

SERVICE OF WITNESS TO THE RESURRECTION

This document is one of St. Mark Presbyterian Church. It is adopted directly from the Presbyterian Church USA constitution, part 2: The Book of Order. Specifically, these excerpts are taken from the Directory on Worship W:4.07

The resurrection is a central doctrine of the Christian faith and shapes Christian's attitudes and responses to the event of death. Death brings loss, sorrow, and grief to all. Even in death, Christians are sustained by the power of the Spirit and community of faith. The church offers a ministry of love and hope to all who grieve.

In Baptism each Christian shares in Christ's dying and rising and receives the promise of eternal and abundant life in him. We understand the Christian Witness to the Resurrection to be the completion of Baptism. In the face of death, we affirm with tears and joy the good news of the gospel and the hope of the resurrection. We do not grieve in isolation, but are sustained by the power of the Holy Spirit and the community of faith.

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In an effort to offer love and compassion to the grieving, the following is a guideline of the procedures that St. Mark will utilize in planning and bearing Witness to the Resurrection. We hope you find this helpful.

THE SERVICE

The service is to be a service of worship with several purposes:

- *To worship God, who, through Jesus Christ's resurrection, broke the bonds of death.*
- *To celebrate the unique life of the person who now lives in God's eternal care.*
- *To comfort those who are grieving.*

The service is under the direction of the minister of the Word and Sacrament of the congregation in which it is held. Others may be invited to share in leadership at the discretion of the minister of the Word and Sacrament. So far as is appropriate, the pastor will strive to carry out the wishes of the family.

The date and time of the service should be set with the pastor and the church office at a time that is appropriate for the family and St. Mark. Services are discouraged from being on a Sunday or holidays and require special session approval if those dates are chosen.

Cremation is a matter of personal preference and is consistent with the Christian faith. If a casket is used during the service, it is to remain closed. Interment of the body may be observed before or after the service.

The service shall be complete in itself, and any fraternal, civic, or military rites should be conducted separately.

MUSIC

Music directs attention to God and expresses the faith of the church. It is appropriate for worshippers to sing hymns, psalms, spirituals, or praise songs which affirm God's power over death, a belief in the resurrection to life everlasting, and the assurance of the communion of saints. The pastor is to be consulted in the selection of music. St. Mark will provide the organist/ pianist and other musicians as appropriate. If an outside musician is to be asked to participate, please consult with the pastor and/or the service coordinator.

FLOWERS

Flowers add beauty to the service and comfort to the bereaved. However, they should reflect the integrity and simplicity of the Christian life. Flower arrangements should be delivered to the church several hours prior to the scheduled service. All flowers should be removed at the end of the service.

MEMORIAL GIVING

It is appropriate for donations to be made to memorial funds determined by the family or deceased's choice as a remembrance in the deceased's name. If made to the church, it may be made to a specific ministry of the church. If undesignated, the gift will be used at the discretion of the worship ministry with session approval.

RECEPTION

A small intimate reception after the service may be held in the hospitality center outside the sanctuary. For members of St. Mark, the diaconate will provide punch, coffee and a dessert table. If the family wishes to provide a greater variety of refreshments or if the service is for a non-member, the family should consult with St. Mark funeral/ memorial service coordinator. It is the policy of St. Mark that alcoholic beverages are not allowed at the church.

FEES AND HONORARIUMS

With coordination of the family and the pastor, the family is able to bring in personal outside musicians (special approval is needed for use of the St. Mark organ). St. Mark is able to provide musicians according to the following fees:

Organist/ pianist: \$100

Soloist or special musicians: \$75

Audio-Visual tech: \$50

Sexton: \$50

Sanctuary Use Fee: \$150 if the deceased or the family of the deceased is not a member of St. Mark. (No fee for members)

The check covering the fees can be made payable to each individual separately or written to "St. Mark Presbyterian Church." It will be deposited in a timely manner and payments distributed to the appropriate parties.

If the deceased is a member of St. Mark, a fee is not charged for the pastoral services. However, if the family wishes to offer an honorarium to the pastor, this can be made privately or included in the check to St. Mark (and will be distributed as the family requests.)

A suggested honorarium for the pastor is \$200-\$300.

If the fees and honorarium are an undue hardship for the family in this time of grief, please talk with the funeral/ memorial coordinator.

Fee structure and suggested honorariums determined with research of other mainline churches in the Boerne area. Policy updated May 2021