



*Planning a
Funeral or
Memorial
Service*

*at
Northeast
United
Methodist
Church*

Table of Contents

Regarding Funerals.....	3
To the Family.....	4
General Policies.....	5
Funeral Services.....	5
Date and Time of Funerals.....	5
Who Will Officiate?.....	5
Structure of the Funeral Service.....	5
Funerals for Inactive and Non-Members.....	5
Funeral Music.....	5
Recording of the Service.....	6
Video Presentation.....	6
Reserved Seating.....	6
Ushers and Greeters.....	6
Bulletin.....	6
Decorations.....	6
Flowers.....	6
Paraments.....	6
Nursery.....	6
Parking/Traffic Assistance.....	6
Family Meal or Reception.....	7
Memorials.....	7
Honorariums and Fees.....	7
Sample Bulletin.....	8

Regarding Funerals at Northeast United Methodist Church

Christians believe that the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ gives them hope and cause for thanksgiving in the face of death. In this faith, we entrust those who have died to the infinite mercy and love of God.

—The Methodist Worship Book, England



A worship service following the death of a loved one does at least two things: It enables us to face the reality of our mortality, and comforts us in the celebration of another reality—life after death in God. As one of our creeds declares, “In life, in death, in life beyond death, we are not alone. Thanks be to God!”

A service where the body of the deceased is present is called a funeral. A memorial service is appropriate when the body of the deceased is not present. (Interment follows the funeral service; in the case of a memorial service, interment or inurnment occurs prior to the service.) Most of the services at Northeast United Methodist Church are called A Service of Death and Resurrection.

It is the commitment of the pastor and music leadership of Northeast United Methodist Church to claim and present a properly balanced and theologically sound experience for all who see God through worship at the time of death. To this end, the following are guidelines and suggestions that we offer to assist those who mourn, and those who look to tomorrow.

To the Family

At the time of death, please contact the pastor at 803.587.1682 during non-business hours or the Church Office at 803.736.6386. Conversations between the family and the pastor will then proceed to define details about the funeral or memorial service. While it will be the pastor who guides you and your family through this important time, there are a few things that only the family of the deceased can do:

- There must be one person who speaks for the family with regard to decisions about the funeral. It will be the pastor's responsibility to decide who this person is, in consultation with the family.
- When considering a service at NEUMC the sanctuary maximum occupancy is 193.
- While friends and extended family certainly wish to help at the time of death, the staff will prepare, execute and conclude the worship service. Ushers and greeters for the service will be provided by the funeral home or church.
- If there is a desire to have a reception at the church following the service, the pastor will see to it that space for such a reception is scheduled.
- If the family desires to display pictures of the deceased, we ask that they be placed on the tables in the narthex and/or they be used at the reception.
- Music for the service, both choral and instrumental, must be coordinated with the pastor and Minister of Music. Selections should be scriptural in nature and primarily focus on God, God's attributes and giving thanks to God. Love songs, show tunes, school songs, etc. are certainly appropriate at the reception. The pastor will consult with Minister of Music or praise team leader to arrange desired selections. Should you wish to have a vocal or musical soloist, the Minister of Music can provide names of recommended individuals. Special choral or instrumental music may be arranged, with fees not determined by the church.
- The central moment in any worship service, including funeral and memorial services, is the proclamation of the Word of God: It is the proclamation of a resurrection faith in a sermon or meditation. There are moments in a funeral for specific remembrances and thanksgivings by family and friends. Experience teaches us that two speakers with a combined length of 10 minutes is sufficient. We request that the personal words reflect the goodness and Christian virtues of the person.
- We reserve the right to intervene should the content or language be unbecoming of a Christian service. The pastor will be free to monitor and implement time limits should a speaker step outside the boundaries.

