

# Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church

## Funeral Customary

3775 Crosshaven Drive, Birmingham, Alabama, 35223

205-967-8786

*The Liturgy for the dead is an Easter liturgy. It finds all its meaning in the Resurrection. Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we, too shall be raised.... This, however, does not make human grief unchristian. The very love we have for each other in Christ brings deep sorrow when we are parted by death. Jesus himself wept at the grave of his friend. So while we rejoice that one we love has entered into the nearer presence of our Lord, we sorrow in sympathy with those who mourn. The Book of Common Prayer, Page 507*

The death of a loved one, whether suddenly and unexpectedly, after a long term illness, or having lived a natural life span is a traumatic time in the lives of those left behind. While still grieving, families and loved ones are called on to make decisions with little time to prepare. The following pages are designed to facilitate the planning of a funeral during a very difficult time, and establish guidelines and policies designed to make it easier for family and friends to prepare for the funeral and interment of their loved one.

There are provisions in *The Book of Common Prayer* for the appropriate readings, psalms, and hymns for a funeral service. Please choose those which will make this service the right one for the celebration of the life of the departed and a fitting memorial in the hearts and minds of those who mourn.

We at Saint Stephen's stand ready to assist you in making decisions for a beautiful and meaningful service. With that in mind, all arrangements for the funeral should be made in consultation with the officiating priest. In the Episcopal Church, a funeral is a celebration of resurrection.

*I am Resurrection and I am Life, says the Lord.  
Whoever has faith in me shall have life, even though he die.  
And everyone who has life, and has committed himself to me in faith, shall not die for ever*

### **PARISH STAFF AT FUNERALS**

The Reverend John Burruss, Rector

The Reverend Katherine Harper, Associate Rector

The Reverend Mary Bea Sullivan, Director of Spirituality & Wellness

Zachary Brown, Parish Administrator

## **The Burial Service**

Subsequent to a death, and prior to meeting with the funeral home, surviving family members and/or those responsible for making the funeral arrangements should contact the Church so that one of the parish priests may be present at that meeting. This is especially important if no prior planning or contact has been made with a funeral home. Your priest will help guide you toward making appropriate and reasonable decisions regarding the funeral home services.

Standard service times are Monday through Friday. Selection of a time for the service is based on the needs of the family and the availability of the Church, clergy, and staff. This is done in consultation with the priest prior to establishing a day and time with the funeral home.

Saint Stephen's uses *The Book of Common Prayer* for all services. The Holy Eucharist is customarily celebrated at funerals; however it is not required. The Prayer Book Service of The Burial of the Dead with Communion takes approximately forty-five minutes, depending upon the number of people receiving communion. A homily may or may not be preached.

The coffin or cremains may be already in place in the Church or may be a part of the opening procession. A coffin is always closed in the church and is covered with a pall. Cremains are covered with a smaller pall\*. [\* pall: a white hanging placed over the casket instead of flowers] \*. In the case of a veteran of the Armed Forces, the clergy can work with the family to incorporate honoring one's military service as a piece of this rite.

## **Participating Clergy**

The parish priest who has helped the family members prepare for the funeral is the appropriate priest to preside at the burial rite. If an Episcopal priest other than one from Saint Stephen's parish staff is desired to assist (or officiate), the permission and invitation of the Rector is required according to The Canon Law (Title III, Canon 21, Section 5a). The location of the funeral other than in the parish church changes nothing; non-parochial priests may only function with the permission and invitation of the Rector of the parish. Guest clergy (other than Episcopal priests and deacons) are invited from time to time to read the lessons, lead prayers, and/or preach.

