



Shanley's  
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Funeral Home

Shanley's Funeral Home  
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Guideline for Funeral planning



Planning a funeral is never an easy thing to do. Saying goodbye to a loved one is difficult. People grieve in different ways. Often times family tension adds to the stress during an already emotionally burdensome period. This practical guide is designed to alleviate some of the burden and offer steps to help you plan your loved one's funeral service.

First, before making any plans, ask family members if your loved one left specific directions for their funeral. If so, this will greatly ease the load of making decisions and guessing what your loved one would have wanted. Be sure to find out if your loved one has a funeral or burial insurance policy or prepaid arrangements with a funeral home or cemetery.

If no prearrangements have been made the following need to be done:

Please be advised, to employ the services of a reputable, licensed and registered funeral home. This will alleviate any problems at the Department of Home Affairs.

The staff of the funeral home will expertly guide you through the process from legal documents, preparing an obituary, choosing a casket/coffin and deciding between a cremation or burial service.

In the event of a loved one passing away, whether at a private residence, nursing home, hospital or clinic, the doctor who has been caring for the deceased must be notified.

The family/friend may then call the funeral home to come and remove the loved one.

## LENGTH OF SERVICE

The entire length of the funeral service often depends on the number of guests, the number of songs, the number and length of eulogies and the length of the sermon. Time should be allowed either before or after the service to greet your guests and give them a moment to say their goodbyes to the deceased. It is recommended to keep the actual service length anywhere between 30-60 minutes.

## IN CONCLUSION

We understand that in the wake of a death of a loved one, circumstances often become blurred and a little complicated. The organisation of a funeral / memorial service, can add immeasurably to that stress.

As a funeral home, we want to be as helpful as possible as you walk through the preparation and experience of that service.

We hope that during this difficult time you will meet God in such a way that you are able to find a certain amount of closure during the funeral service.

Please feel free to discuss any of the above with us.



## PREPARING A EULOGY

A typical eulogy is about 5 minutes in length. It is recommended to leave the emotional elements for the end of the eulogy. Any additional tributes given by family or friends should be limited in length to keep the service from going too long. Young children and family members may want to write down a few sentences to be read aloud by the minister or the person giving the eulogy.

Whether or not you are giving the eulogy, it is helpful to have certain facts and information available. Here is a sample eulogy outline that may aid you in preparing necessary information. Please note that this is simply a suggestion and NOT a requirement.

Outline of a Eulogy:

- Give a brief history including birth date, place of birth, parents, Grandparents and siblings.
- Where did they grow up? What was their childhood like?
- Where did they go to school?
- Professional and career accomplishments?
- Who did they marry? When and where?
- Children and grandchildren.
- How long were they married?
- Significant life accomplishments.
- Personal interests, hobbies, achievements.
- Character qualities, Christian service, and how they affected other Lives.

The funeral home will then contact the family at their convenience, and arrange to meet with them to discuss funeral arrangements.

If the funeral service is to take place in a church / chapel, please be advised to meet with your minister first, in order to see when the church can accommodate your service, before you meet with the funeral home.

All documentation pertaining to the death of a loved one, will be administered by the funeral home.

- The collection of doctors papers.
- The registration of the death at Home Affairs.
- The collection of the death certificate from Home Affairs.
- Original copy and certified copies of the death certificate to be Given to the family by the funeral home.

## PLANNING THE SERVICE IDEAS TO DISCUSS WITH YOUR FUNERAL HOME AND YOUR MINISTER

- Any special songs or music you would like to include (see below Under "Music for the Service")
- Any special announcements to be made?
- If guests are invited to the grave-side service, an announcement Should be made before the end of the service.
- Is there a charity or a benefit you would recommend to mourners In lieu of sending flowers?
- Any special words of "thanks" that need to be mentioned.
- Any poems, stories, bible versus, or readings you would like to Include.
- Any special speakers or singers you would like.
- Any specific photos of your loved one or family you would like to Be displayed.



## SPECIAL REMEMBRANCES

A table is often provided for the family to place special remembrances, photographs and other memorabilia during the service. Be sure to think about what you might want to display. Take some time to gather these items and make arrangements with the funeral coordinator.

## GUEST BOOK

This record of attendance is usually very meaningful to family members, so ask someone to be responsible to bring a guest book and a nice pen. The comments that are left in the book would provide a lasting and very meaningful memento of the deceased.

## SERVICE HANDOUT

It has been a practice at some services to provide a hymn sheet / order of service / memorial document. Because most funerals / memorial services are planned in a relatively short period of time, this detail is often overlooked. Please be aware that the construction and provision of this document would be the responsibility of the family and / or the funeral home.

## TEA ARRANGEMENTS

Churches are willing to run with the arrangements of a tea for after the service. A fee will accompany this service. This fee will vary depending on the size of the funeral. A further alternative is that the family or friends of the deceased decide to run with the tea. Please ensure that contact is made with the church office to find out procedures, or ask your funeral coordinator for advice.

## FLOWERS

Provision of flowers would be the responsibility of the family. Flowers can be ordered by the funeral home on behalf of the family.

## CHOOSING A MINISTER

If your loved one was not a member of a church and had no contact with a church, you may want to rely on the funeral home to recommend a minister, and church or ask family members to decide. There are many venue options available to the family. The person you choose to officiate will have a large part in shaping the overall dynamics of the funeral service

## MUSIC FOR THE SERVICE

Be aware that the choice of songs is often a fairly tricky business. We have often been in a funeral service where the pastor ends up being the only person in the congregation singing the “unknown” songs. In regard to the choice of songs, please consider the following factors:

- You may want to play some songs that were particularly Meaningful to the deceased.
- If the congregation is a churched congregation, then the choice of Music is broader. The decision would then run along the lines of Whether or not to choose contemporary or traditional songs.
- If the congregation is largely “unchurched” it is safer and more Meaningful to turn toward some very well known hymns. Some suggestions would be:
  - The Lord's my Shepherd
  - Abide with me
  - Great is thy Faithfulness
  - Amazing Grace

