dining hall)	\$25.00

**NON-MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH:**

First Presbyterian Church is committed to the care of the greater community and will provide a service to the Witness of the Resurrection, either a funeral, a memorial service or a celebration of life for people who are not members of this congregation.

Arrangements through a funeral home are preferred, as pastor and organist fees are covered in their costs. A donation for building use is suggested.

\*First Presbyterian Church cannot provide direct services related to caring for, or transporting, the body of the deceased. The church can connect the family to funeral homes in the area if needed.

If the family would like a memorial service to be held and a funeral home is not involved in the preparation, First Presbyterian Church has the following fees and donation suggestions:

\*\* Deposit (Refundable following inspection) \$500.00

Sanctuary	(Fee)	\$300.00
Pastor	(Fee)	\$200.00
Organist	(Fee)	\$200.00
Custodian (for church)	(Fee)	\$50.00
Dining Room	(Donation)	\$325.00
Custodian (dining room)	(Fee)	\$50.00

\*\*\* The church Organist will play at all funerals or must approve of a substitute. The Church Organist is \_\_\_\_\_ phone \_\_\_\_\_.

For non-members the deposit must be submitted as soon as a date has been selected in order to reserve the church. Refund of the deposit will depend upon particular circumstances and is at the discretion of the Session.

Fees for pastor, organist, and custodian should be placed in a sealed envelope bearing the name of the person for whom it is intended and given to the church office or pastor, who will then distribute them.

The \$500.00 deposit will be cashed by the church. The deposit will be returned, if all is in order following the service. Inspection of the church following the ceremony will be conducted by a church Trustee or

Building Use committee member. Extended pastor, custodial or organist time due to non-compliance with church policies will result in deductions from the deposit.

Smoking, alcoholic beverages and/or illegal drugs are not permitted in the church building or on church property

No alcoholic beverages or other drugs will be used by any of the family immediately before or during the funeral.

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### **PRE-SERVICE DUTIES FOR FUNERALS, MEMORIAL SERVICES AND CELEBRATIONS OF LIFE**

1. One Elder and/or One Trustee must be present for all funerals.
  - unlock the building one hour before service start time
  - operate elevator if needed
  - assist where needed
2. Make sure tissues and hymnals are in front rows. Make sure baptismal font is out of the way, if necessary.
3. The bulletins will be on the counter in the office. Give these to the funeral director and place near guest book or entry door.
4. Light candles.
5. Turn on the sound system – if organist hasn't already.

### **POST-SERVICE DUTIES FOR FUNERALS, MEMORIAL SERVICES AND CELEBRATIONS OF LIFE**

1. Return baptismal font to its place, if previously moved.
2. Return Communion table, Bible and cross to their usual spots, if previously moved.
3. Pick up used bulletins and return hymnals to racks.
4. Extinguish candles.
5. Turn off all lights.
6. Lock all doors.