

PREPARING FOR A FUNERAL OR MEMORIAL SERVICE AT WESTWOOD

Funerals and memorial services held at Westwood Community Church seek to honor the life of your loved one, provide comfort to your family and community, and express the hope of eternal life in Christ.

WHAT IS MY FIRST STEP?

In preparing for a loss or following a loss, we recommend your first step be to contact a Funeral Director or cremation services. The Funeral Director will provide support and expertise on numerous matters that will require your attention in the days ahead and guide you in following the wishes of your loved one.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A FUNERAL AND MEMORIAL SERVICE?

When a family wishes to have a casket present at the service, a funeral is scheduled approximately 4-7 days following death. A memorial service is appropriate when the family wishes to hold a service on a date after cremation or burial.

HOW DO WE SCHEDULE A SERVICE AT WESTWOOD?

You will be invited to a planning meeting at Westwood, which will include the officiating pastor, the Westwood service coordinator, and family members who will be involved in the planning of the service. When this meeting is confirmed, we will provide guidelines for preparing for the planning meeting.

- Services held at Westwood Campuses occur Monday-Friday with visitation at 10:00am, the service at 11:00am, and a hospitality luncheon following the service.

WHAT DOES WESTWOOD PROVIDE?

It is the desire of Westwood to provide caring and skilled support to you by offering:

- Use of our facility for a 50-60 minute service with a sound technician.
- At our Chanhassen site, services are held in the Woodside Room (max capacity of 400 people) with hospitality in the lower level.
- At our Bush Lake site, services are held in the Worship Center (max capacity of 400 people), with hospitality in the commons.
- Service planning by the officiating Westwood Pastor and Westwood Service Coordinator in collaboration with the family.
- Hospitality volunteers will prepare and serve a luncheon/dessert following the service if requested.
- Administrative support to answer your questions regarding the facility, service details, and hospitality planning.
- Musicians if requested.
- Printed programs if requested.

WHAT IF I WANT TO HAVE A PASTOR OFFICIATE WHO IS NOT ON STAFF AT WESTWOOD?

We recognize that there may be various reasons for requesting an outside pastor to participate. We will consider the involvement of a pastor who plays an important role in your family's ongoing care. If you would like an outside pastor to participate in the service, please provide their contact information to Westwood to begin communicating about essential details.

SERVICE PLANNING

DOES WESTWOOD HAVE ANY GUIDELINES FOR THE SERVICE?

Westwood seeks to assist you in planning a meaningful service for your loved one. Please note the few guidelines we do have in place for all funerals and memorial services:

- An officiating pastor (whether Westwood or other licensed/ordained pastor) is expected to be involved in the planning and participation of the service. Westwood will provide a Service Coordinator.
- Content of the service will be appropriate to the Christian faith.
- Family and friends may be involved in the service and will be asked to respect the guidance of the officiating pastor about the length and type of involvement appropriate to a Christian funeral or memorial service.
- Personal items, including videos and photos, are encouraged to be displayed in the Commons area during the visitation.

WHAT SHOULD OUR FAMILY EXPECT TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE PLANNING?

Although there are varying degrees of involvement possible, the following list suggests the minimum that a family could expect to provide:

- An initial in-person appointment to meet with the pastor and service coordinator to discuss significant details (approx 1½ hours).
- The selection of a date for the service will depend on Westwood's building schedule and available staff. Services are held Monday-Friday at Chanhassen and Bush Lake campuses. We cannot accommodate Saturday services.
- DVD, PowerPoint, Thumb drive, or music CDs can be played during visitation or during hospitality but cannot be included in the service.
- If Westwood is creating programs, all program details must be provided two business days prior to the service. This includes emailing us a digital photograph of the deceased for the program and names, relationships, and correct spelling of individuals participating in the service, such as readers, tributes, and pallbearers.
- The family is encouraged to provide information regarding the designation of memorial gifts (e.g., The American Cancer Society, to the family, etc.) Checks written to Westwood Community Church will be received as contributions to the church.

