

FUNERAL POLICY



St. John African Methodist Episcopal Church

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708 Fifteenth Street North
Birmingham, Alabama

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I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.
II Timothy 4: 7 - 9

As a people of faith, we understand the funeral service is an important event in the life community which provides;

- An opportunity to worship God who is the creator, provider and sustainer of life.
- An opportunity to witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the resurrection of those who believe in Him.
- A chance to gather with family and friends in holy and healthy space to; grieve, rejoice, reflect, and remember.

Following are guidelines for funeral services held at Saint John African Methodist Episcopal Church in Birmingham, Alabama.

Contact

The pastor should be notified immediately when a church member dies. The church office telephone number is (205) 251 - 3764. Rev. Mashod A. Evans, mobile number is (205) 240 – 5655. **No funeral arrangements are to be made without consulting the pastor and the church office.**

When making arrangements, please be mindful that no services are scheduled on the following days: Sundays, Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Day.

Viewing

As the church schedule permits, the sanctuary will be available for wakes and visitation the day before the service. Moreover, the church will be available at least two – hours prior to the service for viewing. If the family chooses, they may view the decedant during the processional at the beginning of service. Once the casket is closed after the processional, **THE CASKET WILL REMAIN CLOSED.**

- Photography and videography are allowed with the family's permission once the casket has been closed.

Eulogy/ Clergy Participation

Officiating the funeral service and delivering the eulogy is the responsibility of the pastor or their designee, (except in the case of services which include Bishop or Presiding Elder). If a family wishes to incorporate other clergy/ worship participants in the service, they must notify the pastor for their approval prior to extending any invitations. Participants are asked to be at the service thirty (30) minutes prior to the beginning of service.

Order of Worship

The funeral program is to follow the order of African Methodist worship as outlined in Hymnal/ Book of Worship. All programs are to be approved by the pastor and church office prior to final printing.

Music

In the Christian context, the funeral service is a worship experience. Often families will choose to incorporate favorite music or possibly a favorite poem of the decedent. Any secular (Non – Christian) music/ poetry is limited to wakes, family hours or services held at the funeral home and not in the church sanctuary. The pastor and church office will assist family in selecting appropriate worship music.

Masonic and Fraternal Services

Many individuals are active in various civic, professional, Masonic and fraternal organizations. Any Masonic and fraternal rites and services are limited to the wake or the family hour, and not during the funeral service. Organization may however submit a letter of condolence or resolution which can be incorporated in the funeral service.

Remarks/ Acknowledgements

If the family chooses to incorporate remarks during the funeral service, families should identify **one - four** individuals who will provide brief reflection(s) (*three minutes*). If the family chooses to acknowledge cards, letters or resolutions, families should identify **one - four** resolutions/ letters to be read during the service.

Repast

The repast is a courtesy of the church for family and friends to gather for food and fellowship. The **Family Meal Ministry** of Saint John works closely with families to provide a repast meal for *members*. For each service, the church will sponsor the repast meal (fixed – menu) for fifty persons. Above fifty (50) individuals, the family will be responsible for the cost, of five (\$5.00) dollars per person.

Schedule of Fees

Below are a schedule of fees for both members and non – members.

Members

Use of Sanctuary (Funeral Service)	<i>No Charge</i>
Use of Sanctuary (Wake)	<i>No Charge</i>
Use of Fellowship Hall	<i>No Charge</i>
Clergy	<i>No Charge</i>
Musician	<i>No Charge</i>
Custodian	<i>No Charge</i>
Fellowship Meal *	<i>No Charge</i>

Non – Members

Use of Sanctuary (Funeral Service)	<i>\$150.00</i>
Use of Sanctuary (Wake) *	<i>\$ 75.00</i>
Use of Fellowship Hall	<i>\$100.00</i>
Officiant/ Eulogist	<i>\$125.00</i>
Musician	<i>\$100.00</i>
Custodian (Sanctuary)	<i>\$ 75.00</i>
Custodian (Sanctuary & Fellowship Hall)	<i>\$100.00</i>

*No charge for fellowship meals which feed fewer than 50 people, \$5.00 per person for 51 people or more (**MEMBERS ONLY**).

* Fees apply to wakes held the day prior to service

Additional Information

- The funeral service at Saint John is a privilege of every church member (in good and regular standing), and while there are no charges, families may consider making a donation to the church in memory of their loved one.
- The **Family Meal Ministry** and the Fellowship Meal are privileges of church members. Non – church members may utilize the church fellowship hall as the church schedule permits, however, outside catering must be secured.

Order of Worship for Funeral Service

Saint John African Methodist Episcopal Church

Birmingham, Alabama

- **Prelude**
A period of prayer as worshippers gathers in reflective meditation
- **Processional**
The entry of the clergy, followed by the family
- **Hymn of Triumph/ Ministry of Music**
Hymn, choral selection, or congregational song.
- **Invocation**
A prayer which invites the Holy Spirit to lead and guide congregants in worship
- **Choral Response**
Congregational song sung in response to prayer
- **Ministry of Music**
Anthem, hymn, choral selection, or congregational song.
- **Scripture**
The written word of God, (Old Testament New Testament, Scripture).
- **Remarks/ Acknowledgements/ Resolutions/ Obituary**
- **Ministry of Music**
Hymn, choral selection, or congregational song.
- **Eulogy**
The message of hope delivered by the pastor which honors God, speaks well of the deceased, and comforts the family.
- **Recessional**
The departure of the clergy, the casket, the family and congregation
- **Postlude**
Period of song and prayer as worshippers prepare to leave.