



A Personal Funeral Planning Guide and Worksheet



First
Congregational
Church ^{IN}
WINCHESTER, UCC

Funeral Planning Guide and Worksheet

First Congregational Church in Winchester, UCC
Pastors: Rev. Will Burhans, Rev. Maeve Hammond

Introduction

In the days following a loved one's death, surviving family members have many decisions about funeral and burial arrangements. However, there is much that the dying and their loved ones can consider and discuss ahead of time to ease the process of tending to the many details while knowing that certain wishes are being met.

This Funeral Planning Guide and Worksheet booklet is designed to encourage the discussion of your funeral wishes with your loved ones. This guide will walk you through a series of questions. In the end, you will have a document that can be used for the planning of your funeral. Rev. Will Burhans and Rev. Maeve Hammond are available to discuss any of the items with you. They are also happy to keep a copy of your plans in their files.

Some Questions and Answers

What is the difference between a funeral and memorial service?

Simply put, the body of the deceased is present at a funeral service, whereas either the deceased's ashes or no remains are present at a memorial service. Both services provide an opportunity to proclaim God's love and the promise of eternal life in Christ as the gathered community remembers and honors the one who has died.

How soon after death does a funeral or memorial service take place?

Funeral services are generally held within a week or so following death, thereby allowing appropriate time for family members and friends to gather for the service. Memorial services can be held at any time. If a funeral or memorial service is to be followed by a burial on the same day, the schedule of the cemetery usually dictates that burials be held during normal business hours for city cemeteries. Funeral homes will work out the scheduling with the cemetery.

Do I need to secure the services of a funeral director?

Working with a funeral director will ease the strain of coordinating all the details and assisting in your wishes being carried out with dignity and honor. Even if cremation is your desire, a funeral director handles many details that are not taken care of by the

church, the pastor, or family members. The presiding pastor can recommend local funeral homes that can be contacted. The two we usually use at First Congregational are Lane's Funeral Home and Costello's.

What are the options for locations of the service?

We have a main sanctuary that seats about 450 people comfortably and a smaller, more intimate chapel that seats about 100 people. Often, services with 30-40 people are encouraged to use the chapel, but it is up to the family. Both spaces are outfitted with live stream capabilities, and our live stream technician can be hired for the service. The sanctuary has both an organ and piano, while the chapel only has a piano. Our ministers are also willing to do memorial services in other locations and have done so at people's homes, in other public buildings, on mountainsides, beside lakes, etc....

What fees are associated with a funeral or memorial service at our church?

The Funeral/Memorial Service Fee Schedule sheet is at the end of this document. You will notice that certain fees are waived for members of the church. The Pastors are always happy to speak with you about a sliding scale of fees if any of the fees are a hardship for you or your family.

Who is responsible for producing the order of worship and bulletin?

After the service has been planned and the bulletin has been created with the presiding pastor and the family, the Office Manager will produce the bulletin at no cost to your family. Usually, a picture of your loved one will be included on the front. If there is a desire for a more involved and professional program, the family can find a graphic designer and local print company to print the bulletins once the content has been finalized. This cost and process is handled by the family.

Who is responsible for submitting the death notice and obituary to the newspaper?

The funeral director will take care of this for you. A simple death notice is printed in the local newspaper shortly after death at no cost to you. A full obituary normally appears 2-3 days before the visitation and funeral. There is a cost for this, and the funeral director will assist you. Notices to other newspapers and online sites can also be handled by the funeral director at your request.

Who plans the reception following the funeral or memorial service?

The family plans the reception to follow and there are catering suggestions on the fee schedule at the end of this document. There are various sized rooms within the church that you are welcome to use and there are caterers who are used to working with our church. Our Facilities Staff will set up and break down the basics of the rooms with tables, chairs, and easels, but it is the family's responsibility to decorate and provide enough food for the anticipated numbers of people attending. We ask that all paper products be recyclable and compostable. Any leftover food is yours to take home or deliver to agencies in the community that welcome donations.

Are there "more green" options to embalming and cremation?

Embalming and cremation are both taxing on the natural world in their own ways. Green burials, on the other hand, conserve resources, protect groundwater, and return bodily nutrients to the soil. Green burials in MA are legal and gaining in popularity. Local cemeteries, however, have different rules and currently (as of Spring 2025, Wildwood Cemetery does not accommodate green burials). Burial on private property is legal in MA, but it requires approval from the local board of health and local governing body. To learn more about green burials, go to this website for a nonprofit that promotes green burials in MA - <https://greenburialma.org/>

Can we use the Reno Memorial Garden beside the church for the ashes?

The beautiful Reno Memorial Garden, which sits on our property outside of Ripley Chapel, can be a place where ashes are committed. The name of the deceased can be added to bricks that encircle certain areas of the garden. The fact/fee sheet for the Reno Garden is included at the end of this document. It will give you more information about the Reno Garden and its policies and costs.

