

**A GUIDE TO**  
**Pre-PLANNING**  
**THE FUNERAL**  
**SERVICE**

**FOR**

**(NAME)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Today's Date** \_\_\_\_\_

## *Pre-Planning a Funeral??*

Very few people like to talk about death—especially their own. It can feel strange, even morbid, for sure. And some people might think that talking about it might somehow usher it in faster.

Yet, one of the greatest gifts we can give to our families is the *pre-planning* of what we want done in the event of our death. Letting our loved ones know directly from us what we want in such a highly difficult and often emotionally challenging time is an act of love and kindness that will offer great comfort. And it will actually give us peace of mind, as well, knowing that we've taken care of these details. As people of faith, we know that we're going to our "real home" — we'll be present with the Lord! But this will give us the opportunity to help facilitate the transition well for the sake of those we love who will be dealing with our loss.

By the way, you don't have to be "old" or "terminal" to pre-plan your funeral. Any time, any age, any person can do it. And, if you're a family member of someone that you feel needs to pre-plan, by all means engage this process with them (or on their behalf, if they're incapacitated). The best way to do so is to do one for yourself and include them . . . and then ask them the same questions to discover their answers.

This particular guide will assist you in pre-planning your funeral or memorial worship services. It will also coach you on the steps you need to take in pre-planning with a funeral director the other details related to your final wishes.

As you walk through this guide, answer the questions to the best of your ability. Take the time to think through what you want to share, perhaps finding out the answers if you yourself don't know (like the name, address and phone number of the funeral home that you want to work with).

After you complete the guide, make two (2) copies — one for the pastor of your church, and the other for the family member or friend or lawyer who will be in charge of making your final arrangements when you die. You would keep the original — perhaps storing it with your other important papers.

And feel free to involve others with this process. If you're married and your spouse is interested in doing one too, great! Do it together! If you have a friend or family member that you want to help you think it through, wonderful! Let this be a positive experience.

So, roll up your sleeves and jump in! As always, we're here to assist you in whatever ways you need. Feel free to contact the church office to speak with a pastor.

Pastor David Woolverton

St. Paul's United Methodist Church  
398 N. Locust Street  
Elizabethtown, PA 17022  
[www.stpauls.faith](http://www.stpauls.faith)  
[info@stpauls.faith](mailto:info@stpauls.faith)

## General Information & Worksheet

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

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

Best Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Place of birth (city, state): \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member of St. Paul's Church?      \_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_ No    \_\_\_ Regular Attender

If not, where do you attend church? \_\_\_\_\_

Date you joined St. Paul's (we have this info if you don't): \_\_\_\_\_

Name of primary person you want making final arrangements when you die: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to you: (circle)    spouse    parent    son / daughter    other: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Contact Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Alt. Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Immediate family:

Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Marriage: \_\_\_\_\_

Children / Grandchildren / etc: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Parents: \_\_\_\_\_

Siblings: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Funeral Home to be Used: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Did you pre-plan with the Funeral Home?    \_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_ No

Where will the funeral service be held?    \_\_\_ St. Paul's Church    \_\_\_ Funeral Home    \_\_\_ Graveside

\_\_\_ Other ~ Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**Preferred Day of Week for Funeral:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Preferred Time of funeral:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Will you be wanting a Viewing / Visitation?** \_\_\_ **Yes** \_\_\_ **No** \_\_\_ **Unsure**

**Preferred Day and Time of viewing/visitation:** \_\_\_\_\_

How will deceased's body be represented? \_\_\_ **Casket** \_\_\_ **Urn** \_\_\_ **Photo** \_\_\_ **Other:**\_\_\_\_\_

**Requested Officiating Pastor(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Place of Interment:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**(Cemetery Name)** **(City or County & State)**

