

# ***Funeral Planning Guide for Non-Church Service & Worksheet***



# Funeral Planning Guide for Non-Church Service and Worksheet

Thank you for picking up a Funeral Planning Guide for Non-Church Service and Worksheet. This material is designed to: to provide a tool for planning for the future when your life on this earth ends, and to support and guide families making plans upon the death of a loved one.

In the first days following a loved one's death, the family makes an average of 200 decisions. During such an emotional, stressful and demanding time, plans that have been made earlier lighten the load after death. If you've not made advance plans, this guide will be helpful to you as you make arrangements for services and the burial of your loved one.

This guide will walk you through a series of questions. Your responses can be marked on the worksheet at the end. When you are finished, please share your worksheet with a family member or friend who will act on your behalf after your death.

## Planning Faithfully, Choosing Wisely

### **What is the difference between a funeral and memorial service?**

Simply put, at a funeral service the body of the deceased is present, whereas at a memorial service either the deceased's ashes or no remains are present.

### **If I choose cremation, do I need to secure the services of a Funeral Director?**

We highly recommend working with a Funeral Director. This professional will ease the strain upon family members by coordinating all the details and thus contributing to your wishes being carried out with dignity and honor. Even if cremation is your desire, a Funeral Director handles many details that are not taken care of by the church, the Pastor, or family members. Attempting to save money by not using a Funeral Director is likely to cause confusion and frustration at a time when you most need guidance and support.

### **Should I make pre-arrangements with a Funeral Director?**

Making the decision to pre-arrange some aspects of your funeral and/or burial is helpful. An appointment with a Funeral Director in advance of death is a wise step to help you decide what you and your family need from the many services available. If you are a family member caring for a dying loved one, making an initial contact now with a Funeral Director can be very helpful and will lessen the decisions and demands you'll face upon death. Refer to a Funeral Director you know well and hold in high regard.

### **How soon after death does a funeral or memorial service take place?**

Funeral services are generally held within three to five days following death, thereby allowing appropriate time for family members and friends to gather for the service. Memorial services can be held at any time. However, waiting for weeks or even months after a death will have a bearing on finding a sense of closure, and this will impact the grief work that follows the death of a loved one. Therefore, it is recommended that a memorial service be held within a few weeks after death.

If a funeral or memorial service is to be followed by a burial that same day, the schedule of the cemetery workers dictates that burials be held during normal business hours. Surcharges apply for weekend burials, and burials are not available on holidays, and some cemeteries do not provide burial services during the winter months. It is also possible to have the burial before the service which allows for a late afternoon or evening service.

Funeral or memorial services on Sunday are highly discouraged, as Sundays are reserved for worship services.

**Who is responsible for submitting the death notice and obituary to the newspaper?**

The Funeral Director will take care of this for you. A full obituary normally appears 2-3 days before the visitation and funeral. There is a cost for this, and the Funeral Director will assist you. Notices to additional newspapers can also be handled by the Funeral Director at your request.

**Who plans the reception following the funeral or memorial service?**

When plans are being made for the funeral following death, the Funeral Director will work with you to order food appropriate to the number of people you anticipate attending. We know it is difficult to estimate a number. Our local funeral home has years of experience in planning these events and, with a few questions, can assist in that estimate. We assure you that there will be sufficient food and seating for all who choose to attend the reception. Any leftover food is yours to take home. Payment for the reception food and servers is coordinated through the organizing party.

**What if I desire to have memorials directed to a Charity, Non-Profit, or other Organizations?**

This is an honorable thing to do. Organizations you choose are blessed when memorials are directed to support their ministries and missions. The Funeral Director will be happy to include any memorial designation(s) in the notices about the funeral service.

# FUNERAL PLANNING FOR NON-CHURCH WORKSHEET

When planning your funeral, or a funeral for a loved one, there are many choices to make. Facing some of those choices now will make the process less demanding for your loved ones later. This Funeral Planning Worksheet will lead you through a variety of decisions.

This worksheet may be used by:

- an individual making their advance plans known, or
- a family planning the funeral of a loved one nearing death or recently deceased.

Please supply as much information as you wish to share on any parts of the worksheet.

## Guide for Funeral of:

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Full Name: First, Middle, (Maiden), Last

Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_

## For the Person Making Advance Plans:

When you have completed this worksheet, please consider sharing it with your Pastor, funeral home, or estate planner. Your information will be kept in a confidential file. It will be used in consultation with your family or whomever you have directed to carry out these wishes upon your death.

Also, after completing the worksheet, consider telling someone you trust about it. You may wish to discuss with them what you have written to be certain that it is clear. Consider providing copies: 1) To your Family; 2) Attached to your Will or Trust Plan; or 3) To a Funeral Director. Or simply give it to someone you trust with a note that says:

*I have recorded my desires regarding my death and burial. I keep this information in the following place:  
\_\_\_\_\_ (i.e., on file at the church, with my will, etc.). At the time of my death, I ask that you use this information to provide guidance for my family and my church in making arrangements for the funeral I desire. Although this information is being left for safekeeping, I understand that it is not legally binding or enforceable. This worksheet does not make the church or anyone obligated or responsible for the execution of these instructions.*

*With gratitude,  
Signature and Date*

## For Family Members Making Plans for the Funeral of a Loved One Nearing Death or Recently Deceased:

Please use this worksheet to assist with plans that will honor your loved one's expressed wishes or desires and will reflect his/her values. If you haven't already contacted a Funeral Director, please consider doing so now. The professional services, compassionate care, and guidance they provide will greatly assist you in the days ahead.

