



MONTGOMERY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

"GROWING IN CHRIST, SHARING HIS LOVE"

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Funeral Policies and Practices

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. 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.

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 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; however, preference will be given to church members whenever possible.

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.



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Date and Time of Funerals

Funerals are very time sensitive, however, dates and times for funerals at MUMC 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.

Decisions concerning areas outside the scope of this funeral policy shall be decided at the discretion of the Pastor.

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

Who Will Officiate?

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

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 United Methodist format. The family may suggest other items to be included in the service, with the approval of the Pastor. The Pastor is available to meet with the family to plan any funeral worship arrangements and can also be available to go with the family to the funeral home if desired.



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Conducting funerals for Christians 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.

Care For Grieving Families On The Day of the Service

A reception following the service may include food items such as cookies, hot and cold beverages or food catered from a local business. Additional trays of food, sandwiches, salads and desserts (for a donation) can be provided. Tables and chairs can be set up by coordinating with the MUMC Bereavement Representative, who can be contacted through the Pastor.

Funeral Music

Only music appropriate to a worship service shall be used. 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. The use of congregational hymns is encouraged and may be selected with the Pastor in consultation with the 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 or slide presentation 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 a completed DVD format (not Power Point) and should not exceed five minutes in length.



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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 in the sanctuary if the family wishes to have flowers. No more than two arrangements should be displayed at the altar.

Closed Casket

All caskets must be closed for the funeral service, 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. The casket remains closed throughout the service. When the service is in the funeral chapel, the casket will be closed 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.

Nursery

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



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Parking / Traffic Assistance

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

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 the church 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 Pastor and the Trustees.

Fees

If the deceased or a member of their immediate family (spouse, parents, children, and siblings) is an active member of the church, there is no fee for the use of the facilities. For all other individuals, please refer to the Facility Use Fee Schedule.

Please refer to the Facility Usage Fee Schedule for appropriate fees.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR LOVED ONE DIES

- Contact Other Family Members and Close Friends
- Contact Your Church
- Notify employer of the deceased and your own employer
- If children are in school, notify the school
- Choose a Funeral Home



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- Before going to the Funeral Home...It will save you considerable time and phone calls if you have the following information available.

1. Full name of deceased (include nickname or other names person may have used). _____

2. Date of Birth _____

3. Place of Birth _____

4. Father's Name _____

5. Mother's Name (Maiden) _____

6. List of relatives and relationship to the deceased _____

7. List of church, professional organizations, clubs and other organizations in which membership was held _____

8. If you wish, indicate memorial to be designated in obituary in memory of the deceased _____



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9. Compile a list of individuals who might be available to serve as pallbearers

10. If a memorial or funeral service is announced in the newspapers, take extra precaution for security at the home of the deceased during the indicated time of the service. The following information will be needed for the Funeral Home and for the planning of the service.

Name of Deceased

Family Contact

Relationship

Family Address

Family Phone

Other Contact Phone

Funeral Home

Address

Phone



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Funeral Director _____

Phone _____

Number of Family Members

Family Hour/Viewing Scheduled

Yes/No

Location _____

Floral Requests _____

Funeral Service Instructions

Service Location: _____