



## Alpharetta Presbyterian Church Funeral and Memorial Service Guidelines

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***"I am the resurrection and the life", says the Lord.  
"Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live."  
—John 11:25-26***

### **I. Preparing for Death with a Resurrection Faith**

Alpharetta Presbyterian Church welcomes requests for a service of Christian worship at the time of death. "A Service of Witness to the Resurrection" is an important part of the life of faith and offers comfort and hope for those who mourn. The church encourages every member to use our sanctuary for funeral and memorial services, and we welcome requests from non-members.

The church encourages members to discuss and plan their funeral or memorial service arrangements with family members and/or church pastors. The important decisions regarding burial or cremation, the location of interment, the choice of a funeral home/director and the location of their "last will and testament" should be shared with family or pastors. Doing so relieves survivors of a difficult burden.

This document provides guidelines for planning a funeral or memorial service at Alpharetta Presbyterian Church. Please contact Rev. Beverly Markham at 770-751-0033 with any questions.

## **II. Planning the Funeral/Memorial Service**

### **A. Clergy**

The church offers love and hope to all who grieve. This includes pastoral care during illness, at the time of death, and afterwards. A member's death should be reported immediately to one of the pastors who will notify our session and diaconate. Church members will be notified electronically once a service time has been determined.

A request for a pastor to officiate at a memorial/funeral service in the sanctuary should be made directly to the pastor. If unavailable, the pastor will suggest other clergy who may be contacted. Other clergy and family members may be invited to participate with the pastor's approval.

***“Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.”  
–Matthew 5:4***

### **B. Church Facility**

APC offers our facility at no fee; however, donations are appreciated.

### **C. Organist and Music**

If a church organist is desired, the family should make a request to the officiating pastor. The family may also request favorite hymns and other sacred music.

APC's Chancel Choir may be requested for the service. The ability of the choir to sing will be the decision of the director of music. Other musicians and soloists may be invited to participate with the approval of the director of music or the officiating pastor.

The family is asked to cover the honoraria for the organist or any musicians.

### **D. Service Coordinator**

The church will have a service coordinator to work with the family and pastor to assist with all details involved in planning and hosting services.

### **E. Flowers and Decorations**

Any condolence flowers in the sanctuary should be removed following the service. Families may leave two arrangements for the regular Sunday worship services. Photo displays and other memorabilia may be displayed in our fellowship hall or narthex. (Several tripods are available.)

The clergy will wear white stoles to celebrate the Resurrection of the Lord. In liturgical tradition, white symbolizes the victory of the saints.

***“Who are these robed in white?  
These are they who have washed their robes and made them white  
by the blood of the Lamb. God will wipe every tear from their eyes.”  
–Revelation 7:14***

### **F. The Service of Committal**

Mourners will gather at the graveside or place of interment for a brief service conducted by the officiating pastor. The committal may be public or private depending on the family's wishes. It may be scheduled either before or after the funeral or memorial service; or on a different day if desired.

The APC Memorial Garden is available for the interment of ashes and service of committal. For more information about using the garden call the church office (770-751-0033) or contact the pastor. You may also view the APC Memorial Garden Policy at [www.alpharettapres.com/apc-document-library](http://www.alpharettapres.com/apc-document-library).

***“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.”  
–2 Corinthians 5:1***

### **III. Visitation or Viewing**

Our fellowship hall or sanctuary may be used by the family for visitation or viewing on the evening prior to the service or immediately preceding the service. Such arrangements should be made with the officiating pastor and depend on building availability.

### **IV. Receptions and Meals**

If the family requests it, our deacons will prepare and host a reception following a funeral or memorial service. These gatherings are held in our fellowship hall. The family should notify the officiating pastor promptly to make arrangements regarding menu, room set-up, and expected attendance. Normally, the family covers the expense for any food or beverages purchased by the Deacons for the reception. Several menu options are available.

***“They said, “The Lord is risen indeed,” and they told them  
how he had been made known to them in the breaking of the bread.”  
–Luke 24:34-35***

### **V. Planned Gifts, Memorial Gifts, Memorial Book and Fees**

APC encourages its members to remember the church in their wills as a final act of faithful stewardship and Christian witness. Planned gifts will greatly benefit future ministry through the APC Endowment. For more information about the APC Endowment, please contact the church office.

Memorial donations may be made to APC. The church will acknowledge the gift to the donor and will provide the family of the deceased the donors' names and addresses. The church session will approve all memorial fund expenditures.

The church keeps a memorial book of the names and the date of death of all members or friends who have joined the church triumphant. On All Saints' Day, November 1st, we remember them in a special worship service.

APC offers our facility at no fee. However, donations are appreciated.

## VI. Other

During the worship service, we seek to focus attention on God. Therefore, the casket (if present) will remain closed, and no photographs are permitted. If the family requests it, the church will be happy to make an audio recording.

The officiating pastor(s) will escort the immediate family to and from the reserved front pews. The family should work with the service coordinator or pastor to arrange for any ushers or pall bearers.

The church will provide a worship bulletin detailing the order of service. If the family desires the celebration of the Lord's Supper, our session must approve that request.

Any military, fraternal or civic rites should be conducted separately from the funeral/memorial service.

***“If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord;  
so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord’s.”  
–Romans 14:18***



### **Alpharetta Presbyterian Church**

180 Academy Street, Alpharetta, GA 30009

770-751-0033 [www.alpharettapres.com](http://www.alpharettapres.com)

Dr. Oliver Wagner, Senior Pastor  
Rev. Beverly Markham, Associate Pastor  
Rev. Caitlin Phillips, Associate Pastor

*Revised January 2018*

# Memorial and Funeral Service Expenses at Alpharetta Presbyterian Church

<u>Possible Expenses include:</u>	<u>Actual Expense:</u>
Organist (\$150)	_____
Sound System Operator (\$75)	_____
Reception Food (actual expense via Deacons)	_____
Memorial Garden Name Plate (\$500)	_____
Honoraria for Pastor(s) (optional)	_____
Donation to Church Memorial Fund (optional)	_____
Total Expense:	_____

***Please complete this form and mail it with your check payable to "Alpharetta Presbyterian Church" with "Memorial" in the memo-line.***

**Checks may be mailed to:**  
Alpharetta Presbyterian Church  
180 Academy Street  
Alpharetta, GA 30009