

Clarence Presbyterian Church

GUIDE TO  
FUNERALS AND  
MEMORIAL SERVICES



**Clarence Presbyterian Church**

9675 Main Street

Clarence, New York 14031

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Dear Friends,

The death of a loved one is something that touches the hearts of all of us. When a loved one dies, we desire the best for him or her. We want the funeral or memorial service to be a meaningful one that is personalized. The Scriptures, hymns and remembrances are to give honor to God and our loved one. We want to gather for consolation.

It is for this reason that you have the options of choosing the readings, selecting hymns and sharing memories of the deceased. This booklet gives you some options, which you can choose. I use the word “options” because this is not required. You may leave the entire funeral in the hands of the minister, if you wish.

I advise you to read this book and then talk over with your family and friends the choices you can make. If you have any questions about the service please feel free to call.

It is my hope that this planning book will be of some comfort to you and assure you that the prayers of our community of faith are with you in your time of need.

Sincerely in Christ,

Gregory Hall

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## **CHOOSING SCRIPTURES**

The readings from Scripture may be done by the Minister or by readers selected by the family. The family may choose two or three readings from the Old Testament and two or three readings from the New Testament



### **OLD TESTAMENT READINGS**

1

Job 19:23-27

O that my words were written down!  
O that they were inscribed in a book!  
O that with an iron pen and with lead  
they were engraved on a rock forever!  
For I know that my Redeemer lives,  
and that at the last he will stand upon the earth;  
and after my skin has been thus destroyed,  
then in my flesh I shall see God,  
whom I shall see on my side,  
and my eyes shall behold, and not another.  
My heart faints within me!

2

Ecclesiastes 3:1-15

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:  
a time to be born, and a time to die;  
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;  
a time to kill, and a time to heal;  
a time to break down, and a time to build up;  
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;  
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;  
a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;

a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;  
a time to seek, and a time to lose;  
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;  
a time to tear, and a time to sew;  
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;  
a time to love, and a time to hate;  
a time for war, and a time for peace.

What gain have the workers from their toil? I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with. He has made everything suitable for its time; moreover he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. I know that there is nothing better for them than to be happy and enjoy themselves as long as they live; moreover, it is God's gift that all should eat and drink and take pleasure in all their toil. I know that whatever God does endures forever; nothing can be added to it, nor anything taken from it; God has done this, so that all should stand in awe before him. That which is, already has been; that which is to be, already is; and God seeks out what has gone by.

3

Isaiah 40:1-11

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.

Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,

and cry to her

that she has served her term,

that her penalty is paid,

that she has received from the Lord's hand

double for all her sins.

A voice cries out:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,

make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Every valley shall be lifted up,

and every mountain and hill be made low;

the uneven ground shall become level,  
and the rough places a plain.  
Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,  
and all people shall see it together,  
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."  
A voice says, "Cry out!"  
And I said, "What shall I cry?"  
All people are grass,  
their constancy is like the flower of the field.  
The grass withers, the flower fades,  
when the breath of the Lord blows upon it;  
surely the people are grass.  
The grass withers, the flower fades;  
but the word of our God will stand forever.  
Get you up to a high mountain,  
O Zion, herald of good tidings;  
lift up your voice with strength,  
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,  
lift it up, do not fear;  
say to the cities of Judah,  
"Here is your God!"  
See, the Lord God comes with might,  
and his arm rules for him;  
his reward is with him,  
and his recompense before him.  
He will feed his flock like a shepherd;  
he will gather the lambs in his arms,  
and carry them in his bosom,  
and gently lead the mother sheep.

4

Isaiah 40:28-31

Have you not known? Have you not heard?  
The Lord is the everlasting God,  
the Creator of the ends of the earth.  
He does not faint or grow weary;

his understanding is unsearchable.  
He gives power to the faint,  
and strengthens the powerless.  
Even youths will faint and be weary,  
and the young will fall exhausted;  
but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength,  
they shall mount up with wings like eagles,  
they shall run and not be weary,  
they shall walk and not faint.

5

Isaiah 65:17-25

For I am about to create new heavens  
and a new earth;  
the former things shall not be remembered  
or come to mind.  
But be glad and rejoice forever  
in what I am creating;  
for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy,  
and its people as a delight.  
I will rejoice in Jerusalem,  
and delight in my people;  
no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it,  
or the cry of distress.  
No more shall there be in it  
an infant that lives but a few days,  
or an old person who does not live out a lifetime;  
for one who dies at a hundred years will be considered a  
youth,  
and one who falls short of a hundred will be con-  
sidered accursed.  
They shall build houses and inhabit them;  
they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.  
They shall not build and another inhabit;  
they shall not plant and another eat;  
for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be,  
and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their  
hands.

