ORDER OF WORSHIP
FOR CHRISTIAN BURIAL

The Order of Worship for Christian Burial should be conducted in the church, preferably at a time when the congregation can be present. The casket should be closed before the service and thereafter remain closed. It may be appropriate that it be covered with a pall or other suitable covering. If there are to be flowers at the church, they should be limited in number.

The Approach to God

VOTUM

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Amen.

Or,

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

SENTENCES

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Matthew 11:28-29

Or,

I am the resurrection and the life, says the Lord; whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. John 11:25-26

Or,

Another appropriate passage, such as Job 1:21; Romans 14:7-9; John 14:25-27

SALUTATION

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Or,
Grace to you and peace from him who is and was and who is to come, and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings on earth.

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Revelation 1:4b-6

A Hymn may be sung or the service may proceed to the Confession or the Prayer of Illumination.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Eternal God, before whose face the generations rise and pass away, you formed us in your image and willed us to live before you in peace and love. We confess we are not the people you created or called us to be—we have not loved you with our whole heart or our neighbors as ourselves. Forgive our sin, O God, and create in us a new and willing spirit, so that in our living, we may serve you, and in our dying, enter the joy of your presence, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

and

Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

With everlasting love I will have compassion on you, says the Lord your Redeemer. I, I am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins. Return to me, for I have redeemed you. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Or,

Who is in a position to condemn? Only Christ, and Christ died for us, Christ rose for us, Christ reigns in power for us, Christ prays for us. Hear and believe the good news of the Gospel: God is love, and in his love we are forgiven. Amen.

Or,
For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.

John 3:16, 17

May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ pardon all our sins. Amen.

THE WORD OF GOD

PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Let us pray.

Eternal God, our refuge and our strength, console and support those who are sorrowful through the comfort of your Word, so we might be confident in this and every time of need, trusting in your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Or,

Almighty God, whose love never fails, and who can turn the shadow of death into the light of life, illumine us through your Word; so that hearing your promises, we may be lifted out of darkness and distress into the light and peace of your presence, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

LESSONS

There will ordinarily be two or three lessons, one from the Old Testament, one from the portion of the New Testament other than the Gospels, and one from the Gospels.

Old Testament: Psalm 23; 27; 42:11-43; 5; 84:1-4, 8-12; 121

The reading may be followed by the Gloria Patri:

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.


SERMON

A brief sermon may be preached. The focus of the sermon is the hope set before us in the Gospel: that in life, in death, in life beyond death, God is with us. It may also be appropriate to acknowledge this hope as it was manifested in the life of the one who has died in the faith.

ASCRIPTION OF PRAISE

Now to the one who is able to keep you from falling, to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

To the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and for ever. Amen.

A Hymn may be sung.

The Response to God

CONFESSION OF FAITH

Let us confess our Christian faith.

I. THE APOSTLES’ CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
   He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.
   He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.
   He descended to the dead.
   On the third day he rose again.
   He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
   He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Or,

II. THE APOSTLES’ CREED

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, dead, and buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven,
and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father almighty.
From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

N.B. A metrical version of the creed may be sung using RIL, hymn 609.

Or,

What then shall we say to this?
If God is for us, who is against us?
Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?
Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution,
or famine, or nakedness,
or peril or sword?
No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.
For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, 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.

Romans 8:31, 35, 37-39

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING AND INTERCESSION

Let us pray.

O God, from the dawn of the first day you have cared for your people. By your hand we were created; in your hand we live; and to your hand we return again. You have revealed yourself in many and various way, until, in the fullness of time, your word was made flesh and dwelt among us in the person of Jesus Christ our Lord. In his life, death, and resurrection we find our calling in this world and our hope for the world to come.

Therefore with your whole Church on earth and with all the company of heaven we worship and adore your glorious name:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest! Blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!

O God, you understand our grief, for you have felt our pain. Jesus wept with Mary and Martha at the death of Lazarus, and the heavens were darkened when your own Son died upon the cross. Comfort us with the knowledge that Jesus raised his friend and will raise all who hear his voice, for he destroyed the darkness of death when you raised him to the light of Easter morn.

We give you thanks in this day for your servants, who, having lived this life in faith, now live eternally with you. Especially we thank you for N.____, for the gift of his her life, for the grace you have given him her, for all in him her that was good and kind and faithful. (Here mention may be made of attributes or service.) We thank you that for him her death is past, and pain is ended, and he she has entered the joy you have prepared in the company of all the saints.
Give us faith to look beyond touch and sight, and in seeing that we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, enable us to run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Bring us at last to your eternal peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose name we are bold to pray:

**LORD’S PRAYER**

**Our Father in heaven,**
  hallowed be your name,
  your kingdom come,
  your will be done,
  on earth as in heaven.
**Give us today our daily bread.**
**Forgive us our sins**
  as we forgive those
  who sin against us.
**Save us from the time of trial,**
  and deliver us from evil.
**For the kingdom, the power,**
  and the glory are yours,
  now and for ever. Amen.

**Our Father, who art in heaven,**
  hallowed be thy name,
  thy kingdom come,
  thy will be done,
  on earth as it is in heaven.
**Give us this day our daily bread.**
**And forgive us our debts,**
  as we forgive our debtors.
**And lead us not into temptation,**
  but deliver us from evil.
**For thine is the kingdom,**
  and the power, and the glory,
  for ever. Amen.

**COMMENDATION**

Into your hands, O merciful Savior, we commend your servant N._______.
Acknowledge, we pray, a sheep of your fold, a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming. Receive him her into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light.

Let us go forth in the name of Christ. Amen.

*A Hymn may be sung.*

*If the body is to be committed for burial, the service shall continue at the grave.*

**The Committal**

**LESSONS**

And I heard a voice from heaven saying, “Write this: Blessed are the dead who die
in the Lord.” “Blessed indeed,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!”

Rev. 14:13

Or,

I lift up my eyes to the hills. From whence does 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. Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade on your right hand. The sun shall not smite 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 forth and for evermore.

Psalm 121

Or,

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, 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, “Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. God will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away.”

Rev. 21:1-4

COMMITTAL

As the body is committed to the grave, earth may be cast upon the coffin by the minister and/or the family and friends of the deceased.

We have entrusted our brother sister, N.______, into the hands of God, and we now commit his her body to the ground deep elements this resting place, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord bless him her and keep him her, the Lord make his face to shine upon him her and be gracious unto him her, the Lord lift up his countenance upon him her and grant him her peace. Amen.

PRAYER

Let us pray.

O God, in the beginning you formed us from the dust of the earth and breathed into us the breath of life. So also, in these last days, you have promised to raise us from
the dust, so we might assume a new body at the coming of your Son. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ shall all be made alive. We thank you for this hope kindled within our hearts, that N.______, who has died, will in the twinkling of an eye be raised to life imperishable.

Look down with tender pity and compassion upon us in this day, and grant unto each of us the comfort of your spirit. Renew within us the gifts of faith, hope, and love, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, world without end. Amen.

BENEDICTION

Now the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in you that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever. And the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be and abide with you always. Amen.