FUNERAL PLANNING WORKSHEET

After you have prepared draft answers to your Funeral Planning Worksheet, take time to meet with family members to discuss your preferences and to get their input. You may want to edit the Funeral Planning Worksheet after getting input from your family. When the Funeral Planning Worksheet has been completed, you can also meet with your Pastor to discuss the Worksheet. Your Worksheet will be kept in a confidential file available only to the Pastor. It will be used in consultation with your family or whomever you have directed to carry out these wishes upon your death.

Guide for the Christian Funeral of _____
Full Name: First, Middle (Maiden/Family Name), Last

Date Completed: _____

Christian Worship Service Plans

Visitation or other Pre-Funeral Gathering? (this is less common in Protestant Churches but still can be done)

- ____ Nothing in advance of the service
- ____ In the church - time _____
- ____ In the home - time _____

Location of Service

- ____ First Congregational Church in Winchester, UCC
- ____ Funeral Home
- ____ Cemetery (A Graveside Service Only)
- ____ Other: _____ (i.e. home, park, Reno Garden, etc.)

Time of the Worship Service

- ____ Morning (usually 10 or 11am)
- ____ Afternoon (usually 1 or 2pm)
- ____ Evening (usually 4 or 5pm)

Will the Remains be Present at the Worship Service?

- ____ Yes (Coffin or Urn with Ashes)
- ____ No

Display Items to be On or Near the Casket/Urn

- ____ Floral Spray and/or additional Flower Bouquets
- ____ Photograph

____Cross

Readers

____The Pastor who officiates

____I would like this/these person(s) to read at my service: _____

Bible Readings

____The Pastor who officiates may choose the readings.

____My family will choose the readings.

____I have chosen the readings as indicated below.

Commonly Used Old Testament (Hebrew Bible) Passages

Job 19:23-27

Isaiah 40:1-11

Isaiah 40:28-31

Isaiah 65:17

Psalms 23

Psalms 46:1-5, 10-11

Psalms 90:1-10, 12

Psalms 121

Psalms 84

Psalms 139:1-12

Proverbs 31:10-31

Commonly Used New Testament Passages

John 14:1-6, 27

Matthew 5:1-10

Matthew 5:15-18

Romans 8:31-39

1 Corinthians 13

1 Corinthians 15:50-58

2 Corinthians 4:16-5:1

Philippians 4:4-9

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Revelation 21:1-6

Revelation 22:1-5

Other Readings Selected: _____

Congregational Hymns

Note – We have two hymnals: the Pilgrim Hymnal (more traditional language) and New Century Hymnal (more inclusive language). Some of your chosen hymns may not be in our hymnals. However, we can print lyrics into the program.

- _____The Pastor who officiates may choose the hymns.
_____My family will choose the hymns
_____I have chosen the hymns as indicated below.

Suggested Hymns

Beautiful Savior
Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer
I Know That My Redeemer Lives!
Love Divine All Loves Excelling
O God, Our Help in Ages Past
For All the Saints
The King of Love My Shepherd
Is Lift High the Cross
The Lord's My Shepherd
Lord Take My Hand and Lead Me
A Mighty Fortress
My Faith Looks up to Thee
My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less
Amazing Grace
Be Thou (Now) My Vision
How Great Thou Art
This Is My Father's World
On Eagle's Wings
I Was There to Hear Your Borning Cry

Other Hymns Selected: _____

Musical Accompaniment

- _____ I would like organ played
_____ I would like piano played
_____ I would like other instrumentation involved: _____

Remembrances/Eulogies

(This is in addition to the Pastoral Reflection offered by one of the pastors. Please ask speakers to limit their remarks to 3-5 minutes.)

_____I would like this person (or these people to speak): _____

____ I would like there to be an "open mic" time to allow anyone to speak from the floor

Reception Following Worship

(please note that the church does not have a group within the church that provides receptions so the family is encouraged to hire catering services.)

I would like a reception following the service for mutual conversation and consolation.

____ Yes ____ No

I would like the Reception

____ Immediately Following the Worship Service; Before Burial

____ Following the Worship Service and After Burial

Location for the Reception

____ First Congregational Church in Winchester, MA at Chidley Hall or Tucker/Palmer Rooms

____ Other Location: _____

Menu for the Reception

____ Dessert and Coffee/Beverages

____ Light Lunch (Sandwiches, salads, dessert)

____ Other:

Funeral Home

Preferred Company _____

(Specific arrangements in advance at the funeral home of your choice are encouraged.)

Have Pre-Arrangements Been Made?

