

BURIAL SERVICE INFORMATION FORM

ST. ALBAN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH, ANNANDALE

This document is intended to be a companion to preplanning the disposition of the body with a memorial society or mortuary.

Concerning the Service

The death of a member of the church should be reported as soon as possible, and arrangements for the funeral should be made in consultation with the Rector of the congregation.

Baptized Christians are properly buried from the church. The service should be held at a time when the congregation has the opportunity to be present.

The coffin is to be closed before the service, and it remains closed thereafter. It is appropriate that it be covered with a pall or other suitable covering.

If necessary, or if desired, all or part of the service of Committal may be said in the church. If preferred, the committal service may take place before the service in the church. It may also be used prior to cremation.

A priest normally presides at the service. It is appropriate that the bishop, when present, presides at the Eucharist and pronounces the Commendation.

The sharing of memories about the deceased is an important pastoral ministry which Christians have for one another; however it is not an appropriate part of a funeral liturgy. St. Alban's holds with the Anglican tradition that eulogies for the deceased are not delivered during the service but are more appropriate for a reception or gathering before or after the service.

It is desirable that the lesson from the Old Testament, and the Epistle, be read by lay persons.

When the services of a priest cannot be obtained, a deacon or lay reader may preside at the service.

At the burial of a child, the passages from Lamentations, 1 John and John 6, together with Psalm 23, are recommended.

NOTE:

The liturgy for the dead is an Easter liturgy. It finds all its meaning in the Resurrection. Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we, too, shall be raised.

The liturgy, therefore, is characterized by joy, in the certainty 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 is all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

This joy, however, does not make human grief unchristian. The very love we have for each other in Christ brings deep sorrow when we are parted by death. Jesus himself wept at the grave of his friend. So, while we rejoice that one we love has entered into the nearer presence of our Lord, we sorrow in sympathy with those who mourn. Book of Common Prayer p. 507.

FUNERAL PLANNING SHEET

Full Name _____

Goes by _____

Date of Birth _____

Date of Death _____

Date of burial service _____

Time of burial service _____

Disposition of the Body

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full body burial | <input type="checkbox"/> Cremation after service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cremation before service | <input type="checkbox"/> Body willed to medical science |

Place of Disposition

- St. Alban's Memorial Grove
 Cemetery elsewhere: _____
 Other: _____

If St. Alban's Memorial Grove, will burial be part of the service, or private (family only)? public private

Place of Service

- St. Alban's
 Graveside: Where? _____
 Funeral Home: Where? _____
 Other: _____

Will the remains be present at the service? yes no

If no, will there be a photo of the deceased at the service? yes no

Type of Service

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Burial Service with Communion | <input type="checkbox"/> Rite II (BCP p. 491) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rite I (BCP p. 469) | Eucharistic Prayer: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D |
| Eucharistic Prayer: <input type="checkbox"/> I <input type="checkbox"/> II | |

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Burial Office only: | <input type="checkbox"/> Rite II (BCP p. 491) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rite I (BCP p. 469) | |

Ushers
(to hand out programs and open doors)

Gift bearers
(bring bread and wine to the altar)

Approximate number of guests: _____ Approximate number of family members: _____

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MUSIC

(See Appendix of suggested hymns for funeral and memorial services at St. Alban's)

Prelude request: _____

The processional may either be a spoken anthem or a processional hymn. There is one anthem for Rite I and two anthems for Rite II. For the Processional, select either an anthem or a hymn. Anthems: (BCP page 469 (Rite I), or BCP pages 491 & 492 (Rite II))

	Number	Title
Processional Hymn <i>or</i> Spoken anthem		
Gospel Hymn		
Communion Hymns		
Recessional Hymn		
Sanctus		

Postlude request: _____

Choir participation:

If Choir is available, would you like them to sing at the funeral? yes no

We suggest an offering to the Music Fund if the Choir is present at the Service.

