

First Baptist Church
Rome, Georgia
Funeral and Memorial Service Policy
(Revised October 2023)

A funeral/memorial service in First Baptist Church serves as witness to the resurrection of Christ and His followers. Ordinarily, services held here are for families affiliated with the church. Exceptions must be approved by the pastor. Services may be held in the Sanctuary (seating capacity of 800) or Chapel (seating capacity of 75). To make funeral arrangements, a representative designated by the family should contact the Pastor, and, if the Pastor is unavailable, the Minister of Worship. Members and affiliated families pay no fee for the use of the church for funerals and memorial services.

At First Baptist Church, a funeral/memorial service is considered a service of worship and will be approached with the dignity accorded worship. A typical order of worship will include: prelude and postlude of sacred music; hymns and sacred music using the congregation and or soloists or ensembles; scripture readings from the Old and/or New Testaments; a message that expresses thanksgiving to God for the life of the deceased and reminds all of Christ's resurrection and promise of eternal life; a benediction. In consultation with the pastor, other elements, such as remarks from family members and friends, may be included in the service. **"Open mic" remembrances are not allowed.**

SCHEDULING: To insure there are no conflicts with previously planned church events, please consult with the Pastor or the Minister of Worship about scheduling before final plans are announced publically.

WORSHIP LEADERSHIP: Funerals or memorial services at the church shall be under the direction of a minister on the staff. The minister will visit with the family to share in prayer and to plan the service together. At the discretion of the minister leading the service, clergy from other congregations who are connected with the family, may participate in the service.

MUSIC: Music used in the service should be in keeping with the sacredness and dignity of a worship service. All music should direct the thought toward God and be sacred in nature. Additionally, no recorded music or accompaniment track will be permitted before, during or after the service without preapproval of a minister. The Sanctuary Choir is available only for services for choir members.

ORDERS OF WORSHIP: If requested by the family, a printed order of worship can be produced by the church at no charge. The design of the order of worship is simple and dignified. Families may choose to have one of two designs: 1) a folded 8.5 x 11 sheet on paper with a gloss finish with a pen-and-ink drawing of the Sanctuary on the cover and the service and obituary information on the inside; or 2) a half-sheet printed on heavy card stock with the service order on one side and, if desired, the obituary on the other side. In keeping with our desire to make this a worship service, photos, etc. of the deceased or other graphics not be used in the program.

USHERS: Ushers for the service will be members of First Baptist. Funeral home staff may also be used, if desired.

FLORAL DISPLAYS: Floral displays in the Sanctuary and Chapel are appropriate. To avoid detracting from the worship experience, these are to be limited to two (2) free-standing arrangements. Floral displays may also be placed in the Narthex of the Sanctuary or the Foyer outside the Chapel. Additional flower arrangements sent directly to the church will be placed at appropriate locations determined by the church staff.

Funerals/memorial services are subject to activities at the church. Therefore, at times there may be decorations (i.e. Christmas greenery, Chrismon trees, Lenten drapes on the baptistery cross, etc.) that may not be moved.

AUDIO RECORDING: Audio recording of a service held in the Sanctuary is available without charge. This must be requested when planning the service with the minister.

VISUALS: First Baptist Church does not have projection capabilities in the sanctuary or chapel and does not use projected images in worship. During the receiving of guests before or after the service, visual projection may only be used outside of the sanctuary or chapel, provided equipment is available. Photography – still or video – is not permitted in the Sanctuary or Chapel during a service. Personal photographs and memorabilia displays are not permitted in the Sanctuary or Chapel but may be placed in the Narthex of the Sanctuary or Foyer of the Chapel.

CASKET: When a casket is present, it is to be closed by the funeral director prior to the service, so that attention in the service may be directed to God. Upon request, the church pall is available without charge. The church pall may not leave the church, however, and cannot be used at the cemetery. The family may provide a United States flag for those who have served in the military, or a floral arrangement may be used as a pall.

RECEPTION OF FRIENDS: The family may wish to greet family and friends before or after the service. Arrangements to use church space for this must be made with the minister when planning the funeral/memorial service.

