

# First Presbyterian Church of Morton

## Funeral Policy

The resurrection is a central doctrine of the Christian faith and shapes Christians' attitudes and responses to the event of death. Death brings loss, sorrow, and grief to all in the face of death. Christians affirm with tears and the joy of the hope of the gospel. Christians do not bear bereavement in isolation but are sustained by the power of the Spirit and the community of Faith.

Funeral, memorial service, or celebration of life, at the First Presbyterian Church of Morton, is always 'witness to the resurrection' – that is to say they affirm the hope of the Christian gospel and the good news to all who grieve.

### **Pre-planning your Funeral**

It is encouraged that all members and associates (those who attend the Church but are not members) of the First Presbyterian Church of Morton meet with one of our Pastors to preplan the funeral, memorial service or celebration of life service. It is suggested that these plans be written out to assure the wishes are complied with. Services may be conducted at the church or at a funeral home.

### **Policy and Practices:**

**Officiates:** A minister of First Presbyterian Church of Morton will officiate at each funeral, memorial service or celebration of life. Additional ministers, family members, friends and members of the congregation may be invited by the Minister to assist in the service. Other ministers may officiate a funeral at the Church at the invitation of the installed Minister and/or the Session. In the event of a pulpit vacancy the Session will make the necessary arrangements for an officiant.

**The Service:** The funeral is a service of witness to the resurrection; this should be the primary focus. The service at the Church should be held in the Sanctuary. The service may be observed before or after the committal of the body. In order that the attention in the service may be directed to God, when a casket is present, it shall be closed.

**Note:** Due to the logistics of the Church the funeral director should be consulted if the casket is to be placed in the Sanctuary for the service.

The service shall be complete in itself and any fraternal, civic or military rites should be conducted separately. The content and language of shared Remembrances spoken during the ceremony should reflect the nature of the service and be delivered with the decorum of the occasion.

**Visitations:** Visitations due to limited space at the church should be held at a funeral home. Exceptions to this policy should be discussed with the pastor.

**Music:** The Director of Music will ordinarily provide music for funerals held at the Church. Guest musicians including soloists and guest organists or accompanists must be approved the Director of Music. All music for the service must be approved by the Director of Music and the Minister. All music

must be liturgically appropriate. Appropriate music includes traditional or contemporary hymns, psalms, spirituals, praise songs, or other appropriate sacred selections.

Any rehearsals for special music at the service shall be scheduled by the Director of Music.

**Scheduling at First Presbyterian Church of Morton:** The Church will make every attempt to accommodate the needs of the family regarding the time and day of the service. However, many activities at the church are planned months in advance and cannot be changed. The family should consult with the minister to determine a day and time for the service.

**Receptions:** The church is honored to be able to provide a simple reception following the service. The church with appropriate notice, is able to supply coffee, punch, and cookies. The church does not have facilities or staff for private food services, and so requests for luncheons and more elaborate receptions shall be catered or held at another location. Luncheons or more elaborate receptions should be fully catered – from set up to clean up, and all materials utilized by the caterer should be removed from the church by the caterer’s staff. Alcohol may not be served on the church property.

**Honoraria and Fees:** For church members and associates (and their immediate family members (spouses and children under their care), there is no fee for the service of the pastor or organist or use of church facilities. Fees and arrangements for soloists or instrumentalists shall be the responsibility of the family. Honorariums are welcome.

**Fees for non-members and non-associates:**

Organist \$50.00

Organist or Pianist with soloist provided by family \$100.00 (included practice time)

Ministers’ fees are not set by our current ministers but can be determined by the family.

Use of Church \$100.00

**Setup/Cleanup –** It is the sole responsibility of the family to set up and return the church to normality immediately following the service. This includes coordination with florists, funeral homes, rental companies, caterers, and so on to restore the church to order. All tables, chairs, furnishings, worship items shall be returned to their original places and restored to the manner in which they were found. Under no circumstances should the family leave furnishings, food, catering supplies, etc. in the church without permission from the Church.