Notes:

READINGS

(See appendix for readings)

Old Testament:

Lector: _____

- Isaiah 25: 6-9 (He will swallow up death in victory.)
- Isaiah 61:1-3 (To comfort those who mourn.)
- Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33 (The Lord is good to those who wait for him.)
- Wisdom 3:1-5, 9 (The souls of the righteous are in the hands of God.)
- Job 19:21-27a (I know that my Redeemer lives.)
- Other: _____

Canticle or Psalm:

Leader: _____

- Psalm 42:1-7
- Psalm 46
- Psalm 90:1-12
- Psalm 121
- Psalm 23
- Psalm 23 *K.V.J.*
- Psalm 130
- Psalm 139:1-11
- Psalm 116
- Canticle, number _____
- Hymn, number and tune _____
- Psalm 27
- Psalm 106:1-5

New Testament:

Lector: _____

- Romans 8: 14-19, 34-35, 37-39 (The glory that shall be revealed.)
- 1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 53-58 (The imperishable body.)
- 2. Corinthians 4:16-5:9 (Things that are unseen are eternal.)
- 1 John 3:1-2 (We shall be like him.)
- Revelation 7:9-17 (God shall wipe away every tear.)
- Revelation 21:2-7 (Behold, I make all things new.)

The Gospel:

(At a celebration of the Eucharist the Gospel is read by a deacon, priest or bishop).

- John 5:24-27 (He who believes has everlasting life.)
- John 6:37-40 (All that the Father gives me shall come to me.)
- John 10:11-16 (I am the good shepherd.)
- John 11:21-27 (I am the resurrection and the life.)
- John 14:1-6 (In my Father's house are many rooms.)

Prayers of the People:

Intercessor: _____

Memorial Gifts/donations (in lieu of flowers):

St. Alban's Episcopal Church Memorial Fund (*always included*)

St. Alban's Episcopal Church Memorial Grove Fund

Other (*Guests will be asked to send donations directly to the organization*)

Fee Schedule:

Clergy: A fee of \$300 is made by check payable *to the Priest*.

Organist: A fee of \$250 is made by check payable *to the organist*. Please make all arrangements for music directly with the organist.

Flowers: The church does not provide flowers for a funeral service, however, the family is welcome to order flowers if desired. For Saturday funerals the family can use the regular, Sunday altar flowers (delivered on Friday) or may order their own flowers. If the Sunday flowers are used they will remain on the altar. If you would like flowers for the service we ask that you contact our florist (below) to make arrangements. ***No other flowers are permitted in the church.***

Due to space constraints, one flower display is permitted in the narthex.

Annandale Florist is our regular, Sunday florist, and is familiar with our altar setup.

7025 Columbia Pike
Annandale, VA 22003
(703) 256-2666

Signature

Date

Appendix of hymns for funeral and memorial services at St. Alban's

The following hymns from *The Hymnal 1982* are especially appropriate for funeral and memorial services.

The columns to the right indicate the portions of the service for which a hymn is particularly appropriate.

(O = Opening; G = Gospel; P = Presentation; HE = Holy Eucharist (at Communion); C = Closing)

#	First line	Tune	O	G	*P	*HE	C
208	Alleluia! The strife is o'er, the battle done	<i>Victory</i>					
287	For all the saints, who from their labors rest	<i>Sine Nomine</i>					
336	Come with us, O blessed Jesus	<i>Werde munter</i>					
339	Deck thyself, my soul, with gladness	<i>Schmücke dich</i>					
358	Christ the Victorious, give to your servants	<i>Russia</i>					
376	Joyful, joyful, we adore thee	<i>Hymn to Joy</i>					
429	I'll praise my maker while I've breath	<i>Old 113th</i>					
487	Come, my Way, my Truth, my Life	<i>The Call</i>					
517	How lovely is thy dwelling-place	<i>Brother James' Air</i>					
620	Jerusalem, my happy home	<i>Land of Rest</i>					
621	Light's abode, celestial Salem	<i>Rhuddlan</i>					
623	O what their joy and their glory must be	<i>O quanta qualia</i>					
624	Jerusalem the golden, with milk and honey blest	<i>Ewing</i>					
625	Ye holy angels bright, who wait at God's right hand	<i>Darwall's 148th</i>					
636	How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord	<i>Foundation</i>					
637	How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord	<i>Lyons</i>					
645	The King of love my shepherd is	<i>St. Columba</i>					
646	The King of love my shepherd is	<i>Dominus regit me</i>					
657	Love divine, all loves excelling	<i>Hyfrydol</i>					
658	As longs the deer for cooling streams	<i>Martyrdom</i>					
662	Abide with me, fast falls the eventide	<i>Eventide</i>					
664	My Shepherd will supply my need	<i>Resignation</i>					
665	All my hope on God is founded	<i>Michael</i>					
680	O God, our help in ages past	<i>St. Anne</i>					
684	O for a closer walk with God	<i>Caithness</i>					
685	Rock of ages, cleft for me	<i>Toplady</i>					
690	Guide me, O thou great Jehovah	<i>Cwm Rhondda</i>					
691	My faith looks up to thee	<i>Olivet</i>					
706	In your mercy, Lord, you called me	<i>Halton Holgate</i>					
707	Take my life, and let it be	<i>Hollingside</i>					

