



# Memorial Service & Funeral

Planning Guide





### A message from Pastor Rockford ...

Dear McFarlin Family and Friends,

Grief over the loss of a loved one ushers a person into a new and often unwanted world of experiences. One enters, as it were, a forest full of uncharted trails. Each fresh realization of the loss, with its unsettling emotional dynamics, forces one to walk down yet another uncharted path. There are numerous decisions to be made; often responsibilities dictate that such decisions be made quickly ... long before we feel ready to make them.

Emotions following a loss often are confusing and intense. There may be anger that shows itself in ways that are not usually a part of who we are; there may be guilt over the loss; there may be denial – a feeling that this can't possibly be happening; there may be a preoccupation which makes it difficult to concentrate on matters at hand. In addition, sometimes the mind wants answers to the question “Why?” and the heart longs to communicate again with the loved one now gone.

Each loss is different, and we hunger for whatever can give direction, information or counsel. I want to reassure you that your McFarlin church family desires to walk the journey of grief with you. We don't have all the answers to the “whys,” but we believe in the importance of being with you as you question, make decisions and heal. We hope this booklet acts as a light for your path and that it will guide you during your time of loss.

The inherent belief in the risen Christ is the cornerstone of a United Methodist funeral or memorial service. Christ is our hope for eternal life, and we offer this hope to surviving family members and friends: your beloved is now in God's eternal charge.

Planning a service can offer unexpected blessings to those in grief. It can be a time to laugh and to cry as we retell stories and share memories. It is a sacred privilege and both our calling and our desire to walk these uncharted paths with you and your family.

Blessings,

Rev. Rockford Johnson  
Senior Pastor

# Planning the Service

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## When Death is Imminent or When Death Occurs

When death is imminent, our pastors are honored to come and pray with you. Please call the church and ask to speak to the pastoral assistant at 405-321-3484, and we will make every effort to send someone to you.

## Scheduling the Service

Please contact the Pastoral Assistant/Funeral Coordinator so we help you schedule the date, time and location of the service, before you make arrangements with the funeral home. Funerals and Memorial services at the church are held Monday through Friday between 9am and 4pm.

The Sanctuary is suitable for a large number of guests, while Martin Chapel is fitting for a smaller more intimate group. Some families schedule the service at a funeral home or cemetery. A pastor from McFarlin can be available for services in such locations, as well.

## Types of Services

You may choose to have one of several types of services:

- Memorial Service
- Funeral Service
- Graveside Service

To celebrate life and resurrection during funeral services held at McFarlin, the casket remains closed before, during and after the service. An exception may be made for family members to view the body 90 minutes prior to the service when arranged through the funeral home.

Our Care Ministries provide either a meal for immediate family members or a reception for all the guests the day of the service. If you choose to have a meal for immediate family members, it can be served at the church or delivered to your home.

## Planning a Service

Following the selection of the date, time, location and type of service, the pastor meets with the family to plan the service. If the deceased prepared an individual planning guide in advance, please bring it to this meeting. The pastoral assistant contacts the family and funeral home, if one is being employed, to review details of the service.

## Fees

While there are no building fees for funerals or memorials held at McFarlin, there are fees for musician and audio technician services. Our pastoral assistant can provide current cost information upon request. If a funeral home is not used for a memorial service, there is a fee for a funeral coordinator.

## Preparing a Video Tribute

A video tribute is one way to share special photos of your loved one with those attending the funeral or memorial service. The video tribute may be shown during or prior to the service. If it is shown during the worship service, the suggested length for the video is five minutes or less. Any music chosen to accompany the video tribute should reflect an attitude of worship in its style and lyrics.

If you have chosen to use a funeral home, the funeral director can arrange to make a video tribute with pictures you provide. Families that choose not to use a funeral home are responsible for making their video tribute. Please consult with the pastoral assistant in advance of the service if you will be making your own video tribute.

## Memorabilia

The family may wish to arrange a memory table displaying photos, scrapbooks, awards, certificates of achievement or other personal items relating to their loved one. These displays can be placed either in the Sanctuary foyer or, if a reception is to be held following the service, in the Atrium. McFarlin provides tables and cloths for such displays. To make arrangements for a memory table display, please advise the pastoral assistant of your wishes prior to the day of the service.

## Funeral Home Responsibilities

Funeral homes do offer guidance and services to help honor your loved one's memory. McFarlin does not endorse any business, and we suggest that you interview a few and seek references before making your selection.