They shall not labor in vain,  
or bear children for calamity;  
for they shall be offspring blessed by the Lord—  
and their descendants as well.

Before they call I will answer,  
while they are yet speaking I will hear.  
The wolf and the lamb shall feed together,  
the lion shall eat straw like the ox;  
but the serpent—its food shall be dust!  
They shall not hurt or destroy  
on all my holy mountain, says the Lord.

6

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.  
He makes me lie down in green pastures;  
he leads me beside still waters;  
he restores my soul.  
He leads me in right paths  
for his name's sake.  
Even though I walk through the darkest valley,  
I fear no evil;  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff—  
they comfort me.  
You prepare a table before me  
in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil;  
my cup overflows.  
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
all the days of my life,  
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord  
my whole life long.



7

Psalm 46:1-5, 10-11

God is our refuge and strength,  
a very present help in trouble.  
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,  
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea;  
though its waters roar and foam,  
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,  
the holy habitation of the Most High.  
God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved;  
God will help it when the morning dawns.  
"Be still, and know that I am God!  
I am exalted among the nations,  
I am exalted in the earth."  
The Lord of hosts is with us;  
the God of Jacob is our refuge.

8

Psalm 90:1-10, 12

Lord, you have been our dwelling place  
in all generations.  
Before the mountains were brought forth,  
or ever you had formed the earth and the world,  
from everlasting to everlasting you are God.  
You turn us back to dust,  
and say, "Turn back, you mortals."  
For a thousand years in your sight  
are like yesterday when it is past,  
or like a watch in the night.  
You sweep them away; they are like a dream,  
like grass that is renewed in the morning;  
in the morning it flourishes and is renewed;  
in the evening it fades and withers.  
For we are consumed by your anger;

by your wrath we are overwhelmed.  
You have set our iniquities before you,  
our secret sins in the light of your countenance.  
For all our days pass away under your wrath;  
our years come to an end like a sigh.  
The days of our life are seventy years,  
or perhaps eighty, if we are strong;  
even then their span is only toil and trouble;  
they are soon gone, and we fly away.  
So teach us to count our days  
that we may gain a wise heart.

9

Psalm 103

Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
and all that is within me,  
bless his holy name.  
Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
and do not forget all his benefits—  
who forgives all your iniquity,  
who heals all your diseases,  
who redeems your life from the Pit,  
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,  
who satisfies you with good as long as you live  
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.  
The Lord works vindication  
and justice for all who are oppressed.  
He made known his ways to Moses,  
his acts to the people of Israel.  
The Lord is merciful and gracious,  
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.  
He will not always accuse,  
nor will he keep his anger forever.  
He does not deal with us according to our sins,  
nor repay us according to our iniquities.  
For as the heavens are high above the earth,  
so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear  
him;

as far as the east is from the west,  
    so far he removes our transgressions from us.  
As a father has compassion for his children,  
    so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him.  
For he knows how we were made;  
    he remembers that we are dust.  
As for mortals, their days are like grass;  
    they flourish like a flower of the field;  
for the wind passes over it, and it is gone,  
    and its place knows it no more.  
But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to ever-  
lasting  
    on those who fear him,  
    and his righteousness to children's children,  
to those who keep his covenant  
    and remember to do his commandments.

The Lord has established his throne in the heavens,  
    and his kingdom rules over all.  
Bless the Lord, O you his angels,  
    you mighty ones who do his bidding,  
    obedient to his spoken word.  
Bless the Lord, all his hosts,  
    his ministers that do his will.  
Bless the Lord, all his works,  
    in all places of his dominion.  
Bless the Lord, O my soul.

10

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills—  
    from where will my help come?  
My help comes from the Lord,  
    who made heaven and earth.  
He will not let your foot be moved;  
    he who keeps you will not slumber.  
He who keeps Israel

will neither slumber nor sleep.  
The Lord is your keeper;  
the Lord is your shade at your right hand.  
The sun shall not strike you by day,  
nor the moon by night.  
The Lord will keep you from all evil;  
he will keep your life.  
The Lord will keep  
your going out and your coming in  
from this time on and forevermore.

11

Psalm 130  
Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.  
Lord, hear my voice!  
Let your ears be attentive  
to the voice of my supplications!  
If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,  
Lord, who could stand?  
But there is forgiveness with you,  
so that you may be revered.  
I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,  
and in his word I hope;  
my soul waits for the Lord  
more than those who watch for the morning,  
more than those who watch for the morning.  
O Israel, hope in the Lord!  
For with the Lord there is steadfast love,  
and with him is great power to redeem.  
It is he who will redeem Israel  
from all its iniquities.