General Policies

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 NEUMC 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 NEUMC 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 NEUMC. 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 NEUMC pastor conduct all funeral services held at NEUMC, unless by agreement with another pastor, he/she is invited to share in the funeral or act on behalf of the pastor of NEUMC. Any requests for another pastor or lay person to officiate or assist in the service must be approved by NEUMC's 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. 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. 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 The United Methodist Hymnal 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. Please note that the use of taped music or pre-recorded accompaniments is discouraged.

Recording of the Service

A CD recording is provided at no cost to the family.

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 five minutes in length.

Reserved Seating

Reserved seating will be arranged for the family according to their wishes.

Ushers and Greeters

Ushers and greeters for the service will be provided by the funeral home or church.

Bulletin

The church office staff will ordinarily produce the bulletin for funerals and memorial services (see pages 8 & 9.) Special requests should be made as early as possible (The cover photo and scripture can be customized). The pastor will work with the family to assist with details regarding the bulletin.

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.
- All decorations must be removed within 3 hours of the conclusion of the service.
- No furniture shall be removed from the church building.

Flowers

Flowers are not a requirement for a service. If family and friends wish to have flowers, they will work directly with their chosen florist. We suggest that arrangements be limited to no more than two at the altar, and these are usually provided by the family or on their behalf; additional arrangements will be placed in the narthex and/or transported to receptions held at our facility. Family and friends are urged to take arrangements with them when possible. We are unable to deliver them to hospitals or care facilities.

Paraments

The paraments will be changed to white by a member of the worship committee.

Nursery

The church does not provide a nursery for funeral services. If needed, the church will help the family secure a childcare worker.

Parking/Traffic Assistance

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

Family Meal or Reception

The church will do everything reasonably possible to accommodate a member's request for a family meal or reception before or after a funeral service. The meal is prepared under the direction of the church's Nurture Ministry Team. Only active members of the church and their family is eligible for this ministry. There is no fee charged for this meal ministry, nor is there any cost for preparation and serving; however, free will 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.

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 NEUMC 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 Finance Ministry Team.

Honorariums and Fees

If the deceased or a member of their immediate family (spouse, parents, children, siblings) is an active member* of NEUMC there is no fee for the use of the facilities. For all other individuals, additional fees will be assessed. Those who have been members of NEUMC, but now are considered inactive members will pay the same fees as non-members. Fees are payable (by cash or check made payable to "NEUMC") 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.

*Active Member (defined below)

The following fees apply:

Active Member		Inactive or Non-Member
Use of Sanctuary	No fee	\$275
Use of Fellowship Hall	No fee	\$125
Pastor (Officiating)	Honorarium**	Honorarium**
Pastor (Additional)	Honorarium***	Honorarium***
Pianist/Organist	Honorarium****	Honorarium****
Soloist	Honorarium****	Honorarium****
Sound System Operator	\$50	\$50

*For the purposes of this policy, active members are defined as those members of Northeast United Methodist Church 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.

**The honorarium for the officiating pastor is \$150-\$200. Depending on the extent to which the officiating pastor is involved in the planing, preparation and leading of the service. Checks should be made payable to pastor.

***The honorarium for the additional pastor is \$75-\$100. Depending on the extent to which the additional pastor(s) is/are involved in the planing, preparation and leading of the service. Checks should be made payable to additional pastor(s).

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

The congregation, officers and staff offer this policy as a faithful way to proceed at the time of death.

Sample Bulletin (Front Page)

*To every thing there is a
season, and a time to every
purpose under heaven.*

Ecclesiastes 3:1



The picture and scripture can be customized.

Sample Bulletin (Inside Page)

A Service of Death and Resurrection for Deceased's Name

Date of Service

Prelude

Gathering

The Word of Grace

Greeting

***Hymn**

Congregation

Old Testament Lesson

Prayer of Petition for God's Help

Testimonies of Love

Family and Friends

Solo

New Testament Lessons

The Word and Witness

Pastor

Prayer of Thanksgiving

***Hymn**

Congregation

Benediction

Postlude

**Please stand as you are able.*



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