



Funeral

P o l i c i e s a n d P r o c e d u r e s

Prayer
of
Faith

i n t e r d e n o m i n a t i o n a l c h u r c h

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Planning a Funeral or Memorial Service at Prayer of Faith

First, before making any plans, ask family members if your loved one left specific directions for their funeral. If so, this will greatly ease the load of making decisions and guessing what your loved one would have wanted. Be sure to find out if your loved one has a funeral or burial insurance policy or prepaid arrangements with a funeral home or cemetery.

If no prearrangements have been made:

1. Preparing Your Attitude

Start by arming yourself with the right attitude. Making the funeral arrangements will be less of a weight if you recognize that it can actually help you and your loved ones work through the grieving process. Begin thinking of the service as a celebration of the person's life. It should be dignified and respectful without being depressing and morbid. Along with mourning, there should be room for expressions of joy—even laughter.

2. Choosing a Funeral Home

Next, contact a funeral home. If you are not sure of a reputable one, ask your church for a recommendation. The staff of the funeral home will expertly guide you through the process, from legal documents, preparing an obituary, choosing a casket or cremation, and every element of the memorial service and burial.

3. Choosing a Minister

If your loved one was a member of a church, they would most likely want you to ask a pastor or minister from their church to officiate the service. If you are working with a funeral home, let them contact the minister of your choice. If the deceased had no contact with a church, you may want to rely on the funeral home to recommend a minister, or ask family members to help decide on a minister. The person you choose to officiate will have a large part in shaping the overall dynamics of the funeral service.

4. Offer Hope

As a Christian keep in mind this important detail when planning the funeral service. Funerals are one of the rare times in life when non-Christians stop to think about eternity. A funeral is the perfect opportunity for a Christian family to share their faith and the hope for eternity with non-believing family and friends. If you wish to clearly present the gospel and offer the hope of salvation in Christ, be sure to ask the minister to include this in his message.

5. Planning the Service

Once you have a plan for the service, you should sit down with the minister and go over the details:

- Any special songs or music you would like to include.
- Any poems, stories, Bible verses, or readings you would like to include.
- Any special speakers or singers you would like to participate.
- Any specific photos of your loved one or family you would like displayed.
- Is there a charity or a benefit you would recommend to mourners in lieu of sending flowers?
- If guests are invited to the graveside service, an announcement should be made at the end of the service.

6. Working with a Funeral Coordinator

Many churches have funeral coordinators. If the service is at a church, you will want to speak with the person responsible for coordinating the funeral to go over details, such as arrival times, flower arrangements, audio and visual needs, reception arrangements, etc. If the service is at a funeral home, they will work with you to coordinate every detail.

7. Preparing a Eulogy

A typical eulogy is about 5 minutes in length. It is recommended to leave the emotional elements for the end of the eulogy. Any additional tributes given by family or friends should be limited in length to keep the service from going too long. Young children and family members may want to write down a few sentences to be read aloud by the minister or the person giving the eulogy.

Whether or not you are giving the eulogy, it is helpful to have certain facts and information available. Here is a sample eulogy outline to aid you in preparing the necessary information.

Outline of a Eulogy

- Give a brief history including birth date, place of birth, parents, grandparents, siblings.
- Where did they grow up? What was their childhood like?
- Where did they go to school?
- Professional and career accomplishments?
- Who did they marry? When and where? Children and grandchildren.
- How long were they married?
- Significant life accomplishments.
- Personal interests, hobbies, achievements.
- Character qualities, Christian service, and how they affected other lives.

8. Special Remembrances

A table is often provided for the family to place special remembrances, photographs and other memorabilia during the service. Be sure to think about what you might want to display. Take some time to gather these items and make arrangements with the funeral coordinator.

9. Service Handout

Because most memorial services are planned in a relatively short period of time, this detail is often overlooked. If you would like the guests to have a memento or remembrance, you can provide a special printed handout or bookmark. This can be as simple as a picture of your loved one with their birth and death dates, the order of service and a cherished Bible verse. Check with the funeral home or coordinator, as they may provide this for you upon request.

10. Guest Book

When I used to help coordinate funerals for my church, I noticed that families often forgot to bring a book for the guests to sign. This record of attendance is usually very meaningful to family members, so ask someone to be responsible to bring a guest book and a nice pen. Some funeral homes provide this.

11. Length of Service

The entire length of the funeral service often depends on the number of guests. Time should be allowed either before or after the service to greet your guests and give them a moment to say their good byes to the deceased. It is recommended to keep the actual service length anywhere between 30-60 minutes.

