

Presiding Pastor

**The Rev. Robert Vodra
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**First Congregational Church of Dunbarton
United Church of Christ
6 Stark Highway North
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Funeral Policy

When a death in the family occurs, one's religious heritage assumes a special sense of significance. It is during our season of grief that many of us reaffirm our faith in Jesus Christ, finding comfort in houses of worship and the community of care they embody. This document is designed to outline our policies and clarify your expectations with regard to funeral rites and services here at the Dunbarton Congregational Church.

Our primary goal during times of loss is to provide pastoral care to those who grieve. In the tradition of the United Church of Christ, a funeral service itself is considered a celebration—a celebration of life and a celebration of faith. The actual service should accomplish three things: 1) provide affirmation for feelings of loss, anger, confusion and sadness, 2) provide a time and space to remember in truth the one who has died, and 3) provide a message of hope and reassurance that in Christ all things are made new, that death is the doorway to new life for those we have lost *and* for ourselves. Our aim is to be sensitive to your needs and feelings as we walk together through the emotional turmoil that is grief. In our role as a community church, ongoing pastoral care will be provided to church members and is available to non-members to the greatest extent possible.

For Christians, death signifies a transition, not an ending. Maintaining the delicate balance between joy and sorrow requires the pastor to be both compassionate of heart and solid in faith. Our goal is to acknowledge the cruel severing death brings while planting seeds of hope that will eventually lead to healing and wholeness. Like birth, death is one of life's most hallowed moments. Let us honor it together with reverence and with joy.

**The Board of Deacons has established the following policies
and guidelines concerning funerals:**

Presiding Clergy:

It is understood that the presiding Pastor of the Dunbarton Congregational Church will conduct the funeral ceremony. If the family would like a family member or friend who is an ordained clergyperson to assist with the service, it is the family's duty to ask that individual to write or call the Dunbarton pastor and negotiate that involvement at the time funeral arrangements are made.

Facilities:

Our traditional white clapboard meetinghouse is located on Route 13 in historic Dunbarton, New Hampshire. For 185 years it has occupied a place of prominence on the Town Common in this picturesque New Hampshire town. Our “campus” consists of the church building, a wide lawn, and a small vestry building with meeting areas and offices. Though our historic buildings are beautifully maintained, please know that a few creaks and imperfections come with age!

The interior of the sanctuary has two aisles and three seating sections that will accommodate approximately 225 adults. There is only one restroom located in the vestry building. No restrooms are available in the church. Family members are welcome to use the vestry prior to the service. The vestry is suited for only the smallest and most informal of receptions. The church lawn is also available for use. Church, vestry and restroom facilities are all handicapped accessible.

Funeral Homes:

If you are using a licensed funeral director, he or she should be instructed to call the church (774-4601) AND Pastor Robert Vodra’s cell phone (617-863-7241) as soon as possible after the death to begin the planning process. Arrangements with the church are not confirmed until contact is made with the current minister.

Music:

The church has an amplification system and a piano. We can suggest a pianist for the service if you so desire. The family should contact this individual personally to discuss musical selections. The church uses the New Century Hymnal. If congregational hymns from other sources are chosen, the family should discuss these selections with the pianist and make arrangements for their inclusion as inserts in the bulletin. Soloists must arrange a time to rehearse with the pianist prior to the service.

Bulletins:

Our church is small with no administrative staff. If bulletins (Orders of Worship) are desired, the pastor will provide the family with an electronic copy of the service so that copies can be prepared. Special inserts are the responsibility of the family.

Flowers:

We are more than happy to work with a florist of your choice and will make the church available for planning and set up provided we have ample notification. If you plan to leave flowers in the church after the ceremony, we ask that you let us know ahead of time so that we may include an acknowledgement of your generosity in our Sunday Bulletin.

Cemetery:

Arrangements for the burial of your loved one should be made privately through your funeral director. If burial is to be in a Dunbarton Town cemetery, please contact the Selectmen's Office.

Funeral Fee Schedule:

If fees are to be paid privately, checks should be made out to "The Dunbarton Congregational Church" and are due just prior to or on the day of the service. If fees are to be paid by a licensed Funeral Home, checks should be delivered on the day of the service.

	Active Members*	Inactive or Non-Members
Minister	\$100	\$150
Musician, if provided by church	\$100 *	\$100 *
Sanctuary Rental	No Charge	\$100
Small Reception Vestry or Lawn - Optional	No Charge	\$75 first two hours following service. \$25 each additional hour*
Sexton	\$25	\$50
Special Music & Bulletins	The family will make arrangements for special music and the printing of service bulletins	
TOTAL COST	\$225*	\$400 +

We are deeply sorry for your loss.

Our role is to make this time as comforting and stress-free as possible.

May the peace and hope that are found in Jesus Christ be with you during this difficult time.

*Active members are those individuals who have been officially installed as members of the church, who attend church regularly, who support the church financially, and who currently support the programs and missions of the church.

At the discretion of the Deacons, [Friends of the Church](#) (i.e. Active Non-Members) may be granted Member status with regard to costs.