12

Psalm 139:1-12  
O Lord, you have searched me and known me.  
You know when I sit down and when I rise up;  
you discern my thoughts from far away.  
You search out my path and my lying down,

and are acquainted with all my ways.  
Even before a word is on my tongue,  
O Lord, you know it completely.  
You hem me in, behind and before,  
and lay your hand upon me.  
Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;  
it is so high that I cannot attain it.  
Where can I go from your spirit?  
Or where can I flee from your presence?  
If I ascend to heaven, you are there;  
if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.  
If I take the wings of the morning  
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,  
even there your hand shall lead me,  
and your right hand shall hold me fast.  
If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me,  
and the light around me become night,"  
even the darkness is not dark to you;  
the night is as bright as the day,  
for darkness is as light to you.

### NEW TESTAMENT LESSONS

EPISTLES  
13

Romans 8:14-23, 31-39

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. For you did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption. When we cry, "Abba Father!" it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ—if, in fact, we suffer with him so that we may also be glorified with him.

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of

the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written,

"For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered."

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

14

Romans 14:7-9, 10b-12

We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. 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. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

We will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written,

"As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,  
and every tongue shall give praise to God."  
So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

15

1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-44, 50, 53-58

Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died. For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead has also come through a human being; for as all die in Adam, so all will be made alive in Christ. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

Someone will ask, "How are the dead raised? With what kind of body do they come?" Fool! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. And as for what you sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body.

So it is with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable, what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a physical body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body.

What I am saying, brothers and sisters, is this: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality. When this perishable body puts on imperishability, and this mortal body puts on immortality, then the saying that is written will be fulfilled:

"Death has been swallowed up in victory."

"Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death, is your sting?"

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

16

2 Corinthians 4:16—5:1

We do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

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.

17

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet



the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage one another with these words.

18

Revelation 21:1-4, 22-25; 22:3-5

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

"See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them as their God;

they will be his peoples,

and God himself will be with them;

he will wipe every tear from their eyes.

Death will be no more;

mourning and crying and pain will be no more,

for the first things have passed away."

I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. Its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.

## Gospels

19

Matthew 18:1-5, 10

The disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a child, whom he put among them, and said, "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.

"Take care that you do not despise one of these little ones; for, I tell you, in heaven their angels continually see the face of my Father in heaven."

20

Mark 10:13-16

People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

21

Luke 23:33, 39-43

When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. One of the criminals who were hanged there kept deriding him and saying, "Are you not the Messiah? Save yourself and us!" But the other rebuked him, saying, "Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence

of condemnation? And we indeed have been condemned justly, for we are getting what we deserve for our deeds, but this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." He replied, "Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in Paradise."

22

John 11:17-27

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world."

23

John 14:1-6, 25-27

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way

to the place where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?" Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. "I have said these things to you while I am still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid."



## MUSIC FOR THE FUNERAL SERVICE



The music for the service is usually provided by our Music Director Mrs. Kotoe Shimojo. Her phone number is 636-5173. She will work with any soloist or visiting musician you may wish to have. The following list of hymns is by no means complete, but will give you some ideas for music:

|                                |                          |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| For All the Saints             | Near to the Heart of God |
| Give Thanks for Lives          | Lord of the Living       |
| Amazing Grace                  | How Great Thou Art       |
| Abide With Me                  | A Mighty Fortress        |
| O God Our Help In Ages         | Lead Kindly Light        |
| Be Thou My Vision              | How Firm a Foundation    |
| O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go |                          |

## SHARING MEMORIES



During the service before the prayers of the people there is an opportunity for a family member or friend to share a reflection about the deceased. When planning this time the following should be kept in mind:

- The thoughts should focus on the life of the deceased and the meaning of his/her life.
- Ordinarily only one or two persons should speak.

- Three to five minutes is a suitable amount of time for such a reflection.
- It is helpful to have the remarks written out beforehand so that the speaker does not lose the train of thought.

## RECEPTIONS



As a service to the family, the Fellowship Committee of our Church can provide a reception for those attending the service. This is held in our Fellowship Hall. The reception is offered immediately following the service or after the burial at a local cemetery.

Receptions—There is no charge, but donations may be made to the church. Donations are based on the fare chosen by the family.

## FEES



There is no charge for the use of our building for funeral or memorial services. We encourage families to remit the following fees through the funeral home:

- Organist—\$150
- Soloist—\$75
- Minister's suggested honorarium—\$200
- Sexton—\$50



*Clarence Presbyterian  
Church  
Growing, Serving, Celebrating*

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