These are only recommendations – there may be hymns that are particularly meaningful to you that you would like to include, and we are happy to include them. If you would like a hymn from another hymnal, we can certainly typeset it in music notation and include it in the worship leaflet, so long as we can abide by copyright restrictions.

Many of the hymns in our hymnal, particularly those traditionally sung on specific feast days like Easter, have verses with small asterisks next to them. These verses can usually be omitted without changing the sense of the words of the hymn. It's often a good idea to omit them, since they sometimes refer to specific days of the liturgical year.

These are simply recommendations – for example, if the table indicates a hymn is particularly appropriate for the Opening hymn, but you would prefer to have it sung at Communion, that’s totally fine.

You can work directly from this table when choosing hymns. We are also happy to meet with you and work through these choices together.

When choosing a Gospel hymn, it can be helpful to reflect upon the Gospel reading which immediately follows.

In lieu of a presentation hymn, you can opt for an organ voluntary, or some other instrumental music. If there are musicians in the family who are willing to perform, this is often a good moment to feature them.

If you anticipate a large number of attendees and expect many of them to receive Communion, it may be a good idea to choose two or three hymns for that portion of the service, in case one hymn is not long enough to cover the distribution of Communion.

*If there is not to be Communion, there is no need for a Presentation hymn or (a) hymn(s) during Communion.

Appendix of Suggested Readings

Suggested Old Testament Readings

Isaiah 25:6-9

On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-matured wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-matured wines strained clear. And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations; he will swallow up death for ever.

Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken. It will be said on that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us. This is the Lord for whom we have waited; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Isaiah 61:1-3

The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the broken-hearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners;
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.

They will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, to display his glory.

Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end;
they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

'The Lord is my portion,' says my soul, 'therefore I will hope in him.'

The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that seeks him.

It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord.

For the Lord will not reject for ever.

Although he causes grief, he will have compassion according to the abundance of his steadfast love;
for he does not willingly afflict or grieve anyone.

Wisdom 3:1-5,9

But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment will ever touch them. In the eyes of the foolish they seemed to have died, and their departure was thought to be a disaster, and their going from us to be their destruction; but they are at peace. For though in the sight of others they were punished, their hope is full of immortality. Having been disciplined a little, they will receive great good, because God tested them and found them worthy of himself; Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will abide with him in love, because grace and mercy are upon his holy ones, and he watches over his elect.

Job 19:21-27

Have pity on me, have pity on me, O you my friends,
for the hand of God has touched me!
Why do you, like God, pursue me,
never satisfied with my flesh?
'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 for ever!
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.

Suggested Psalms

Psalm 23

1. The LORD is my shepherd; *
I shall not be in want.
2. He makes me lie down in green pastures *
and leads me beside still waters.
3. He revives my soul *
and guides me along right pathways for his Name's sake.
4. Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I shall fear no evil; *
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
5. You spread a table before me in the presence of those
who trouble me; *
you have anointed my head with oil,
and my cup is running over.
6. Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days
of my life, *
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Psalm 23 (KJV)

1. The LORD is my shepherd; *
I shall not want.
2. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; *
he leadeth me beside the still waters.
3. He restoreth my soul; *
he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his Name's sake.
4. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; *
for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.
5. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; *
thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.
6. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, *
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Psalm 27

