

Music (continued)

A “funeral choir” may be present to assist with the singing of any hymns that are chosen. You may also wish to have additional solos or instrumental music (fees may apply). All music should be complementary to the worship experience. Requests and choices may be discussed with the minister or with the Director of Music.

Reception

Often, a reception takes place following the funeral or memorial service. It is a time to greet family and friends and to share memories and stories of the deceased. This may take place at the funeral home, at the church or at another location. If it is to be held at the church, our Funeral Coordinator, Margaret Ashfield, will attend to the details. She will contact you prior to the service about your preferences. Members of the church will be pleased to assist at the reception. Costs for food and beverages will be passed on to you.

Follow up

Following the funeral or memorial service, we will continue to hold you in our prayers, and offer you support as appropriate and possible. You will also receive an invitation to attend our Annual Memorial Service held in late October or early November. Your loved one will be named and remembered as part of this service.

Decorations/Flowers

Flowers may be delivered to the church the day of the service. The funeral home staff or the funeral coordinator will place the flowers. Please try to avoid lilies and other fragrant flowers as many people have allergies. Note that any seasonal decorations (e.g. Christmas, Thanksgiving) will remain in place.

Pre-Service Visitation

Prior to services at the church, you may wish to greet friends and family, or you may wish to gather privately as close family. Space for both options is available.

Use of Pall

The church has a funeral pall that may be placed on the casket (if present) during the service. The pall is a large white cloth with an embroidered gold cross. It is a symbol of new life, and serves as a reminder that in the presence of God we are all equal. The use of the pall can be discussed with the minister.

Pall Bearers

If a casket is present, you may wish to have family members or friends act as pall bearers. Typically, pall bearers will be seated at the front of the worship space, and will accompany the casket out of the church or funeral home at the end of the service.

Bulletins

The church office can prepare a funeral bulletin that outlines the order of service. This is optional. We have a number of covers, or you may wish to supply the church office with a picture of your loved one to include on the cover of the bulletin.

Fees

If involved with the service, a funeral home will normally handle costs. However, if you wish to handle fees, the following apply:

Minister: \$250

Music Director: \$200

Funeral Coordinator: \$125

Sound System Operator: \$25

Set-up/clean-up (if service occurs on weekend): \$45

Please note: there is no cost for use of the church.

FUNERAL AND MEMORIAL SERVICES

Rev. Michael Brooks, Minister
Stillman Matheson, Music Director
Rebecca Murphy, Church Administrator
Margaret Ashfield, Funeral Coordinator

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Introduction

The death of a loved one can be a time of great emotional and spiritual challenge. At this time, you may be seeking a service to remember and to celebrate the life of a loved one. Perhaps you may be putting some initial plans in place for the future. Regardless, we are here to offer you and your loved ones support and care.

Purpose

Following a death, a public service of worship is often an important and helpful step in grieving and in healing. A funeral or memorial service is about many things, but first and foremost it is a service of worship and praise to God for the gift of life. The gathered community is reminded of its identity as people of faith. We retell stories of faith as found primarily in the Bible, but also in hymns and music, in poetry, in prayers and in blessings. While part of a funeral or memorial service entails celebrating a particular life lived, this is just one aspect of the larger celebration of life itself. Your relationship with the community in the hours and days following the death will include:

Initial Call to the Minister or Church

Typically, a member of the family or a representative from a funeral home (if a funeral home is to be involved) contacts the church office or a minister. Depending on availability and any preferences stated by the family, one of our ministers will take the lead in helping to plan the funeral or memorial service. The minister will be in touch with you as soon as possible.

Visit With The Minister

In addition to offering pastoral care, the minister will want to meet, when possible, in person with family members to make plans. Any family and friends are welcome at this meeting.

The Funeral or Memorial Service

While there is flexibility, here is an order of service that many have found helpful as a starting point:

Gathering *This may include music (see note on music below)*

Entrance of the Family *The family is usually seated together at the front of the worship space*

Lighting of the Christ Candle *A candle is lit to remind us that Jesus Christ, the light of the world, is with us even in our darkness and grief; family may participate in this act that does not involve speaking*

Scripture Sentences *This roots the gathering and the memories that will be shared in the stories of faith that bring us together*

Statement of Purpose *This includes a brief welcome and a statement of the purpose of why we gather*

Opening Prayer *To pray for God's presence as we mourn and remember*

A Time of Remembering *Family and/or friends may offer memories, stories, poems, etc. It is suggested that this time **not exceed fifteen minutes in total**; as a guideline, one double-spaced, typed page of text using 12-point font will take between 2 and 3 minutes to read.*

Scripture Readings *One or two readings from the Bible are read; family/friends may wish to participate in this way*

Reflection *The minister offers a brief reflection (maximum 10 minutes) that proclaims hope and good news; the Bible reading(s) will be incorporated, as will discussion of the life that is being celebrated*

Prayers and The Lord's Prayer *The minister offers prayers of thanks for the gift of life and prayers of concern for the family and friends; typically, everyone will pray The Lord's Prayer together*

Words of Commendation and Blessing *Prayers are offered near the casket/urn for the deceased, commending the person's care to God; words of blessing conclude the time as gathered community*

Music at the Funeral or Memorial Service

Music can add meaning to funeral and memorial services. For services held in the church, our Director of Music, Stillman Matheson, typically plays the piano and/or organ as people gather as well as at the end of the service.