____ Yes ____ No

Disposition of the Body

____ Green Burial *(If possible based on residency of deceased and preferred cemetery)*

____ Embalm Body *(Usually required if unrefrigerated over 24 hours before burial)*

____ Cremate Body Shortly After Death

____ Cremate Body After Visitation and/or Service

____ Donating Body to Science

Burial Wishes

____ Bury Coffin/Urn in Cemetery

____ Commit Ashes to Reno Garden

____ Other: _____

(I.e., keeping ashes with a family member, spreading ashes at a favorite spot, etc.)

Bury Coffin or Urn

____ Before Visitation

____ After Visitation but Before Funeral Service

____ After Funeral Service but Before Luncheon Reception

____ After Luncheon Reception

____ At a Later Date:

Grave Marker

____ I have made arrangements for a grave marker with this company:

____ I would like the following to be included on the grave marker:

Name: _____

Dates (birth/death dates): _____

Maiden/Family Name: _____

Bible Verse: _____

Graphic: _____

Other: _____

Eligible for Military Honors

____ Yes ____ No

Names of Pallbearers (*Six pallbearers needed only when there is a coffin for burial.*)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Cemetery

____ I have made arrangements for my burial.

Name of Cemetery _____

Location of Cemetery _____

____ I do not have arrangements for my burial. I suggest the following arrangements:

____ I have arrangements for a memorial marker with the following company:

(Include contact information)

Desired Expressions of Sympathy

____ Flowers

____ I desire memorial gifts in lieu of flowers

Memorial Suggestions

____ First Congregational Church in Winchester, UCC

____ Other: _____

Obituary

Full Name: _____

Birth Date and Location: _____

Parent(s)'s Name(s): _____

Baptism Date, Church, and Location: _____

Confirmation Date, Church, and Location: _____

Marital Status, Marriage Date, and Name of Spouse: _____

Other Marriages/Divorces/Spouse(s): _____

Names of Children: _____

Additional Next of Kin: _____

Additional Loved Ones:

Personal History

On a separate page, record additional information including place(s) of residence, special events, hobbies/interests, schools attended and degrees received, accomplishments, memberships, employment history, volunteer activities, military service, etc. Include as many full names, city of residence, birth and death dates, etc. as possible. All this information is important to your family/preparers of your obituary. This information does not need to be prepared in paragraph form.

Important Documents and Advisors

It is important that survivors be able to locate vital records and important documents. Before your death, you should have a current will/living trust and related health care directives which express your wishes on important personal, financial, medical, and charitable issues for your survivors. If you need information regarding estate planning, planned giving, and/or the inclusion of a Christian preamble for your will, please consult your legal or financial advisor.

Right of Sepulcher Agent: _____

Trustee of Final Expense Trust: _____

Power of Attorney/Financial: _____

Power of Attorney/Proxy for Health Care: _____

Location and Date of Will/Living Trust: _____

Location of my Final Wishes Booklet or Living Will: _____

Attorney/Will Preparer: _____

Executor of Will/Estate _____

Guardian for Minor Children: _____

Additional Comments:

Planned Giving

First Congregational Church in Winchester, UCC has nurtured the faith and enriched the lives of generations of congregants and proclaims the good news of God's love in this community and beyond. FCCW needs your financial support to continue doing so into the future. We invite you to consider making a planned gift to FCCW. Your gift will help secure the church's financial future so it can continue to strengthen and nurture the Christian faith in our community for generations to come. There are a number of ways you can make a planned gift. These include a legacy gift made through your final expense trust, a bequest, and a life income plan. Regardless of your financial position, all church members can, with careful planning, provide for the future of the church. In addition, planned gifts can provide improved estate management and important tax benefits.

Legacy Gifts from Final Expense Trust

Contributions made to your final expense trust can be committed to the church, or you can commit to the church any funds remaining in the trust after your funeral and burial arrangements have been paid.

Bequests

A simple way to make a planned gift is by a provision in your will. It can be changed at any time during your life and is fully tax deductible for estate purposes. A bequest can be for a specific dollar amount or a percentage of your estate; a transfer of assets such as securities, real estate, tangible personal property or intangible properties such as patents or copyrights; retirement accounts or insurance policy assets.

Life Income Plans

Life income plans offer the opportunity to dedicate a substantial gift to the church while retaining the income from that gift to support you or your loved ones for life. These may include a Charitable Remainder Trust, a Charitable Gift Annuity or a Pooled Income Fund. The advantages of a life income plan include payments to you or another for life, an immediate tax deduction and subsequent annual tax free distributions, a chance to increase income while reducing tax on appreciated assets and reduced estate taxes.