1. The LORD is my light and my salvation;
whom then shall I fear? *
the LORD is the strength of my life;
of whom then shall I be afraid?
2. When evildoers came upon me to eat up my flesh, *
it was they, my foes and my adversaries, who
stumbled and fell.
3. Though an army should encamp against me, *
yet my heart shall not be afraid;

4. And though war should rise up against me, *
yet will I put my trust in him.
5. One thing have I asked of the LORD;
one thing I seek; *
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days
of my life;
6. To behold the fair beauty of the LORD *
and to seek him in his temple.
7. For in the day of trouble he shall keep me safe
in his shelter; *
he shall hide me in the secrecy of his dwelling
and set me high upon a rock.
8. Even now he lifts up my head *
above my enemies round about me.
9. Therefore I will offer in his dwelling an oblation
with sounds of great gladness; *
I will sing and make music to the LORD.
10. Hearken to my voice, O LORD, when I call; *
have mercy on me and answer me.
11. You speak in my heart and say, "Seek my face." *
Your face, LORD, will I seek.
12. Hide not your face from me, *
nor turn away your servant in displeasure.
13. You have been my helper;
cast me not away; *
do not forsake me, O God of my salvation.
14. Though my father and my mother forsake me, *
the LORD will sustain me.
15. Show me your way, O LORD; *
lead me on a level path, because of my enemies.
16. Deliver me not into the hand of my adversaries, *
for false witnesses have risen up against me,
and also those who speak malice.
17. What if I had not believed
that I should see the goodness of the LORD *
in the land of the living!
18. O tarry and await the LORD'S pleasure;
be strong, and he shall comfort your heart; *
wait patiently for the LORD.

Psalm 42:1-7

1. As the deer longs for the water-brooks, *
so longs my soul for you, O God.
2. My soul is athirst for God, athirst for the living God; *
when shall I come to appear before the presence of God?
3. My tears have been my food day and night, *
while all day long they say to me,
"Where now is your God?"

4. I pour out my soul when I think on these things: *
how I went with the multitude and led them into the house of God,
5. With the voice of praise and thanksgiving, *
among those who keep holy-day.
6. Why are you so full of heaviness, O my soul? *
and why are you so disquieted within me?
7. Put your trust in God; *
for I will yet give thanks to him,
who is the help of my countenance, and my God.

Psalm 46

1. God is our refuge and strength, *
a very present help in trouble.
2. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be moved, *
and though the mountains be toppled into the
depths of the sea;
3. Though its waters rage and foam, *
and though the mountains tremble at its tumult.
4. The LORD of hosts is with us; *
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.
5. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, *
the holy habitation of the Most High.
6. God is in the midst of her;
she shall not be overthrown; *
God shall help her at the break of day.
7. The nations make much ado, and the kingdoms are shaken; *
God has spoken, and the earth shall melt away.
8. The LORD of hosts is with us; *
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.
9. Come now and look upon the works of the LORD, *
what awesome things he has done on earth.
10. It is he who makes war to cease in all the world; *
he breaks the bow, and shatters the spear,
and burns the shields with fire.
11. "Be still, then, and know that I am God; *
I will be exalted among the nations;
I will be exalted in the earth."
12. The LORD of hosts is with us; *
the God of Jacob is our stronghold.

Psalm 90:1-12

1. Lord, you have been our refuge *
from one generation to another.
2. Before the mountains were brought forth,
or the land and the earth were born, *
from age to age you are God.

3. You turn us back to the dust and say, *
"Go back, O child of earth."
4. For a thousand years in your sight are like yesterday
when it is past *
and like a watch in the night.
5. You sweep us away like a dream; *
we fade away suddenly like the grass.
6. In the morning it is green and flourishes; *
in the evening it is dried up and withered.
7. For we consume away in your displeasure; *
we are afraid because of your wrathful indignation.
8. Our iniquities you have set before you, *
and our secret sins in the light of your countenance.
9. When you are angry, all our days are gone; *
we bring our years to an end like a sigh.
10. The span of our life is seventy years,
perhaps in strength even eighty; *
yet the sum of them is but labor and sorrow,
for they pass away quickly and we are gone.
11. Who regards the power of your wrath? *
who rightly fears your indignation?
12. So teach us to number our days *
that we may apply our hearts to wisdom.