**Will Military Honors be observed at Graveside / Interment?** \_\_\_ **Yes** \_\_\_ **No**

**Do you desire to have a funeral bulletin?** \_\_\_ **Yes** \_\_\_ **No**

**Will a photo be provided for the cover?** \_\_\_ **Yes** \_\_\_ **No**

**Do you have St. Paul's Church in your will?** \_\_\_ **Yes** \_\_\_ **No** **Would you like more info?** \_\_\_\_\_

**In lieu of flowers, would you like to have memorial gifts designated to St. Paul's?** \_\_\_ **Yes** \_\_\_ **No**

**Will there be other Memorial Gift Designations (e.g., in lieu of flowers)?** \_\_\_ **Yes** \_\_\_ **No**

**Contact person & address for the acknowledgement of gifts received:**

**Details (e.g., American Cancer Society, Hospice of Lancaster County):**

**Do you desire any Special Service Presentations (Masons, Police, Fire Dept. etc.)** \_\_\_ **Yes** \_\_\_ **No**  
**Details:**

**Would you like a Memorial Table to display photos, memorabilia?** \_\_\_ **Yes** \_\_\_ **No**

**Number of Tables You Anticipate Needing:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Will there be a video / slide show as part of the funeral process?** \_\_\_ **Yes** \_\_\_ **No** \_\_\_ **Unsure**

**When will the video be played?** \_\_\_ **During the Viewing / Visitation**

\_\_\_ **During the Funeral Service (limit to 5 minutes)**

**Name / contact info of person creating the video / slide presentation:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Requested Scripture Readings for the Service (see examples at the end of this Guide):

Often, personal stories at the funeral give testimony to the deceased person's life. They can be shared verbally or in written form, if desired. You may wish to ask them in advance, if you'd like.

Any testimonies/witnesses of family or friends? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Unsure

If yes, who: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Requested hymns or songs (see the examples at the end of this Guide):

Any special requests for music, solos, etc.

Do you have a song that is "your song" (from your wedding, from your growing up years, etc.)? Or what is your favorite type of music (e.g., country, pop, Frank Sinatra, Elvis)?

Any special needs/requests/comments:

Background information:

Education:

Work History:

Military Service / Branch:

Honors / Awards / Special Items to Remember:

Additional Information You Would Like to Relay to the Pastor:

## Some Common Hymns Appropriate for Funerals

A Mighty Fortress is our God  
Abide with Me  
All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name  
All Praise to Thee, for Thou, O King Divine  
Amazing Grace  
Be Still, My Soul  
Be Thou My Vision  
Beams of Heaven As I Go  
Because He Lives  
Blessed Assurance  
Christ, the Lord, is Risen Today  
Come, Christians, Join to Sing  
For All the Saints  
Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken  
God of Grace and God of Glory  
Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah  
He Leadeth Me  
How Great Thou Art  
Hymn of Promise  
I Am Thine, O Lord  
I Stand Amazed in the Presence

I'll Fly Away  
I'll Praise My Maker  
In The Garden  
It Is Well With My Soul  
Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee  
Love vine, All Loves Excelling  
My Jesus, I Love Thee  
Now Thank We All Our God  
O God, Our Help in Ages Past  
O How I Love Jesus  
On Eagle's Wings  
Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven  
Precious Lord, Take My Hand  
Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me  
The Church's One Foundation  
The King of Love My Shepherd Is  
The Strife is O'er  
This Is My Father's World  
'Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus  
When We All Get to Heaven  
Where He Leads Me

## Some Contemporary Songs Appropriate for Funerals

10,000 Reasons (Matt Redman)  
Amazing Grace (My Chains are Gone) (Tomlin)  
As It Is in Heaven (Matt Maher)  
Blessed Be Your Name (Matt & Beth Redman)  
Blessings (Laura Story)  
Broken Halos (Chris Stapleton)  
Broken Vessels (Amazing Grace) (Hillsong)  
Cornerstone (Hillsong Worship)  
Cry Out to Jesus (Third Day)  
Dancing with the Angels (Monk & Neagle)  
Draw Me Close to You (Hillsong United)  
Eagles Wings (Hillsong)  
Go Rest High on that Mountain (Vince Gill)  
Hallelujah (Leonard Cohen / Jeff Buckley)  
Healing is in Your Hand (Christy Nockels)  
Heaven Song (Phil Wickham)  
He's Walking Her Home (Mark Schultz)  
Homesick (Mercy Me)  
How Can I Keep from Singing (Chris Tomlin)  
I'll See You Again (Westlife)  
I Can Only Imagine (Mercy Me)  
I Will Rise (Chris Tomlin)