## Readings from Scripture

During the service, one to three readings from the Bible are read. You may choose a reading from the Old Testament, a psalm (read by the congregation as a whole), a reading from the New Testament, and a reading from the Gospel. The translation used is the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible. The parish priest will assist you in selecting the readings. A deacon, priest, or bishop reads the Gospel. Lay Readers available from the church can read from the Old Testament and the New Testament and lead the congregation in the reading of the psalm. If the family would like a family member or friend to read a lesson, please take into careful consideration the emotional state of that person in respect to the deceased. The following readings are those authorized for The Burial of the Dead:

### Old Testament:

Isaiah 25:6-9 (He will swallow up death in victory)

Isaiah 61:1-3 (To comfort all that mourn)

Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33 (The Lord is good unto them that wait for him)

Wisdom 3:1-5, 9 (The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God)

Job 19:21-27a (I know that my Redeemer liveth)

### New Testament:

Romans 8:14-19, 34-35, 37-39 (The glory that shall be revealed)

I Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-44, 53-58 (Raised in incorruption)

II Corinthians 4:16-5:9 (Things which are not seen are eternal)

I John 3:1-2 (We shall be like him)

Revelation 7:9-17 (God shall wipe away all tears)

Revelation 21:2-7 (Behold, I make all things new)

### Psalms:

Psalms 23, Psalm 27, Psalm 42, Psalm 46, Psalm 90, Psalm 106,

Psalm 121, Psalm 130, Psalm 139

### Gospel:

John 5:24-27 (He that believeth hath everlasting life)

John 6:37-40 (All that the Father giveth me shall come to me)

John 10:11-16 (I am the good shepherd)

John 11:21-27 (I am the resurrection and the life)

John 14:1-6 (In my Father's house are many mansions)

## Music at the Funeral Ceremony

There is a wealth of beautiful and appropriate sacred music that is suitable for use in the context of the Burial of the Dead. We recommend between one and three hymns be sung. Suitable times for hymns are before the Gospel reading; as the altar is being prepared; during Communion; and at the final procession into the world. Saint Stephen's will provide a pianist for the funeral service. An honorarium given directly to the pianist is acceptable. If musicians [soloists or instrumentalist] other than the pianist are used, the music director will coordinate the hiring of such persons and the clergy will inform the family of the additional costs.

Hymns appropriate for the Celebration of the Resurrection:

From *The Hymnal 1982*

8	Morning Has Broken
24	The Day Thou Gavest, Lord Is Ended
275	Hark! The Sound of Holy Voices
287	For All the Saints
293	I Sing a Song of the Saints of God
304	I Come with Joy to Meet My Lord
335	I Am the Bread of Life
383	Fairest Lord Jesus
473	Lift High the Cross
474	When I Survey the Wondrous Cross
490	I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light
608	Eternal Father, Strong to Save
620	Jerusalem, My Happy Home
645	The King of the Love My Shepherd Is
657	Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
662	Abide with Me
671	Amazing Grace!
680	O God, Our Help in Ages Past
688	A Mighty Fortress is Our God
690	Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah
691	My Faith Looks up to Thee
707	Take My Life and Let It Be Consecrated to Thee
708	Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us

From *The Alleluia III Songbook*

7	Alleluia, He Is Coming
19	Be Not Afraid
50	Great Is Thy Faithfulness
67	How Great Thou Art
95	In the Garden
100	It Is Well with My Soul
110	Lord of All Hopefulness
118	My Holy Shepherd
119	My Jesus, I Love Thee
121	My Shepherd Will Supply My Need
138	Sanctuary
140	Shall We Gather at the River
155	Surely the Presence
161	Surely It is God Who Saves Me
167	The Prayer of St. Francis
172	There Is a Balm in Gilead
173	There Is a Redeemer
189	What a Friend We Have in Jesus

## Flowers at the Service

Saint Stephen's is blessed with a competent and talented Flower Guild, which can provide flowers at the altar during the funeral. If the family would like to use a local florist, that is acceptable, in consultation with the priest responsible for the funeral. Floral sprays and decorations sent by family and friends may be displayed in the hallway or reception space.

## **Reserved Seating**

Pews will be reserved at the front of the church for the family and for pall bearers. If there will be a coffin present, please let the priest know ahead of time how many pallbearers there will be. Please also let the priest know how many family members will be seated in the reserved area.

