

Memorial Service Outline

Funeral is with a casket, Memorial is with an urn

The Pastor On Call who receives the death notification should respond and minister to the family. This pastor should then ask the family if there is a pastor who has been directly involved in the families past, and if they would like that pastor to officiate the memorial service. Arrangements can be made another meeting with officiant.

I. Preliminaries

- A. Officiating pastor meets with the family
 1. Minister the Word of Life
 2. Cover the order of service (See section III. Service Outline).
 3. Gather information regarding the deceased – personalizes the eulogy.
 4. Ask for music preferences: tapes, CDs, verify with music dept. before committing singers. (song selection too)
 5. Establish individuals who will participate in the service for family sharing.

- B. Scheduling of Service
 1. Check church calendar for conflicts
 2. Call and reserve chapel and fellowship hall with maintenance
 3. Inform Kitchen if there is fellowship to follow.
 - a. Members are they provided for or is there as cost?
 - b. Ask the family for an estimated guest count. This can change especially with social media awareness.

- C. When there is no funeral home involvement
 1. Usually a cremation
 2. Ask the family if obituary or memorial cards will be printed.
 3. Will there be a committal service?
 4. Another pastor should help direct the people
 - a. Gather family with officiating pastor for prayer prior to service (10 minutes).
 - b. Direct the rest of the congregation to go in and be seated.

- D. Church Staff Notification
 1. Maintenance
 - a. Pastor's chairs on platform
 - b. Podium
 - c. Table(s) for urn and pictures
 - d. Easels for larger portraits
 - e. Podium for guest book
 - f. Storage of flowers that arrive early
 - g. Unlock Bride and Groom's room for family
 - h. Atrium and chapel available early for funeral home setup.

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2. Technical Support
 - a. Microphones – cordless, and podium for family, also a handheld
 - b. Order of service with music titles listed
 - c. Tapes and CD accompaniment
 - d. Monitor for pastor on platform
 - e. Recorded tape of service for family
 - f. Inform of background music for visitation and pre/post service
3. Music Department
 - a. Order of service with music titles
 - b. When to begin (5-10 minutes prior to service)
 - c. Pianist or CD accompaniment?
4. Greeters / Ushers / Parking
 - a. Voice mail instructing staff about chapel parking
 - b. Rope off the pews in the back of the chapel to promote congregational seating towards the front.
 - c. Basket for cards by guest book, designate a person to be responsible for and to watch card basket

II. Visitation

A. Schedule

1. Visitation is usually an evening prior the service and is often at the funeral home for those unable to attend the service the next day.
2. There is almost always a visitation one hour prior to the memorial service.
3. Family will gather one half-hour prior to the public viewing. This is a good time for ministry and can be very difficult for the family.
4. Family will assemble 15 minutes prior to service at casket; funeral director or pastor should initiate this for a prompt service time.
5. Minister meets with family for prayer in a separate area while attendants close the casket.
6. Pastor will either lead or follow the family into the chapel to begin the service after the time of prayer.

III. Service

A. Opening Statement

1. State the purpose for gathering
2. Sets the tone of the service
3. 2-3 minutes

B. Eulogy

1. Birth date and place
2. Preceded in death by...
3. Remembered today by...
4. Personal attributes and accomplishments
5. Departed from this life on...

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C. Family Sharing

1. Know certain individuals whom you can call on to help this time begin.
2. Maintain control of the service between individuals sharing by introducing the next person or asking for anyone else.
 - a. Able to address wrong doctrine (God's will they died) you are responsible for this service and ministry.
 - b. Use humor or be uplifting
 - c. Able to say, "We have time for just one or two more people..." and end the family time.
 - d. Be ready to assist those who struggle, by standing beside them and reassuring them.
 - e. Offer to read letters for those unable to attend from a distance

D. Message

1. Comfort for the family – God's promise
2. Evangelistic for congregation
3. Salvation call for raising of hands and prayer, no alter ministry.

E. Closing

1. Announce fellowship, graveside and thank-you from the family.
2. Wait for funeral directors or lead the family out.
3. Pallbearers (casket) will be directly behind the pastor with family following.

IV. Fellowship

- A. Announce this at the end of the memorial.
- B. Schedule if possible immediately after the service prior to the interment.
- C. Possibly pray for the food at the fellowship.
- D. When held at a different location have maps or directions with memorial cards.

V. Interment (committal)

- A. Reading of scripture and prayer
- B. Usually about 10-15 minutes depending on weather
- C. Give a designated ending, "This concludes our committal service..."
- D. Once the pastor leaves the family generally departs too.