

Funeral Policy of Johns Island Presbyterian Church

Service of Witness to the Resurrection

At Johns Island Presbyterian Church, the Resurrection is a central belief of our Christian faith and shapes our attitudes and responses to the event of death. Death brings loss, sorrow and grief to us all. In the face of death, we affirm with tears and with joy the hope of the Gospel we know in Jesus Christ. We do not bear death alone but are sustained by the power of the Holy Spirit and the Church. As a congregation, we offer a ministry of love and hope to all who grieve.

The sanctuary and the cemetery of Johns Island Presbyterian Church are made available for services for members and those connected to our church family. The Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) provides guidelines for a Service of Witness to the Resurrection to affirm God's power over death. The service begins with the readings of scripture, and it is appropriate to sing hymns, psalms, and spirituals. A sermon or meditation may be included. The people may make an affirmation of faith. It is also appropriate to celebrate the life of the deceased by recalling aspects of the life of the one who has died, particularly as they relate to their Christian character and discipleship.

Prayers shall be offered, giving thanks to God:

1. For the life of Jesus Christ and the promise of the Gospel;
2. For the gift of the life of the one who has died;
3. For the comfort of the Holy Spirit;
4. For the community of faith.

making intercessions:

5. For the family members and loved ones who grieve;
6. For those who minister to and support the bereaved;
7. For those who suffer loss.

lifting supplications:

8. For faith and grace for all who are present;

concluding with the Lord's Prayer.

The Service ends by commending the one who has died to the care of the eternal God and sending the people forth with a Benediction. This service may be observed before or after the committal of the body.

The Service of Witness to the Resurrection at Johns Island Presbyterian Church shall be a Christian and Presbyterian service, rather than a secular or non-denominational service. For this reason, when a Service is held at Johns Island Presbyterian Church, any club, civic, or fraternal ceremonies are to be conducted at the funeral home, rather than in the church sanctuary. If such ceremonies are anticipated as part of a graveside service, they should take place prior to the Christian committal service.

When the casket is present in the church, it shall remain closed at all times in order that attention in the service is directed to God.

There are ordinarily no Services of Witness to the Resurrection on Sunday.

It is the responsibility of the Pastor of JIPC, in consultation with the family of the deceased, to plan and lead Services of Witness to the Resurrection. Session approval is required for other worship leaders to participate in the service. Hymns and scripture readings should be chosen which affirm the goodness and grace of God, and which give comfort and support to those who

grieve. No prerecorded music will be used. The Music Director will provide suitable sacred music and is available for consultation with the family concerning these musical selections. Additional instrumentalists or vocalists may also be used, but must be approved by the church's Music Director. The family is expected to cover the cost of additional musicians.

For members of Johns Island Presbyterian Church, there are no charges or fees for use of the church's facilities or for the services of the staff. Any honorarium the family wishes to give to employees of the church, should be made to Johns Island Presbyterian Church, with the intended recipient in the lower left-hand corner of the check, and delivered to the church office. Should the family wish to contribute to the maintenance and care of JIPC's cemetery, such checks should also be delivered to the church office.

“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.” John 14:27