## **During the Service**

Members of the family will be seated prior to the beginning of the service. The lay ministers and clergy will enter in an appropriate liturgical procession from the back of the Church. This will be explained and discussed by the officiating priest in the course of preparations for the funeral.

## **Service Leaflets**

It is our policy that service leaflets for the funeral be produced in-house.

## **Guest Book**

Saint Stephen's will provide a guest book upon request.

## **Ushers**

Ushers at the funeral fulfill two important responsibilities: seating of guests, and ushering of the congregation to the Altar Rail to receive Holy Communion. We will provide ushers at all funerals. Thus, ushers from a funeral home are not necessary at the church.

## **Memorial Gifts**

Gifts to the church may be made by individuals or by the family of the deceased. That information will be printed in the service bulletin. Should the family choose Saint Stephen's, please designate your choice of either Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church, or The Saint Stephen's Charitable Endowment, Birmingham, AL. Gifts to the church are placed in the memorial fund for furnishings and appointments to the building. Gifts to the charitable endowment are invested to encourage growth of the principal; the earnings are intended to fund Outreach programs.

## **At the Graveside/Memorial Garden**

The committal service is brief. It can be held either prior to the church service or following it. Family and friends may choose for this to be a private service or may open the service to all. Military honors are always a welcome part of the Committal Service. Extra-liturgical ceremonies, conducted by fraternal organizations, may be held subsequent to the church's Committal Service.

## **Visitation and Reception**

Arrangements can be made for the family to have a visitation either prior to or following the service. A reception can be provided following the service with simple finger foods and non-alcoholic beverages. If a floral arrangement centerpiece for the reception table is desired, the family may make these arrangements with a florist. Displays of pictures of the deceased and other memorabilia may be displayed on a table in the reception area.

## **Cremation**

Cremation is an acceptable practice within the Episcopal Church. Saint Stephen's has a Memorial Garden and a planned Columbarium for the internment of ashes. Ashes can be scattered or buried within the Memorial Garden or ashes can be placed in an urn and place in a columbarium niche. If ashes are to be placed in the garden, no container will be used. For ashes to be placed in a columbarium niche, the church will provide an urn for the cremains.

## **Fees**

The current price for a columbarium niche (which holds 2 urns) is \$5,000. This prices includes 2 urns and the cost of engraving for the niche plate for two names. Rights to a single space within a columbarium niche can be purchased for \$3,000. There is no fee for ashes spread or buried in the Memorial Garden. If you wish to have the deceased's name included on a plaque on one of the church's memorial walls in the Memorial Garden, the cost is \$1,000 per name.

Please contact the church office if you would like more information about the Memorial Garden.

*“All we go down to the dust;  
Yet, even at the grave we make our song  
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!”*

## A Statement for the Guidance of my Parish and Family

*The liturgy for the dead is an Easter liturgy. It finds all its meaning in the resurrection. Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we, too, shall be raised. The liturgy, therefore, is characterized by joy, in the certainty that "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." This joy, however, does not make human grief unchristian. The very love we have for each other in Christ brings deep sorrow when we are parted by death. Jesus himself wept at the grave of his friend. So, while we rejoice that one we love has entered into the nearer presence of our Lord, we sorrow in sympathy with those who mourn.*  
*The Book of Common Prayer, Page 507*

**Services are to be conducted at Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church in Birmingham, Alabama or:**

\_\_\_\_\_ (Parish Church), (City or Town).

*If in another location, the Funeral Director will be told: "The parish priest will be in charge of the services and all related arrangements. It is my desire that the services be conducted as instructed by the parish priest and as provided in the Book of Common Prayer. The priest will make selections when no preference is expressed below."*

### **General Information**

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

In the course of the service, the name of the one who died is used often.

