



Planning a Memorial or Funeral Service

When Death Occurs

Memorial services at Forestgate are grounded deeply in our understanding that Jesus has conquered death through His work on the cross, and in our Lord's promise of life beyond death for all in relationship with Him. It is also an opportunity to celebrate the life of a loved one who has died, giving thanks for how God used him or her to touch our lives.

Preparing for a memorial service requires many decisions. When planning such a service, please contact our Event Coordinator as soon as possible, so we can be of help in scheduling church facilities and personnel. The following information is provided as a helpful guide for your planning. Additional planning resources are also available from the Event Coordinator.

Scheduling the Service

A service may be scheduled Monday-Friday from 10am to 3pm, pending availability of space and minister. Saturday services are also possible, but require additional fees.

The service will be officiated by one of our ministers, though a non Forestgate minister may assist with approval.

Music and Audio/Visual

The selection of music should be sacred and appropriate for a service of Christian worship; secular songs may be utilized but only during the reception. Two or three songs can greatly enhance the flow of a service, though this is a family choice.

We encourage live music during the service but in certain circumstances, allow recorded music (the latter may be utilized during the reception). Let the Event Coordinator know if you need an accompanist.

Music and/or pictures may be played on the sanctuary screens prior to the service. Please request this when meeting with the Event Coordinator so equipment and proper set-up can be arranged. We do not do an open mic in the service.

Presence of the Body

A casket is rarely present during the service. If you desire to include it, we respectfully request that it remain closed during the service, as our focus during that time is on the promise of resurrected life beyond our earthly bodies. A medium sized picture of your loved one can be placed on the front table, as well as an urn if your loved one is cremated.

Funeral Expenses

Any expenses will be reviewed with the family by the Event Coordinator per the Building Use Policy prior to planning the service.

An honorarium amount for the pastor is left to the family's discretion. These should be given to the Event Coordinator prior to the start of the service.

A service on Saturday involves an additional charge to cover custodial services.

Forestgate will provide a program for the service should the family desire one. The Event Coordinator and family will work with the Office Coordinator to determine content.

Donations

In lieu of flowers, you can request to have monies donated to an organization or ministry of your choice.

On the Day of the Service

Please plan for all your family to arrive at least 45 minutes prior to the service, or at least an hour early if you plan to set up your loved one's memorabilia table.

If you prefer, we will arrange your pictures and memorabilia for you at the reception.

Your family will have a private room to gather in before the service begins.

You may request rows of pews to be reserved for your family in the front of the sanctuary. Please update us with any revisions from your initial estimate, so we can reserve sufficient space.

Forestgate does not provide flower arrangements or a guest book. The Event Coordinator will help set out any arrangements delivered or brought in by the family.

Reception

The family is responsible to finance and provide for a reception. The kitchen is available as a staging area for catering. If you plan to cater your reception, please plan to provide everything needed including, but not limited to: food, beverages, paperware, utensils and items to package leftovers. Please also make arrangements to either have the catering company do the set up/tear down or arrange ahead of time for friends/family to be responsible. The Event Coordinator will work with the family to answer specific questions and make the reception as smooth and stress-free as possible so that the family can interact with friends and loved-ones.

Additional Resources

Please ask our Event Coordinator if you'd like a list of local funeral homes, cemeteries, or Scriptures frequently used in a funeral/memorial service.