Services offered by funeral homes include:

- Offering a selection of caskets and urns
- Helping choose a cemetery, as well as purchasing a burial plot or urn niche
- Displaying floral arrangements at the service and removing them afterward
- Coordinating a processional to the cemetery
- Hosting visitation at the funeral home
- Drafting and placing an obituary in the local newspaper
- Providing guest books
- Compiling a video from materials you provide
- Printing worship bulletins for the service

## When a Funeral Home is not Involved in the Service

When a body is not present during the service, as with cremations or donations of the body, the family may choose not to have a funeral home involved in the memorial service. In such instances, the family is responsible for the following:

- Informing the pastoral assistant of the number of reserved seats needed for family members and if a memory table is desired
- Removing floral arrangements after the service
- Publishing the worship bulletins (*if desired*)
- Providing guest books (*if desired*)
- Creating a video to be displayed before, during or after the service and providing the video to the pastoral assistant at least one day prior to the service (*if desired*)

## Memorial Gifts

As an expression of love, friends and family may choose to make a memorial contribution to a charity. When such gifts are directed to McFarlin Memorial United Methodist Church, we mail an acknowledgment to the bereaved family and send a note of appreciation to the donor.

For more information on memorial gifts, please contact McFarlin's Accounting & Payroll Coordinator at 405-321-3484, extension 106.

## Walking with You Through Grief

Your church wants to encourage and support you following your loss. We offer Congregational Care Ministers to support grieving individuals and grief literature during the first year of loss. Please contact the Director of Care Ministries for more information at 405-321-3484, extension 115.

# Elements of Worship

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## Music

Music is a vital part of any worship experience. So often, music can speak volumes when we are unable to speak ourselves. McFarlin offers both traditional and contemporary styles of sacred music. Your pastor helps in the selection of music for the service. Secular and pre-recorded music is not used during our worship services. Musical portions of the service usually include:

**Prelude:** Here, the musician plays for approximately 20 minutes prior to the service. This might include requested hymns or a selection of the musician's choice.

**Processional:** Music accompanies the family and the funeral director or pastoral assistant as they enter the Sanctuary or chapel and are seated.

**Solos and congregational hymns:** These pieces complement the worship service and are chosen in consultation with the pastor.

**Recessional:** As this music plays, the casket (if applicable), pastor and family exit the Sanctuary and the music continues until everyone has left the room.

## Scripture Readings

Scripture enhances the funeral or memorial experience, especially when it reflects the character or situation of the deceased or family members. We encourage you to make your personal favorites known to your pastor. Among some of the most widely selected Scriptures for memorials and funerals are these:

- Exodus 14:5-14, 19-31
- Psalm 23
- Psalm 130
- Isaiah 40:1-8
- Isaiah 40:28-31
- Isaiah 43:1-3, 5-7, 13, 15, 18-19, 25
- Isaiah 55:1-3, 6-13
- Luke 24:13-35
- John 11:1-4, 20-27, 32-35, 38-44
- John 14: 1-4, 18-19, 25-27
- Romans 8:1-2,11,14,17-18,28,31-32
- 1 Corinthians 13:1-13
- 1 Corinthians 15:51-57
- 2 Corinthians 4:5-18
- Ephesians 1:15-23, 2:1-10
- 1 Peter 1:3-9, 13, 21-25
- Revelation 7:2-3, 9-17
- Revelation 21:1-7

*Israel's deliverance*  
*The Lord is my shepherd*  
*Out of the depths I cry to the Lord*  
*Comfort, comfort my people*  
*Do you not know?*  
*God will deliver*  
*Hymn of Joy*  
*Jesus at Emmaus*  
*The raising of Lazarus*  
*Do not let your hearts be troubled*  
*Life through the Spirit*  
*If I speak in the tongues*  
*Listen, I tell you a mystery*  
*Glory in God*  
*Alive in Christ*  
*Blessed by God*  
*The multitude of the redeemed*  
*Then I saw a new heaven*

## Order of Worship

This is a guide for a typical funeral or memorial service at McFarlin:

- Prelude
- Family entrance
- Greeting
- Word of grace
- Prayer
- Congregational hymn or solo
- Scripture reading
- Special music
- Homily and eulogy
- Prayer
- Congregational hymn or solo
- Commendation
- Dismissal and blessing
- Recessional

## Immediately Following the Service

The family may wish to greet guests following the service. Please notify the pastoral assistant of such plans in advance.

Fear not, for I am with you, be dismayed, for I am your God;  
 I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with  
 the victorious right hand.

*Isaiah 41:10*



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