What name would you like used? \_\_\_\_\_

### **Service Information**

**Please use the following:**

\_\_\_\_ The Burial of the Dead: Rite One (BCP p. 469)

\_\_\_\_ The Burial of the Dead: Rite Two (BCP p 491)

**I would like The Holy Eucharist to be celebrated as a part of the service.** Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

**I would like a Visitation before the Service.** Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If yes, I would like my visitation at \_\_\_ Saint Stephen's \_\_\_ Funeral Home \_\_\_ Other

**If the Holy Eucharist is celebrated:**

I would like the following people to present the offerings of bread and wine at the Offertory:

1.) \_\_\_\_\_

2.) \_\_\_\_\_

I would like the following people to serve as Eucharistic Ministers:

1.) \_\_\_\_\_

2.) \_\_\_\_\_

## Music

I would like the following hymns sung during the service:

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Other music:

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## The Liturgy of the Word (Please choose from the following category)

*One or more of the following passages from Holy Scripture is read. If there is to be a Communion, a passage from the Gospel always concludes the Readings.*

### a. Old Testament

_____ Isaiah 25: 6-9	He will swallow up death forever
_____ Isaiah 61: 1-3	To comfort those who mourn
_____ Lamentations 3:22-26,31-33	The Lord is good to those who wait for him
_____ Wisdom 3: 1-5,9	The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God
_____ Job 19: 21-27a	I know that my Redeemer lives

Choice of Reader: \_\_\_\_\_

### b. Psalms

_____ Psalm 23	The Lord is my Shepherd
_____ Psalm 27	The Lord is my light and my salvation
_____ Psalm 42: 1-7	As the deer longs for the water brooks
_____ Psalm 46	God is our refuge and strength
_____ Psalm 90: 1-12	Lord, you have been our refuge
_____ Psalm 106: 1-5	Hallelujah!_ Give thanks to the Lord
_____ Psalm 121	I lift my eyes to the hills
_____ Psalm 130	Out of the depths have I called
_____ Psalm 139: 1-11	Lord, you have search me out
_____ # Other	

### c. New Testament

_____ Romans 8: 14-19,34-35, 37-39	The glory that shall be revealed
_____ I Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-44,53-58	The imperishable body
_____ II Corinthians 4:16-5:9	Things that are unseen are eternal
_____ I John 3: 1-2	We shall be like him
_____ Revelation 7: 9-17	God will wipe away every tear
_____ Revelation 21: 2-7	Behold, I make all things new

Choice of Reader: \_\_\_\_\_

### d. The Gospel

_____ John 5: 24-27	He who believes has everlasting life
_____ John 6: 37-40	All that the Father gives will come to me
_____ John 10: 11-16	I am the good shepherd
_____ John 11: 21-27	I am the resurrection and the life
_____ John 14: 1-6	In my Father's house are many room



**Additional requests for the service:**

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**When would you prefer the committal of ashes/body to occur:**

Before the Burial Service  After the Burial  At a separate time

**I would like my remains:**

- 1.) Buried in a casket
- 2.) Donated for research
- 3.) Cremated

If cremated, would wish for your ashes to be

placed in an urn for interment in the Columbarium at Saint Stephen's

placed in an urn – Given to: \_\_\_\_\_

placed in the Saint Stephen's Memorial Garden -  Scattered or  Buried

committed to the ground – Where: \_\_\_\_\_

**If buried, name of cemetery where burial is to occur:** \_\_\_\_\_

**I have received information about the Parish Memorial Garden:** Yes  No

**Do you have any requests regarding military honors?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you have any preference with regard to memorial gifts?**

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**Have you made arrangements previously with a mortuary or burial society?** Yes  No

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Have you made arrangements for a reception?** Yes  No

**If yes, please provide all the information that is applicable:**

**Name of Caterer:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Contact Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Contact Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**To be served on-site at Saint Stephen's or another venue?**

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**My next of kin is (name, address, phone)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Who do you want to be present when final arrangements are made with the church?**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*These instructions should be placed on file at the church and a copy given to a close friend or relative.*