Funeral Services

Even for Christians, the death of a loved one is a difficult experience.

We grieve the loss of one who has been close, but we do not sorrow as those who have no hope (1 Thessalonians 4: 13). It is our desire and privilege to minister to the families of our congregation in their time of need. It is through the Word of God that we have hope at the time of the death of a loved one (Romans 15: 4). This policy is provided to assist our families in planning and providing a Christian funeral.

Although funeral services may be held in funeral homes, the best place for conducting a funeral service upon the death of a Christian is in the sanctuary of the church to which he or she belonged.

By having the service at the church, all who attend will be reminded of our hope and assurance in Jesus Christ. Therefore, all members of Prayer of Faith are encouraged to use the church building for funeral services. The sanctuary is also offered for the funeral services of Christians whose membership is in another church.

There can be alternative methods for the conducting of services at the time of death. These could include a private graveside service for family members as soon after death as possible and/or a public service of worship (a memorial service) conducted at the church later.

However, funeral worship services will only be conducted in the church sanctuary. The pastor is available to go with the family to the funeral home to assist in making arrangements if desired. The pastor will be happy to meet with the family to plan any funeral worship arrangements.

Date and Time of Funerals

Dates and times for funerals at Prayer of Faith are to be arranged in consultation with the pastor based on availability and the preferences of the deceased's family. The pastor must approve all funeral arrangements at Prayer of Faith. Decisions concerning areas outside the scope of this funeral policy shall be decided at the discretion of the pastor and before the service.

Funeral services will need to be planned around already scheduled events such as weddings, conferences, workshops, etc).

Who Will Officiate?

Pastoral standards require that Prayer of Faith's pastors conduct all funeral services held at Prayer of Faith, unless by agreement with another pastor, he/she is invited to share in the funeral or act on behalf of the pastor of Prayer of Faith. Any requests for another pastor or lay person to officiate or assist in the service must be approved by Prayer of Faith's pastors.

Structure of the Funeral Service

A funeral service held in the church is a service of worship, celebrating the deceased's life and the promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ. Consequently, all parts of the service are to be consistent with the present worship practices of the church. Generally, the outline for the funeral and burial service will take on a traditional Christian form. The family may suggest other items to be included in the service, with the approval of the pastor.

Funerals for Non-members and Inactive Members

Conducting funerals for people who have no connection with the church is a normal part of the ministerial obligation. However, it is up to the discretion of the pastor to allow himself or the church to participate.

Funeral Music

Only music appropriate to a worship service shall be used. Prayer of Faith does not have paid staff musicians. All musical arrangements (pianist, soloist, etc.) must be arranged for and taken care of by the family. If possible, we will make every effort to help you, but please remember that time and date may affect the availability of our musicians. As with weddings, a funeral is a service of Christian worship.

Therefore, sacred or Christian music would be appropriate. Taped instrumental and accompaniment music, soloists and solos, anthems, and guest musicians must have the approval of the pastor and needs to be coordinated with the Prayer of Faith person that will be operating the sound system.

If you choose to use congregational hymns or spiritual songs, they are encouraged and may be selected, in consultation with the pastor and family during the service planning process. In cases where an outside organist/pianist is desired, permission must be secured from the pastor. Additional musicians or soloists may be utilized.

Video Presentation

If a video is to be used during the service, it must be submitted to the church office 24 hours prior to the funeral service for review. All presentations should be in DVD format (not Power Point) and should not exceed 12 minutes in length.

Services by Fraternal Orders, Lodges etc.

Services by fraternal orders, lodges, veterans groups or other organizations are not appropriate at our church. If they are held, they should be limited to the funeral home or graveside, and must be coordinated with the pastor prior to the graveside service.

Decorations

Families may wish to display the deceased's remains, as well as certain mementos or photographs of the deceased and his/her family. The following guidelines would be applicable in these situations:

- Any displays or pictures must be appropriate to a worship setting.
- No nails, tacks, staples or screws shall be put in the walls or attached to the pews.
- All decorations must be removed within 3 hours of the conclusion of the service.
- No furniture shall be removed from the church building.

Flowers

Only fresh cut flowers and planters may be used for the funeral setting.

Casket Viewing

Open casket viewing will only be in the front of the sanctuary. The casket remains closed throughout the service. When the service is in the sanctuary, the casket will be closed and in place before the ceremony begins. The funeral director in concert with the pastor will have direction over such matters as timing, closed caskets, music, flowers, etc.

