



St. George's Episcopal Church

Growing into Christ + Reaching out in Love

The Rev. Joseph H. Hensley, Jr., Rector
The Rev. Areeta D. Bridgemohan
The Rev. Robert M. Miller, Clergy Associate
The Rev. David P. Casey, O.P., Young Adult Missioner

Dearly beloved,

Our faith teaches us that when we die, life is changed, not ended. Marking that change when someone dies is an important step in the grieving process. Whether you are reading this in anticipation of death or after the fact, please accept our prayers and support. Let me outline, briefly, how St. George's is prepared to offer its ministry before, during, and after death.

Before death: We are available to meet to plan ahead with you for arrangements after death, to arrange for pastoral visits leading up to death, and to address any other concerns you may have. When someone is near death, we encourage you to contact us so that we may come and offer the prayers designated for a person about to die. These prayers can also be offered after death. There is nothing "magic" about these prayers (sometimes referred to as "last rites"). They are often helpful for the person dying as well as for those who are caring for them, but they are by no means required. We understand that some families prefer privacy.

When death occurs: Please contact us right away. You may contact clergy directly or the church office. We will then arrange to meet with you as soon as is convenient and desirable to make or revise plans. At that meeting, we will go over the details with you step by step.

Funerals: The Book of Common Prayer prescribes burial from the church. However, there are a variety of options, depending on the pastoral needs of the family and congregation. The clergy will discuss these options with you, and we try to be as flexible as possible. At St. George's we try to avoid funerals on Sundays. Mondays and Tuesdays are less convenient if Sydnor Hall is needed, because our outreach ministries are active on those days. We do not encourage "eulogies." Clergy will preach a homily (short sermon) and incorporate the story of the deceased with the greater story of God's gift of eternal life. The funeral service is a worship service. Other tributes are best included at a reception or other event. Military honors typically follow the burial at graveside.

Bulletins: The church will create and print the service leaflets for services at the church. We are fine with outside printers, as long as the clergy can proof it ahead of time.

Musicians: St. George's is happy to provide music for the funeral. Our organists are available for a \$200 offering, although we can be flexible if needed. If you would like additional musicians, we can discuss this in the planning meeting with clergy.

Flowers: Flowers for the funeral service are usually provided by the family using an outside vendor, but our flower guild chair is available to consult with you and offer options. Arrangements that arrive separately are usually displayed in the entryway or at the reception.

Offerings: We do not charge for use of the church and fellowship hall (Sydnor) for funerals, or for the printing of the bulletins. The only fixed cost is for our organist (\$200). Most families do make a donation to the church in thanksgiving. Gifts have ranged from \$100 to over \$1000. It is not necessary to provide a separate gift to clergy, but if desired, you may donate to our discretionary funds so that we can help others.

When making your offering, please write one check to "St. George's" and include a note which describes how the check should be divided (\$200 for organist, \$XXX for donation for church, \$XXX for clergy discretionary fund, etc.). If the funeral home is writing the check on your behalf, please ask them to contact the church office.

Receptions: If a reception is desired at the church following the funeral, we ask families to provide food and staffing. Our staff are available to orient caterers or friends to our kitchen facility.

Graveyard: Unfortunately, our historic graveyard is at capacity for casket burial. In the case of cremation, we can scatter or bury the cremains in the church graveyard. A wall plaque lists names of persons who have been laid to rest in our graveyard in this way. If you wish to have someone listed on the plaque, we ask for a donation of \$300-\$500 to cover the cost of the plaque as well as upkeep of this historic site.

Memorials: We are grateful when families designate St. George's for memorial gifts. Memorial gifts help fund a variety of projects beyond our annual budget. If there is a specific project you would like to fund through these memorials, please talk with us. We will notify you when gifts arrive. If there are other memorial designations you would like us to share, please let us know.

Again, this is just a brief overview that we hope will be helpful to you as you begin to make plans. We will be ready for more conversation with you. God bless you and keep you and give a sense of peace that passes all understanding.

Faithfully in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joe" followed by a small cross symbol.

The Rev. Joseph H. Hensley, Jr.
Rector