

## FUNERAL PRACTICE & POLICY

- 1 Any deceased person is eligible for a Funeral - whether they are regular worshipping members of the community, or not. This provided that the accepted Anglican form of service is used.
- 2 The Anglican Church of Southern Africa (ACSA) requires in the Canon rubrics relating to Funeral Services, that the coffin be present for the **Funeral Service** - whether in the Church or a designated chapel. This is not negotiable.
- 3 Our present day culture is often recognized and characterized by our ability to deny death. We too often only have regard for what is beautiful and living, what is successful and what reflects good health. Yet in our Christian understanding we are called to recognize what is also “unlovely”, what can sometimes be regarded as “failure” and above all what is an inescapable reality - death. It is a reality, although painful to experience. We cannot deny it in any way.
- 4 The funeral service should preferably take place in a regular place of worship (i.e. the church building). This is because death is a part of our shared life as the body of Christ, and so it is appropriate that a death rite should take place in our place of regular worship. Since the crematorium and the Funeral Home are not places of regular worship, they should not usually be the venue for a funeral.
- 5 If there is to be a “viewing” at the church, it is appropriate that this takes place before the Funeral liturgy begins. Likewise, if there are to be tributes or eulogies, they should precede the Funeral rite. - Our liturgy is beautiful and solemn, and really should proceed without interpolation.
- 6 The funeral rite should begin at the advertised time. When planning a funeral, please be sensitive to the fact that the church may be needed for other celebrations, or the priest may have other pastoral responsibilities to attend to. Beginning and ending timeously ensures that all concerned are able to give the necessary attention to the celebration at hand
- 7 NO photographs or videos are to be taken inside the Church.
- 8 We do not have an “open” graveyard, and so we cannot conduct a burial in the church grounds. One of the local cemeteries would need to be approached, if a burial were to be required.
- 9 Within the church grounds, an interment of ashes that are contained in a receptacle can only take place in the area designated as a Garden of Remembrance. Ashes that are not contained in a receptacle may be interred anywhere in the church grounds. Either way, the permission of the rector and churchwardens is required before interment can take place (*See: Application for Interment*).
- 10 If family and friends would like to make a donation to the church (in cash or in kind) in memory of the deceased, they should first discuss the options with the rector and churchwardens

Before structural changes can be made to the church plant, Vestry has to agree to the changes AND the bishop's faculty needs to be obtained. And, even if the items are moveable (and therefore do not require the aforementioned endorsements), the permission of the rector and churchwardens should still be obtained.

### THINGS THE APPLICANTS NEED TO DO

- 1 The bereaved should contact the Parish Secretary or one of the Clergy BEFORE the Funeral Home, if at all possible. This is a stressful, emotional time, and a priest can offer both guidance and support. The wider community can also offer various caring ministries, including prayer
- 2 The bereaved should contact the Funeral Home, so that they can remove the body. One would need to check whether there are any existing policies, etc. BEFORE making a choice as to which company to approach. Obviously, if the deceased has a policy with a particular company, they should be approached. If there is no policy, your priest will be able to offer counsel as to who should be approached. It is important that access to the Last Will and Testament (ORIGINAL ONLY) be known about as this document will in due course have to be submitted to the organization handling the Estate.
- 3 The priest makes contact with the bereaved, to plan the funeral (*see: Funeral Arrangements*). The priest and/or the Parish Office contacts those who are to be involved in the funeral and the funeral tea.
- 4 The bereaved should make an appointment to meet with the Funeral Director, as soon as possible. When he/she/they go to meet him/her, they should take the deceased's ID book and any Funeral policies.

At this meeting, if the deceased is to be cremated, the next-of-kin will be asked difficult questions such as what the deceased should be wearing when the cremation takes place. If possible, it would be advisable to take a family member or a friend along, for support.

*Policy approved and adopted by Parish Council in October 2013*