

St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
PLANNING FOR THE FINAL CELEBRATION OF LIFE

The best possible person to plan your funeral is *you*.

This outline is an effort to help parishioners of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church to understand the choices available to them. It has been designed in two parts to guide you through a process. We recommend that you give the Church one copy to keep on file; another to your family; a third to your attorney; and keep a fourth with your will.

PART A: PLANNING THE FUNERAL

Each of us will die. When we die, it falls to members of our family and our friends to plan our services and burials.

Planning such things when grieving is both hard and time-consuming. Often members of the surviving family live far apart and have never discussed these matters. When the time for planning comes they can have very different ideas about what the deceased person would have preferred or about what would be appropriate. The best way to avoid all this struggle, and even disagreement about what should be done, is to make your own plans. It is a very thoughtful gift both to your family and to yourself. You simply leave written instructions saying, "This is what I prefer."

Before planning the service, with its many options, it will be helpful to your family if you provide certain preliminary information:

1. Do you wish to be buried in a casket? _____
2. Do you wish to be cremated? _____
3. Do you wish to have a viewing? _____
(Once the casket is closed at the funeral home, it will not be reopened at the church)
4. Who should be notified of your death?
(In addition to family and friends, list Social Security, pension funds, especially military pension funds, insurance companies, organizations, schools and colleges, professional and other associations known only to you.) Use a separate sheet if necessary.

By Telephone: _____

By Mail: _____

5. If you are entitled to military honors, where are your discharge papers? _____

6. If you own a burial plot, where is the deed? _____
7. Have you made a will or created a revocable trust? _____

8. Does your will make prudent provision for the well being of family, with arrangements for their nurture and education? _____

9. Does your will or trust leave bequests for charitable purposes, including St. Stephen's? _____

10. Where are your will and other important papers? _____

11. Where is your security box and where is the key? _____

12. Where is your passport? _____

13. Do you have valuable papers that need to be kept? If yes, where are they? _____

14. Where are bankbooks, stock certificates, titles and deeds of ownership? _____

15. Have you compiled a list of valuable and/or treasured items and their proposed recipients apart from your will? If yes, where is that list? _____

16. Whom have you designated as your executor? _____

17. Does anyone have any outstanding obligations to you about which your family or executor should be aware? _____

18. Who has your Power of Attorney? _____

19. Have you made an "advanced directive/living will" and/or healthcare proxy? _____

Where is it? _____

Who has copies? _____

Who is your healthcare proxy? _____

What is that person's telephone number? _____

20. Do you own property of which others may not be aware? If yes, where? _____

21. Do you have partnerships in properties or businesses of which others may not be aware?

22. Do you have death benefits of which others may not be aware? If yes, please list. _____

PART B: PLANNING THE SERVICE

The clergy would be happy to meet with you to assist in the planning of this Service. Burial Services at St. Stephen's are from the Book of Common Prayer, 1979 utilizing Rite I found on page 469 or Rite II beginning on page 491. The appropriate place for the Service is in the Church. It is highly recommended, though not necessary, to include Holy Eucharist.

Your full name: _____

The date of your birth: _____

RITE I (traditional English): _____ or RITE II (modern English): _____

Do you wish a Funeral Service with body or cremains present? _____

MUSIC

Within the service there are opportunities for the singing of several hymns. Please list your preferences from the Episcopal Hymnal 1982.

READINGS AND PRAYERS

There may be as many as three, or as few as one, reading(s) from the Bible (one of which must be from the Gospel) interspersed with Psalms. The suggested Psalms, listed below from the Book of Common Prayer, need not be used in the order that they appear. Psalms do not have to be used at all.

1. The first reading may be from the Old Testament or from the Apocrypha.

Choose one of the following:

_____ Isaiah 25:6-9

_____ Isaiah 61:1-3

_____ Lamentations 3:22-26; 31-33
_____ Wisdom of Solomon 3:1-5, 9 (*from the Apocrypha*)
_____ Job 19:21-27a (*the "a" means the first phrase in that verse*)

2. Choose a Psalm:

42:1-7 ____; or 46 ____; or 90:1-12 ____; or 121 ____; or 130 ____; or 139:1-11 ____.

3. Another reading may be from the New Testament. Choose one.

_____ Romans 8:14-19, 34-35, 37-39
_____ I Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-44
_____ II Corinthians 4:16-5:9
_____ I John 3:1-2
_____ Revelation 7:9-17
_____ Revelation 21:2-7

4. Choose a second Psalm:

23 (*King James*) ____; or 23 (*Prayer Book*) ____; or 27 ____; or 106:1-5 ____; or 116 ____.

5. The Gospel. Choose one.

_____ John 5:24-27
_____ John 6:37-40
_____ John 10:11-16
_____ John 11:21-27
_____ John 14:1-6

6. The Homily/Sermon. The priest will preach on the Resurrection of the Dead.

7. The Apostle's Creed may be said.

8. The Prayers of the People.

9. The Communion.

10. Other suitable prayers you might want to consider from the Prayer Book:

_____ The final collect on page 280
_____ Collect number 25, page 823
_____ Collect number 54, page 831
_____ Collect number 62, page 833
_____ Collect number 63, page 833
_____ Collect number 4, page 838
_____ Collect number 6, page 839

11. Any additional readings in the Burial Office or at the grave site committal: _____

12. Additional requests: _____

13. It would be helpful if you would attach a finished obituary or the outline of an obituary.

Signature

Date

Copies of this form should be given to your family, your attorney, your designated executor and the church office at:

St. Stephen's Church
16 Highland Ave
Cohasset, MA 02025

PART C: SCRIPTURE SELECTIONS

SELECTIONS FROM THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES (OLD TESTAMENT)

Isaiah 25:6-9

On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-aged wines strained clear. And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations; he will swallow up death forever. Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken. It will be said on that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us. This is the Lord for whom we have waited; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Isaiah 61:1-3

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion—to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit. They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, to display his glory.

Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in him." The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that seeks him. It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. For the Lord will not reject

forever. Although he causes grief, he will have compassion according to the abundance of his steadfast love; for he does not willingly afflict or grieve anyone.

Wisdom 3:1-5, 9

The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be a disaster, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace. For though in the sight of others they were punished, their hope is full of immortality. Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself; Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his holy ones, and he watches over his elect.

Job 19:21-27

Job answered, "Have pity on me, have pity on me, O you my friends, for the hand of God has touched me! Why do you, like God, pursue me, never satisfied with my flesh? O that my words were written down! O that they were inscribed in a book! O that with an iron pen and with lead they were engraved on a rock forever! For I know that my Redeemer lives, and that at the last he will stand upon the earth; and after my skin has been thus destroyed, then in my flesh I shall see God, whom I shall see on my side, and my eyes shall behold, and not another."

SELECTIONS FROM THE PSALMS

Psalms 23 (King James Version)

The Lord is my shepherd; *
I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; *
he leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul; *
he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his Name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I will fear no evil; *
for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me
in the presence of mine enemies; *
thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,*
and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

Psalms 42

As the deer longs for the water-brooks, *
so longs my soul for you, O God.
My soul is athirst for God, athirst for the living God; *
when shall I come to appear before the presence of God?
My tears have been my food day and night, *
while all day long they say to me, "Where now is your God?"

I pour out my soul when I think on these things: *
how I went with the multitude and led them into the house of God,
With the voice of praise and thanksgiving, *
among those who keep holy-day.
Why are you so full of heaviness, O my soul? *
and why are you so disquieted within me?
Put your trust in God; *
for I will yet give thanks to him, who is the help of my countenance, and my God.
My soul is heavy within me; *
therefore I will remember you from the land of Jordan, and from the peak of Mizar among the
heights of Hermon.
One deep calls to another in the noise of your cataracts; *
all your rapids and floods have gone over me.
The Lord grants his loving-kindness in the daytime; *
in the night season his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life.
I will say to the God of my strength, "Why have you forgotten me? *
and why do I go so heavily while the enemy oppresses me?"
While my bones are being broken, *
my enemies mock me to my face;
All day long they mock me * and say to me, "Where now is your God?"
Why are you so full of heaviness, O my soul? *
and why are you so disquieted within me?
Put your trust in God; *
for I will yet give thanks to him, who is the help of my countenance, and my God.

Psalm 46

God is our hope and strength, *
a very present help in trouble.
Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be moved; *
and though the hills be carried into the midst of the sea;
Though the waters thereof rage and swell, *
and though the mountains shake at the tempest of the same.
There is a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God, *
the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most Highest.
God is in the midst of her, therefore shall she not be removed; *
God shall help her, and that right early.
Be still then, and know that I am God; *
I will be exalted among the nations, and I will be exalted in the earth.
The Lord of hosts is with us; *
the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Psalm 139

Lord, you have searched me out and known me; *
you know my sitting down and my rising up; you discern my thoughts from afar.
You trace my journeys and my resting-places *
and are acquainted with all my ways.
Indeed, there is not a word on my lips, *
but you, O Lord, know it altogether.
You press upon me behind and before *

and lay your hand upon me.
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; *
it is so high that I cannot attain to it.
Where can I go then from your Spirit? *
where can I flee from your presence?
If I climb up to heaven, you are there; *
if I make the grave my bed, you are there also.
If I take the wings of the morning *
and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
Even there your hand will lead me *
and your right hand hold me fast.
If I say, "Surely the darkness will cover me, *
and the light around me turn to night,"
Darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day; *
darkness and light to you are both alike.

SELECTIONS FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT LETTERS

Romans 8:14-19, 34-35, 37-39

All who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba! Father!" it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, 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.

I Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-44, 53-58

Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

But someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body.

So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body.

For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled:

“Death has been swallowed up in victory.
Where, O death, is your victory?
Where, O death, is your sting?”

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

II Corinthians 4:16-5:9

We do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling— if indeed, when we have taken it off* we will not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we groan under our burden, because we wish not to be unclothed but to be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord— for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.

I John 3:1-2

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is.

Revelation 7:9-17

After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, “Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, singing,

“Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God for ever and ever! Amen.”

Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, “Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?” I said to him, “Sir, you are the one that knows.” Then he said to me, “These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; for the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

Revelation 21:2-7

And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, “See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them as their God; they will be his peoples, and God himself shall be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.”

And the one who was seated upon the throne said, “See, I make all things new.” Also he said unto me, “Write this, for these words are trustworthy true.”

And he said to me, “To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my people.”

SELECTIONS FROM THE GOSPEL

John 5:24-27

Jesus said, “Very truly, I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life, and does not come under judgment, but has passed from death to life.”

“Very truly, I tell you, the hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For just as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself; and he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man.”

John 6:37-40

Jesus said, “All that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away; for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day.”

John 10:11-16

Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd."

John 11:21-27

Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and every-one who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world."

John 14:1-6

Jesus said to his disciples, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

NOTES