FAMILY MEAL: If the deceased was a church member, the church will provide a meal at no cost for family members and out-of-town guests in the church Dining Room on the day of a service held Monday through Friday. For services held on weekends, a meal will be brought to the home on Saturday. Family members should give a final count of those who will be eating to the Pastor's secretary as soon as possible, so that the church will have time to make proper preparations.

MILITARY/MASONIC HONORS: Such honors are not considered part of Christian worship, and are therefore more appropriately carried out at the cemetery.

GRAVESIDE SERVICE: Graveside committal services may be held before or after the funeral/memorial service. This service typically includes: scripture, prayer, words of committal, and a benediction. The minister will discuss this service with the family.

MEMORIALS: Gifts given in memory of a loved one are appropriate and welcomed. First Baptist has a Foundation, or specific ministries of the church may be designated, or charitable organizations of the donor's choice are potential recipients of such gifts. Memorial gifts to the church are kept in a separate account from the church budget. Our financial secretary will see that the family is made aware of who has given gifts so that they will be able to acknowledge the contributions.

PRE-PLANNING: First Baptist members are strongly encouraged to pre-plan their funeral/memorial service. A form is attached to this document, or you may pick up a form in the church office or download it from our website. Once completed and returned, the forms will be kept in the church's confidential files; where they will be available for revision. At the time of death, the information will be shared with family members and the minister with whom the service is being planned.

Funeral/Memorial Service Pre-Arrangement Form

First Baptist Church Rome, Georgia

(Please fill out as much of this form as you can. This form is simply an indication of your preferences as of this date. Any of this information can be changed at any time with a call to the Minister of Worship. The church staff will do what we can to honor your preferences, but please understand that everything may not be possible at any given time due to unforeseen circumstances. Upon completion, please mail or give the form to the Minister of Worship, who will contact you with any questions and provide you a copy for your records.)

Date: _____

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Place of Birth: _____

Spouse's Full Name: _____

Spouse's Maiden Name: _____

Place of Marriage: _____

Date of Marriage: _____

Mother's Name: _____

Mother's Maiden Name: _____

Father's Name: _____

Children's and/or Next of Kin Names, Addresses and Phone Numbers

Work and Education

Education (High School): _____

College(s): _____

Usual Occupation (most of life): _____

Kind of Business: _____

Company: _____

Military Records

Branch of Service: _____

Date Enlisted: _____ Rank at Discharge: _____

Date discharged: _____

Location of discharge papers _____

Name of Wars: _____

Church Activities (places of service, involvement, committees, etc.):

Funeral Service Information

Funeral Home Preference: _____

Do you have a pre-paid funeral plan with this funeral home? _____

Place of Funeral/Memorial Service: _____

If this place is not available is there an alternative choice for the place of the service? _____

Place of Visitation: _____

I prefer the visitation to be:

The day before the funeral _____

OR

The day of the funeral _____

Before the service? _____ After the service? _____

I prefer that burial be: (check one)

Before the service _____

After the service _____

I prefer a printed program: Yes _____ No _____

Flower Preference:

Officiating Minister(s):

Scriptures to be read:

Life Verse:

Music:

Organ _____ Piano _____ Both _____ Whatever is available _____

Preferred Organist: _____ Preferred Pianist: _____

Preferred Soloist(s): _____

If the preferred musicians are not available, it will be acceptable for the pastor or minister of worship to find suitable replacements.

_____ Yes _____ No

Specific music to be sung or played:

Pall Bearers (if necessary):

Honorary Pall Bearers:

Place of Interment: _____

Please add any special instructions about the location or details related to interment (i.e. mausoleum, scattering of ashes, etc.):

Other Information and Special Instructions

Please list any other instructions or information you would like us to have:

I would like a personal meeting with the Pastor and/or Minister of Worship to discuss these plans.

Yes _____ No _____

When completed, please return this form to:

David Brooks
Pastor
First Baptist Church
100 East Fourth Avenue
Rome, GA 30161

Signed: _____

Print Name: _____

Date: _____