



# Alpharetta Presbyterian Church Funeral and Memorial Service Guidelines

Revised June 2021

“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

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.

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.

## **I. 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. When we are made aware of a death, pastors will contact a family member immediately to offer condolences and assist in planning a memorial service. 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. You may reach a pastor by calling the church office at 770-751-0033.



“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 all musicians.

#### D. Service Coordinator

The church's Service Coordinator will work with the family and pastor to assist with all details involved in planning and hosting services including arranging for ushers. If the family desires pall bearers, they should contact them personally, and the Service Coordinator will coordinate their participation in the service.

#### 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.

#### F. Video and/or Audio Recording

The A/V operator will be happy to do an audio recording of the service, if requested. You may also request that the service be Livestreamed (or have a video recording done), but this will be dependent on the availability of A/V staff and comes with an additional fee.

“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

### G. 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/documents-and-forms/](http://www.alpharettapres.com/documents-and-forms/)

“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

### II. 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.

### III. Receptions and Meals

If the family requests, 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. A deacon will work with the family to make arrangements regarding menu, room set-up, and expected attendance. The family covers the expense for any food or beverages purchased by the Deacons for the reception. If financial assistance is needed, please talk to the pastor.

### IV. Planned Gifts, Memorial Gifts, Memorial Book

Memorial donations may be made to the APC Memorial Fund or to any of APC's designated funds. 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.



“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

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.

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.

#### **V. Other**

During the worship service, we seek to focus attention on God. Therefore, the casket (if present) will remain closed. A photo of your loved one may be placed on the front of the bulletin and/or in the sanctuary (8"x10" maximum) for the service. Please discuss your wishes with the pastor. If you would like an audio recording of the service, please ask the pastor.

The officiating pastor(s) will escort the immediate family to and from the reserved front pews. 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



## Memorial and Funeral Service Expenses at Alpharetta Presbyterian Church

As you plan for a memorial service, this worksheet will help you plan for expenses. Alpharetta Presbyterian Church has some set fees listed below and there are also honoraria you can consider.

<u>Possible Expenses:</u>	<u>Fee:</u>	<u>Indicate expenses included in your check:</u>
Organist	\$250	_____
Sound System Operator	\$100	_____
Livestream Operator	\$250	_____
Soloist/Instrumentalist	\$100	_____
Memorial Garden Name Plate (Please complete and return request form if you wish to use the Memorial Garden)	\$500	_____
Reception Food and Beverages (Deacons will purchase all food)	Varies depending on food purchased	_____
Honoraria for Pastors	At your discretion	_____
Honorarium for Choir Director (if choir sings)	At your discretion	_____
Suggested Honorarium for Property Manager for Memorial Garden Preparation	\$50	_____
Donation to APC Memorial Fund	At your discretion	_____

You may write one check to cover all expenses. Please use this form to alert our finance office which expenses you are including so that the appropriate amounts can be paid to each person and mail it with your check payable to "Alpharetta Presbyterian Church" with "Memorial Service" in the memo-line. If you have questions regarding expenses, contact the Finance office at 770-751-0033.

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