In Christ Alone (Natalie Grant)  
Jesus Messiah (Chris Tomlin)  
Jesus Promised Me a Home Over There  
(Jennifer Hudson)  
Let Your Mercy Rain (Chris Tomlin)  
Lord, I Need You (Matt Maher)  
Messiah / You're Beautiful (Phil Wickham)  
My Sweet Lord (George Harrison)  
Oceans (Hillsong United)  
Power of Your Love (Darlene Zschech)  
Praise You in This Storm (Casting Crowns)  
Revelation Song (Kari Jobe)  
Save a Place for Me (Matthew West)  
Somewhere, Somehow (Smith & Grant)  
Ten Thousand Angels Cried (LeAnn Rimes)  
The Air I Breathe (Vineyard / Kathryn Scott)  
Three Wooden Crosses (Randy Travis)  
Untitled Hymn (Chris Rice)  
Welcome Home (Michael W. Smith)  
Who Am I (Casting Crowns)  
With Hope (Steven Curtis Chapman)  
You Raise Me Up (Josh Groban)

# A Sampling of Scripture Passages for Funerals

Psalms 18	Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33	1 Corinthians 15:42-44
Psalms 23	Matthew 11:28-30	1 Corinthians 15:55-57
Psalms 34:18	Matthew 16:21-26	2 Corinthians 1:3-4
Psalms 46	Matthew 18:1-5, 10-14	2 Corinthians 5:1-8
Psalms 56:10-13	John 3:16-17	2 Corinthians 5:17-21
Psalms 91	John 6:20	Galatians 2:20
Psalms 103	John 6:53-54	Philippians 1:21-23
Psalms 116	John 10:27-29	Philippians 3:7-9
Psalms 121	John 11:25-26	Philippians 3:20-21
Proverbs 12:28	John 12:26	Colossians 1:12-14
Proverbs 31:10-20	John 14:1-8, 27	2 Timothy 2:8-13
Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, 11	Romans 5:1-5	2 Timothy 4:18
Job 19:23-27	Romans 6:4-5	1 Thessalonians 4:13-17
Isaiah 25:8	Romans 8:35, 37-39	1 Peter 1:3-9
Isaiah 26:3-4	Romans 14:7-9	1 John 3:2
Isaiah 41:10	1 Corinthians 7:29-31	1 John 4
Isaiah 43:1	1 Corinthians 13:4-13	Revelation 7:13-17
Jeremiah 29:11-13	1 Corinthians 15:17-20	Revelation 21:1-7

## Other Questions to Consider as You Pre-Plan Your Funeral

- 1. Do You Have an Up-to-Date Will — and a Living Will?** If you don't, that needs to be a priority. You want to be able to direct your assets where you want them to go, rather than having the probate court decide. You also want to give guidance to your loved ones in the event that you are incapacitated.
- 2. Have You Considered Putting the Church in Your Will — or as a Primary or Secondary Beneficiary on a Life Insurance Policy?** Never underestimate the power and importance of this type of legacy giving. Even in your death, you can bless the ministries and mission of God's Church. Such a blessing also keeps your name and your faith passion alive for the next generations. Whether it's a specific amount (like \$1,000 or \$2,000,000), or a percentage (like a 10% tithe), or appreciable stock, or even property, your gift really matters. Call the church office for more information.
- 3. Do You Want to Be Buried in a Casket or Do You Want to Be Cremated?** One of the most common questions we are asked is, "Is it okay for Christians to be cremated?" The answer is "Yes." There is no specific command in Scripture that prohibits cremation. In fact, the Bible tells us that God created us out of the dust of the earth (Genesis 2:7). In Genesis 3:19, God tells Adam, "you are dust and to dust you shall return." The writer of Ecclesiastes (3:20) picks up that same theme. Basically, we trust that the God who created us from "dust" can raise us up from the dust when Jesus returns. For followers of Jesus, nothing separates us from the love of God (Romans 8:37-39).
- 4. Do I Have Someone Selected to Take Charge of My Final Arrangements?** This is usually a family member or a close friend or a lawyer. Make sure that they know how to access your important papers — including your will, your Social Security number, your financial information, and the like. Consider establishing them as a Durable Power of Attorney for when needed.