21 Church St.
Winchester, MA 01890
781-729-9180
www.fcc-winchester.org



21 Church Street, Winchester, Massachusetts 01890, phone 781-729-9180

MEMORIAL SERVICE FEE

Presiding Minister's Fee: \$500* Memorial Service/Funeral
\$350* Graveside Service
Please make check out to either **Rev. William Burhans** or **Rev. Maeve Hammond**

Facility and Administrative Fee: \$200* (\$150 without reception)
Please make check out to: **First Congregational Church**

Organist/Pianist Fee: \$275
Please make check out to: **Jeffrey Mead**

Sexton: \$150
Please make check out to: **Bill Lewis**

Soloists (if applicable): \$200
Please make check out to: **Susan Navien** or **Peter Owens**

Live Stream: If you would like to have the service live-streamed we can request services from our Live-Stream Technician - \$450
Please make check out to: **-Brian McArdle**

Order of Service/Bulletin: The church office will provide a simple 8 ½ by 11 bulletin for the service. If the family would prefer a different size or design they can work with a local company like Litho-craft (781-729-2012) to design and print their own.

Reception: Families are encouraged to contact local caterers.

Some suggestions:

- D'Agostinos Deli (781-729-7984)
- Roses to Radishes (Lisa Rubin; 781-641-1447)
- Basil Tree (617-776-9100; basiltree.com)
- Capers Catering (781-279-5100; caperscatering.com)

Our church community is working to eliminating plastic use for all church events so we encourage families and caterers to either use reusable or compostable dinnerware for receptions.

www.bambuhome.com/collections/compostable-plates

Amazon: [EcoSoul](#)

Please give all checks to the presiding minister before the service begins and he/she will see that the appropriate people receive them.

*Contributing members of the congregation do not need to pay the minister or facilities fee. If these fees are a hardship in any way please let us know and we are happy to see how we can help.

Terms & Conditions Regarding the Placement of Cremated Remains In The Reno Garden

Background: The Reno Garden at First Congregational Church in Winchester was created in 2011 to provide a beautiful place on church grounds for peaceful meditation and prayer as well as remembrance of loved ones. The placement of cremated remains takes place on the lower garden level overlooking the pond, known as the Contemplative Garden.

Persons Eligible: The Reno Garden is intended for the use of members of First Congregational Church in Winchester and their immediate families, former members who have moved away and staff. Placement of cremains (cremated remains) of those who have close ties with the church shall be at the discretion of the ministerial staff. We are sorry but we are not able to bury cremains of pets.

Placement Ceremony: When an individual or family wish to have cremains placed in the Garden, the attached application form must be completed and fee paid. In the case of an immediate placement, a date must be arranged with the clergy for a Placement Ceremony. This is a short prayer service during which the cremains are placed in the ground and which may or may not occur in conjunction with a church service. The placement of cremains is done as weather permits.

Fee: The fee includes preparation of the Garden, placement of cremains in the Garden, covering of the hole, the Placement Ceremony, and a contribution to the Reno Garden Fund. The inscription of the deceased's name on the Memory Bench will be billed separately. And is in addition to the fee.

Cremated Remains: Your funeral home will provide you with a container filled with the cremains. You do not need to prepare them in any way. They will be placed in the ground as received from the funeral home. Please have the container unsealed so that ashes may pass into the earth easily. All cremains become a permanent part of the Garden and may not be exhumed or removed by the family after placement. However, the church reserves the right to take any appropriate action regarding the location of cremains if future repair or modifications of the Garden should warrant.

Markers: No containers or markers are used. Cremains are deposited directly into the ground. Families may wish to provide flowers on the day of internment but must take them home afterward. The Garden & Placement Committee reserves the right to designate the location within the Garden where cremains will be interred.

Memory Bench: The names and years of birth & death for each individual whose cremains are interred are inscribed on our granite Memory Bench. This provides families with another way to honor or visit their loved one. Inscriptions are done once per year.



First Congregational Church

IN WINCHESTER, UCC



21 Church Street
Winchester, MA 01890
781-729-9180

Agreement for Future Placement of Cremated Remains in The Reno Garden

Note: Relationship to deceased should be marked "self". The sections pertaining to Date of Placement Ceremony and Date of Death should be left blank at this time and completed later when known.

** Agreement made this _____ day of _____, 20____ between First Congregational Church in Winchester in Winchester, MA (hereinafter called "The Church") and

Name: _____
(Hereinafter called "The Participant")

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Relationship to Deceased: _____

Date of Placement Ceremony: _____

** The Participant acknowledges reading and understanding the Terms & Conditions for Placement of Ashes at The Reno Garden and agrees to be bound thereby.

Signed by: _____ First Congregational Church in Winchester:

Participant _____ Garden Committee Representative

** The Church acknowledges receipt of the sum of \$1,500.00 from and gives permission to The Participant to have placed in the Reno Garden the ashes of:

Name of Deceased: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Date of Death: _____

I do/do not (circle one) wish to provide materials for the Memory Book.