

Saint Mary's Anglican Church

Funeral Information

For Christians our conversations around death are profoundly influenced by Easter. It was as the women were following the funeral customs of their day, faith, and culture that they became the first to discover Jesus' resurrection.

Before Death

It is helpful to share with family and friends our concerns and wishes regarding death and burial rites before we die. Our Rector is available for consultation and written requests can be kept on file.

In talking about funerals, it is important to remember that they are for the living, as well as for remembering the dead. Questions to discuss with loved ones might include:

What would be an appropriate service?

Who might share in the service?

Are there hymns or scriptures that are particularly precious that would be fitting?

In lieu of flowers are there charities to be remembered?

Pallbearers to be considered?

Cremation or burial?

Where would the grave be?

At the Time of Death

*Give rest, O Christ, to your servant with your saints
where sorrow and pain are no more, neither sighing, but life everlasting.*

Please inform the church in times of serious sickness and impending death. We want to know and will seek to respond and be available.

Please get in touch with our clergy as soon as possible when you are making arrangements. We wish to accommodate the bereaved as to time and place and will change our schedules when possible. But we generally need at least three days to make proper preparations with the family before the service can take place.

Visitation

Although it can be difficult, time for visitation can often be appropriate. The casket does not have to be open or even present. Friends and family can benefit from the opportunity to come and give condolences.

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

—John 11:25-26

Order of Events

The traditional order of visitation, funeral service, committal, and reception does not have to be followed. The following are possibilities:

1. The funeral service, followed by committal of the body to the earth or, in the case of cremation, to the fire.
2. The funeral service followed by private cremation. The final committal of ashes takes place at a later time.
3. The committal of the body to the earth or to the fire followed by a funeral (memorial) service.
4. Cremation, followed by the funeral service and committal of ashes to their final resting place.
5. Committal of the body to the fire, and another committal of ashes to their final resting place later.

Guidelines and Customs

1. It is customary for the priest and immediate family to go the crematorium or grave if this is preceded by the funeral service. If the burial is to take place at a distance from Richmond Hill, special arrangements may have to be made.
2. It is customary for the ashes to be placed in a final resting place, and, upon request, a priest will be present for this.

The Funeral Service

Into your hands, O merciful Saviour, we commend your servant and acknowledge, we pray, a sheep of your own fold. Receive him/her into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace and the glorious company of the saints in light.

1. St. Mary's Church is available for members of the parish and it is appropriate that funeral services take place there. The clergy are also available to take services at a funeral home, graveside or crematorium, if the family so decides.
2. For practising Christians it is appropriate for the funeral liturgy to include Communion.
3. St. Mary's is responsible to arrange for an organist. Suggested appropriate hymns are listed in the blue hymn book.
4. St. Mary's has a funeral pall which will be placed over the casket as it enters the church. This symbolizes our equality before God. Flowers may be placed on the pall.
5. In consultation with clergy, it is the decision of the family and friends of the deceased as to whether the *Book of Alternative Services* or the *Book of Common Prayer* is used.
6. Bible readings, chosen in consultation with the minister, are read as part of the service and it is appropriate that these are done by family and friends. Suitable passages are listed on pages 604-5 of the *Book of Alternative Services*.
7. Flowers may be placed in the church, but families are requested to limit the number so that the church is not overwhelmed.
8. The Easter, Paschal, candle will be lit as a reminder that Christians are united to Christ in his death and resurrection.
9. Eulogies are appropriate and may be given by family members or friends. This should be done in consultation with the minister.
10. Receptions following funerals can be held in Wrixon Hall, if it is available.

Fees and Donations

This section is intended to offer guidelines for funerals in church. No parishioner will be charged for use of the church or a minister's services. In other cases, the following fees generally apply, but no-one will be denied a funeral because of cost:

Organist: \$150.00.

Use of Church: \$300.00

Honorarium for Minister: \$250.00.

Catering and Wrixon Hall: please contact the church office.