Psalm 106:1-5

1. Hallelujah!
Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, *
for his mercy endures for ever.
2. Who can declare the mighty acts of the LORD *
or show forth all his praise?
3. Happy are those who act with justice *
and always do what is right!
4. Remember me, O LORD, with the favor you have
for your people, *
and visit me with your saving help;
5. That I may see the prosperity of your elect
and be glad with the gladness of your people, *
that I may glory with your inheritance.

Psalm 116

1. I love the LORD, because he has heard the voice of my supplication, *
because he has inclined his ear to me whenever I called upon him.
2. The cords of death entangled me;
the grip of the grave took hold of me; *
I came to grief and sorrow.

3. Then I called upon the Name of the LORD: *
"O LORD, I pray you, save my life."
4. Gracious is the LORD and righteous; *
our God is full of compassion.
5. The LORD watches over the innocent; *
I was brought very low, and he helped me.
6. Turn again to your rest, O my soul, *
for the LORD has treated you well.
7. For you have rescued my life from death, *
my eyes from tears, and my feet from stumbling.
8. I will walk in the presence of the LORD *
in the land of the living.
9. I believed, even when I said,
"I have been brought very low." *
In my distress I said, "No one can be trusted."
10. How shall I repay the LORD *
for all the good things he has done for me?
11. I will lift up the cup of salvation *
and call upon the Name of the LORD.
12. I will fulfill my vows to the LORD *
in the presence of all his people.
13. Precious in the sight of the LORD *
is the death of his servants.
14. O LORD, I am your servant; *
I am your servant and the child of your handmaid;
you have freed me from my bonds.
15. I will offer you the sacrifice of thanksgiving *
and call upon the Name of the LORD.
16. I will fulfill my vows to the LORD *
in the presence of all his people,
17. In the courts of the LORD'S house, *
in the midst of you, O Jerusalem.
Hallelujah!

Psalm 139:1-11

1. LORD, you have searched me out and known me; *
you know my sitting down and my rising up;
you discern my thoughts from afar.
2. You trace my journeys and my resting-places *
and are acquainted with all my ways.
3. Indeed, there is not a word on my lips, *
but you, O LORD, know it altogether.
4. You press upon me behind and before *
and lay your hand upon me.
5. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; *
it is so high that I cannot attain to it.
6. Where can I go then from your Spirit? *
where can I flee from your presence?

7. If I climb up to heaven, you are there; *
if I make the grave my bed, you are there also.
8. If I take the wings of the morning *
and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
9. Even there your hand will lead me *
and your right hand hold me fast.
10. If I say, "Surely the darkness will cover me, *
and the light around me turn to night,"
11. Darkness is not dark to you;
the night is as bright as the day; *
darkness and light to you are both alike.

Romans 8:14-19, 34-35, 37-39

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; 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?

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.

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

But in fact 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.

But 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. 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.

2 Corinthians 4:16-5:9

So 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. For in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling— if indeed, when we have taken it off we will not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we groan under our burden, because we wish not to be unclothed but to be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord— for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him.

1 John 3:1-2

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and that is what we are. The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is.

Revelation 7:9-17

After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. They cried out in a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!' And all the angels stood around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, singing, 'Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God for ever and ever! Amen.'

Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, 'Who are these, robed in white, and where have they come from?' I said to him, 'Sir, you are the one that knows.' Then he said to me, 'These are they who have come out of the great ordeal; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'

For this reason they are before the throne of God, and worship him day and night within his temple, and the one who is seated on the throne will shelter them. They will hunger no more, and thirst no more; the sun will not strike them, nor any scorching heat; for the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.'

Suggested Gospel Readings

John 5:24-27

Very truly, I tell you, anyone who hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life, and does not come under judgement, but has passed from death to life. ‘Very truly, I tell you, the hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For just as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself; and he has given him authority to execute judgement, because he is the Son of Man.’

John 6:37-40

‘Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away; for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day.’

John 10:11-16

‘I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.’

John 11:21-27

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.’

John 14:1-6

‘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.’