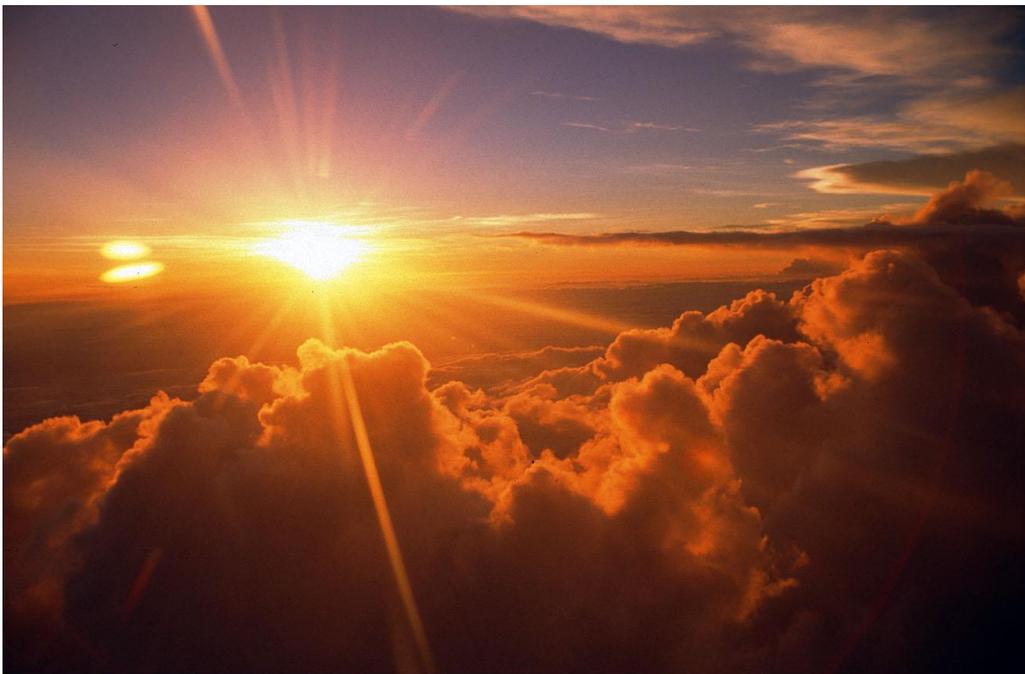


# PLANNING YOUR FUNERAL



## At A&M 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

# Planning your funeral

AT A&M UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## Regarding Funerals at A&M UMC

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. (Interment follows the funeral service.) A memorial service is appropriate when the body of the deceased is not present. (Interment or inurnment occurs prior to the service.) The services at A&M UMC are called “A Celebration of the Life and Resurrection.”

It is the commitment of the clergy and music leadership of A&M UMC to provide 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 have been developed to assist those who mourn, and those who look to tomorrow.

Fraternal and/or military rites are most appropriate at the cemetery or another location. Please let the pastor know if you will be having such a ceremony.

## To the Family

At the time of death, please contact the church office at 979-846-8731. If it is during non-business hours, the recording will give you the emergency number to reach a pastor on call. Conversations between the family and the minister will then proceed to details about the funeral or memorial service. While it will be the minister 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 needs to be one person who speaks for the family with regard to decisions about the funeral.
- While friends and extended family certainly wish to help at the time of death, the staff of A&M UMC will prepare, execute, and conclude the worship service.

- If there is a desire to have a reception at the church following the service, the Administrative Assistant will see to it that a space is reserved. If the reception is to be catered, the staff will make sure that the space is setup and ready when the caterer arrives. It is the family's responsibility to make the arrangements with local caterers, we are happy to help if needed.
- The music for a funeral or memorial service shall be sacred and reflect the tradition of music at A&M UMC. Music should be scriptural in nature and primarily focused on God. Taped, prerecorded, or electronically produced music may not be used. Our music department will provide music for the service in consultation with the pastor(s). The Assistant Director of Music will be the organist for all funerals unless otherwise approved through the music department. If requested, The Chancel Choir, Chapel Choir, professional soloists and instrumentalists may be arranged through the Director of Music. When additional musicians are requested, a gift to the Music Department (in addition to those outlined in General Policies) is expected to cover associated fees. If special music is requested that is approved by the pastor and we do not have that music, it is expected that the family will provide the music for the organist/pianist.
- 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 special remembrances and thanksgivings by family and friends. Experience teaches us that two speakers with a combined length of 10 minutes is best. 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 minister will be free to monitor and implement time limits should a speaker step outside the boundaries.

## General Policies

1. Funerals are conducted Monday through Thursday between the hours of 10:00 am and 2:00 pm. Funerals scheduled on Fridays and Saturdays are by special arrangement and will include an extra fee for building use and custodial services.
2. Reserved seating will be arranged for the family according to their wishes. We are unable to reserve seating for civic clubs, service groups, or workplace friends and colleagues. Limited reserved parking is available on Tauber St. for the family and for funeral home accessibility. It is the responsibility of the funeral home to contact the City of College Station regarding the reservation of parking spaces on Tauber St.

3. For non-members, the fees for using the building are as follows:
 

a) Sanctuary	\$200.00
b) Fellowship Hall	\$150.00
c) Great Hall	\$200.00
  
4. A funeral or memorial service requires a number of persons. Below is listed a sampling of possible service assistants. Please make out checks to the individuals. These checks may be distributed by the family or given to the officiating pastor.
  - a. Organist/Pianist                      \$150.00
  - b. Vocal/Instrumental soloist        \$150.00
  - c. Musical Coordinator/Choir Dir.    \$150.00
  - d. Audio/Video/ technician            \$125.00
  - e. An honorarium for the minister is at the family's discretion and is to be given directly to him/her.
  
5. If the family desires to display pictures of the deceased, we can provide easels or tables. A slide show may also be shown in the Sanctuary until the Prelude begins and also at the reception. It is the responsibility of the family to bring the pictures to the church prior to the service and any video or slide presentation must be brought to the church 24 hours prior to the service. Our audio/video technician will be required to run the presentations.
  
6. Flowers are not a requirement for a service. If family and friends wish to have flowers, they will work directly with their chosen florist. When a funeral home is used, they will gather all the arrangements after the service. In lieu of flowers, the family may designate donations be made to their favorite charities.
  
7. A standardized bulletin for the service is provided. Please consult with the minister about providing additional printed biographies and photographs. Such items need to be delivered to the church office in person or by email at least 24 hours prior to the service. Please send photos in digital format to [office@am-umc.org](mailto:office@am-umc.org). The minister, working with the family, will assist with details regarding the bulletin.
  
8. The church is closed all major holidays as well as Spring Break and Christmas Break.

## After Care

Your church does not want you to feel you are alone following your loss. If one-on-one care is needed, consider Stephen Ministry, which can provide a Christian caregiver (not a therapist) to walk with you through the difficulty of grief. Contact the church office for more information about Stephen Ministry.

We also have a book series called *Journeying Through Grief*. Many find reassurance knowing their experiences with grief are normal. If you are interested in this grief resource, please contact the church office at [office@am-umc.org](mailto:office@am-umc.org) or the number below. For information regarding current grief support groups or to find out when the next one will start, please contact the church office at (979)846-8731.