When death occurs call your area Funeral Directors. If death occurs at home, call 911.

## Visitation

A Visitation is an informal gathering for friends and family to express sympathy, view photographs/video tribute, etc.

### Will a Visitation be Held?

- Yes  
 No

### Location of Visitation (Name/Address)

At the Funeral Home: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cemetery: (A Graveside Service Only) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other (i.e. Care Facility Chapel, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

At Church: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Will the Remains be Present at the Visitation?

- Coffin with Viewing of Body  
 Closed Coffin  
 Urn with Photograph next to it  
 No Remains Present

### Time of the Visitation

- Evening Prior to the Funeral or Memorial Service  
 Before the Funeral or Memorial Service  
 Both

### Displays

- Photographic Displays  
 Mementos (Awards, Certificates, etc.)  
 Bible of the Deceased  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Reception Following Funeral

**I would like a reception following the service for mutual conversation and consolation.**

- Yes  
 No

### I would like the Reception

- Immediately Following the Funeral Service; Before Burial  
 Following the Service and After Burial

### Location for the Reception

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

**Menu for the Reception**

- Dessert (cakes) and Coffee/Beverage/juice
- Secure your own caterer and wait staff.
- Light Lunch (Sandwiches, Salads, pickles, chips, dessert(cakes))
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Funeral Home**

**Preferred Company** \_\_\_\_\_  
*(Specific arrangements in advance at the funeral home of your choice are encouraged.)*

**Have Pre-Arrangements Been Made?**

- Yes
- No

**Disposition of the Body**

- Embalm Body (Usually required if unrefrigerated over 24 hours before burial.)
- Cremate Body Shortly After Death
- Cremate Body After Visitation and/or Service

**Burial Wishes**

- Bury Coffin/Urn in Cemetery
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
*(This might include keeping ashes with a family member, spreading ashes at a favorite spot, etc.)*

**Bury Coffin or Urn**

- Before Visitation
- After Visitation but Before Funeral Service
- After Funeral Service but Before Luncheon Reception
- After Luncheon Reception
- At a Later Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Grave Marker**

I have made arrangements for a grave marker with this company: \_\_\_\_\_  
I would like the following to be included on the grave marker:

- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Maiden name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Dates: (birth/death dates) \_\_\_\_\_
- Bible Verse: \_\_\_\_\_
- Graphic: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Eligible for Military Honors**

- Yes, which Military branch? \_\_\_\_\_
- No

**Names of Pall Bearers** *(Six Pall Bearers needed only when there is a coffin for burial.)*

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**Cemetery**

\_\_\_\_\_ I have made arrangements for my burial.

Name of Cemetery \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Cemetery \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not have arrangements for my burial. I suggest the following arrangements:

\_\_\_\_\_

*(Include Contact Information)*

**Desired Expressions of Sympathy**

\_\_\_\_\_ Flowers

\_\_\_\_\_ I desire Memorial Gifts in lieu of Flowers

**Memorial Suggestions (Charity, Church, non-profit)**

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (Name & Address): \_\_\_\_\_

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**Obituary**

Full Name *(including Maiden Name)* \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date and Location \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Names *(including Mother's Maiden Name)* \_\_\_\_\_

Baptism Date, Church, and Location \_\_\_\_\_

Confirmation Date, Church, and Location \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status, Marriage Date, and Name of Spouse \_\_\_\_\_

Other Marriages/Divorces/Spouse(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Names of Children and their spouses \_\_\_\_\_

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Additional Next of Kin \_\_\_\_\_

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## Personal History

*On a separate page, record additional information including place(s) of residence, special events, hobbies/interests, schools attended, and degrees received, accomplishments, memberships, employment history, volunteer activities, military service, etc. Include as many full names, city of residence, birth and death dates, etc. as possible. All this information is important to your family. This information does not need to be prepared in paragraph form.*

## Important Documents and Advisors

*It is important that survivors be able to locate vital records and important documents. Before your death, you should have a current will/living trust and related health care directives which express your wishes on important personal, financial, medical, and charitable issues for your survivors. If you need information regarding estate planning, planned giving, and/or the inclusion of a Christian preamble for your will, please consult your legal or financial advisor. Additional information is available at [www.CoopersvilleUMC.org](http://www.CoopersvilleUMC.org) under "Giving".*

**Location and Date of Will/Living Trust** \_\_\_\_\_

**Attorney/Will Preparer** \_\_\_\_\_

**Power of Attorney for Financial** \_\_\_\_\_

**Power of Attorney for Health Care** \_\_\_\_\_

**Executor of Will/Estate** \_\_\_\_\_

**Guardian (for Minor Children)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Comments**

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# Please Be Sure To Notify These People Of My Passing

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

## Additional Notes & Thoughts

### To My Loved Ones

*It's out of pure and simple love that I leave you with this gift to guide and assist you through the period ahead.*

*My wish is to spare you any unnecessary expense and the burden of having to make decisions under pressure of time and emotion. That's why I have expressed my wishes and provided the information you'll need to answer the many questions you'll be asked. I have also shared my personal thoughts and memories. May you find as much comfort and meaning in receiving these pages as I found in preparing them.*

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_