All caskets must be closed for the graveside burial services, but may be open during the viewing (or preceding the viewing, for the family only), if desired. When closed, the flower blanket, flag, or coverlet covers the casket.

Nursery

The church does not provide a nursery for funeral services. If needed, the family is responsible for securing an attendant.

Parking / Traffic Assistance

Parking assistance is generally provided by the funeral home. The church does not have any resources to assist in traffic control.

Facility Usage and Family Meals

The church will do everything reasonably possible to accommodate a member's request for a family meal before or after a funeral service. The meal is prepared under the direction of the church's Special Events Coordinator.

Only **active members*** of the church and their immediate family (spouse, children, siblings and/or parents living in the immediate household) will be eligible for this ministry. There is a \$150 cleaning fee for Sanctuary, Restrooms, Hallway and Fellowship Hall.

There is no fee charged for any cost of preparation and serving of this meal ministry to **active members***, however, donations are accepted. Members of the church provide this service as a ministry in the spirit of Christian love. Their mission is to serve willingly and pleasingly, inspired and led by God.

For 35 people, choose from one of the following menus:

1. Lasagna, garlic bread, green salad, desserts
2. Roasted Chicken, pasta salad, green salad, desserts
3. Meatloaf, mashed potatoes, green beans, Apple pie
4. Fried Chicken, mashed potatoes, Corn, desserts

Non-members and inactive members may utilize the Fellowship Hall but are responsible for the indicated building expense use fees and for providing the food or refreshments.

The following cost is provided:

\$100 Utility/Rental Fee for 2 hours

\$150 Cleaning Fee for Sanctuary, Restrooms, Hallway and Fellowship Hall

\$200 for 35 people (\$5.50 per person) Choose from one of the following menus

1. Lasagna, garlic bread, green salad, desserts
2. Roasted Chicken, pasta salad, green salad, desserts
3. Meatloaf, mashed potatoes, green beans, Apple pie
4. Fried Chicken, mashed potatoes, Corn, desserts

An active member at Prayer of Faith is defined through:

1. Faithful attendance through fellowship and reaching out to others.
2. Giving of tithes and offerings to support missions and the church.
3. Lifting up our church family's needs and it's leadership through regular prayer.
4. Serving in areas of ministry and sharing in the responsibility of the church's needs.
5. Growing in discipleship through learning your spiritual gifts and equipping for service.

Memorials

In certain circumstances, the family might request a contribution to the church or a charitable organization in lieu of flowers. The church will not manage, receive or distribute designated funds for an outside institution. Undesignated funds and funds designated for an established project at Prayer of Faith will be received by the church. Funds designated for a project or ministry not previously established will be designated for such only with approval of the pastors and Board.

Fees

If the deceased or a member of their immediate family (spouse, children, siblings and/or parents living in the immediate household) is an **active member*** of Prayer of Faith there is no fee for the use of the facilities with the exception of the cleaning fee.

For all other individuals, additional fees will be assessed. Those who have been members of Prayer of Faith but now are considered **inactive members** will pay the same fees as **non-members**. Fees are payable (by cash or check made payable to "Prayer of Faith" on or prior to the day of the funeral.

Normally, honorariums for the pastor, pianist, or musicians are paid following the service or through the funeral director.

The following fees apply:

| Usage | Active Member | Non-Member & Inactive Member |
|------------------------|----------------------|---|
| Use of Sanctuary | No fee | \$250 |
| Use of Fellowship Hall | No fee | \$200 (family meals) |
| Pastor | Honorarium** | Honorarium** |
| Pianist/Organist | Honorarium*** | Honorarium*** |
| Soloist | Honorarium*** | Honorarium*** |
| Sound System Operator | \$0 | \$75 |

*For the purposes of this policy, active members are defined as those members of Prayer of Faith who regularly attend church services and contribute to the church as they generally provide regular financial and personal support for the church. These privileges are also extended to the following:

1. Homebound members.
2. Faithful attendees of the church who attend regularly but who have not officially joined the church as an official member and
3. Those who have served as former pastors of the church.

**There is no fixed fee for the services of the Prayer of Faith minister; however, it is customary to give an honorarium to the officiating minister. Checks should be made payable to the individual minister.

***If the family has made arrangement with an available musician and/or soloist, typical honorariums for them range from \$75 - \$150 per person. Checks should be made payable to the individual musician(s) or soloist(s)