



FAITHFULLY GRIEVING,
CELEBRATING LIFE,
AND
WITNESSING TO THE RESURRECTION



FAITHFULLY GRIEVING, CELEBRATING LIFE, AND WITNESSING TO THE RESURRECTION

- Is fully integrated with living faithfully in all the dimensions of life
- All of life, which includes grief and gratitude, dying and death, mourning and celebration: grounded in God: Eternal Parent, Christ, and Holy Spirit; Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer
- “The Holy Mystery that created me will sustain me.”



A BRIEF STATEMENT OF FAITH OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

Opening lines:

In life and in death we belong to God.

Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,

and the communion of the Holy Spirit,
we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel,
whom alone we worship and serve.



A BRIEF STATEMENT OF FAITH OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

Closing lines:

With believers in every time and place,
we rejoice that nothing in life or in death
can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our
Lord.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

SPIRITUAL ENGAGEMENT WITH END-OF-LIFE PRE-PLANNING

Gift to oneself:

- embrace the sheer gift of life, given by God, as beloved child of God
- grounds one in faith in the present and orients with hope toward the future
- enhances meaning and depth, quality and choices, perspectives and strength
- stimulates courage and resilience; living in the surety of God's grace
- grows faith and trust, gratitude and hope, and acceptance
- deepens love of life, lessens fear and anxiety, deepens security in God's love

Gift to family:

- act of love
- act of support in crisis, overwhelm, loss and grief
- gift of faith and legacy

ACCEPTING THIS INVITATION AS OPPORTUNITY FOR GROWTH

Accept the invitation;

to engage the medical/physical side to plan and share: helps us to lean into and share our faith, claiming the God who created us is the mystery who will sustain us beyond this earthly life – and for our loved ones.

to create meaning and understanding by reflecting on own life story – and find and articulate God was with you all along, IS with you all along

to name what you believe, articulate a faith statement/articulate beliefs, and claim other important expressions of your faith and life through hymns and scriptures – provides more strength for all that life brings

to plan service offers the opportunity to grow in faith by facing death, claiming that the eventual end of earthly life does not end life with God, and helps grow faith and trust in God that “all will be well with my soul”



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A SERVICE OF WITNESS TO THE RESURRECTION

Key understandings:

- This service is an affirmation of faith in God's love for all people, a love that strengthens and supports even in the midst of grief; a love which is stronger than death and never ends.
- This service bears witness to the sure and certain hope of eternal life, promised in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- In the face of death, Christians affirm with tears and joy the hope of the Gospel, and the central doctrine of resurrection and eternal life.

A SERVICE OF WITNESS TO THE RESURRECTION

Key understandings (continued):

- This service occurs in community: Christians do not bear grief in isolation, but are sustained by the power of the Spirit, the love of God, and the ministry of love and hope of the community of faith.
- Paschal candle moved to central place: symbolizes the light of the risen Christ, which shines even in the midst of the darkness of death.
- This service also celebrates life! Gives thanks for the unique gift of life to this particular beloved child of God, and shines a light on their love, legacy, and witness to faith which shines on.



ELEMENTS FOR PRE-PLANNING SERVICE

- Cremation or casket burial; how and where
- Hymns
- Scriptures
 - Psalm 23 is optional
- Celebration of Life (speakers)



ELEMENTS FOR PRE-PLANNING SERVICE:

- Other music, if desired
- Visitation, display, flowers, etc.
- Pastoral support: pre-planning; for family at time of death
- Additional elements: pastoral leadership, Apostles' Creed (or other affirmation of faith), doxology, prayer of thanksgiving
- Support of pastors – for pre-planning; for planning with family