WHAT DOES IT COST TO HOLD A FUNERAL OR MEMORIAL SERVICE AT WESTWOOD?

There is no cost to use the facility. However, there are some expenses that ensure we can cover the costs to provide the necessary elements for the service.

- Facility cost: no charge
- Sound Technician fee: \$200 (per technician)
- Suggested honorarium for officiating pastor: \$100 - \$200
- Suggested honorarium for musicians: \$100-\$200 (per musician)
- Hospitality
 - Luncheon - serving includes sandwiches, potato salad, assorted chips, fresh fruit, dessert, coffee, water, lemonade provided by Westwood: \$6.00 per serving

**Funeral and memorial services held at the Chanhassen Campus will be held in the Woodside Room unless the expected number of guests exceeds capacity.*

SAMPLE ORDER OF SERVICE

Prelude

Call to Worship (Music)

Welcome

Scripture Reading

Scripture passages can be provided to you.

Prayer

Eulogy

This is a reading of an extended obituary that captures significant events, accomplishments, and relationships.

Tributes

1- 3 people, 3-5 minutes each

Music

Message

Officiating Pastor

Music

Benediction

Postlude

DAY OF SERVICE

WHEN SHOULD WE ARRIVE?

Please arrive 30 minutes prior to the visitation. The Westwood Service Coordinator will greet you when you arrive. A private room equipped with beverages and a light snack is available for your family to come together prior to visitation and the service. Personal items such as coats, purses, etc., can remain in this locked room during the service. The Westwood Service Coordinator will also assist you and/or the funeral home with arranging personal memorabilia in the visitation area and service venue.

ONCE GUESTS ARRIVE, WHAT DOES OUR FAMILY EXPERIENCE?

After receiving your guests during the visitation hour, the officiating pastor will gather your family ten minutes prior to the service in the designated family room. This is a time for you to collect your thoughts and pray before entering the service together as a family.

ARE WE RESPONSIBLE FOR CLEANING UP AFTER THE SERVICE?

Please appoint several friends or family members to collect your personal memorabilia, guest book, and flowers after the service. All flower arrangements and memorabilia must be removed from the church following the gathering. We encourage you to think ahead about how much vehicle space you'll need to transport these items as you leave Westwood.

WHAT IF THERE IS LEFTOVER FOOD?

Our Hospitality Team will package any leftover food. You will be asked if you would like to keep the food, if you prefer it distributed among family members, or if you prefer to donate it to a local organization. (Westwood has partner organizations that will pick up donated leftover food and give to families in need.)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

CAN WE PROVIDE OUR OWN FOOD OR A SPECIAL FAMILY DESSERT?

Our intent is to provide quality food and ensure safe food handling practices. Food that is brought onto Westwood Campuses must be commercially prepared and purchased from a licensed facility (i.e., restaurant or retail grocery) that is inspected by the Minnesota Department of Health. Food cannot be prepared at home and brought on campus.

DOES WESTWOOD PROVIDE CHILDCARE DURING A FUNERAL OR MEMORIAL SERVICE?

Westwood does not have childcare staff available. A family room is available for guests with small children outside the Woodside Room.

IS A WESTWOOD PASTOR AVAILABLE FOR INTERMENT FOLLOWING THE SERVICE?

Please consult with the officiating pastor before the day of the service to make this request.

DOES WESTWOOD PROVIDE VIDEOTAPING OF THE SERVICE?

Westwood does not offer this option, but you may hire a videographer if desired. Westwood does provide the family an audio CD of the service.

IS A SOUND SYSTEM AND MICROPHONE AVAILABLE FOR USE DURING THE HOSPITALITY LUNCHEON?

Westwood does not supply this equipment. The family may provide a portable speaker or small karaoke machine if sharing or background music is desired.

MAY SLIDES OR VIDEOS BE SHOWN ON THE LARGE SCREENS IN THE WORSHIP CENTER?

Memorabilia, videos, or slide shows can only be displayed during the visitation and hospitality. Our sound technician is unable to facilitate this type of request.

HOW LONG CAN WE EXPECT THE LUNCHEON TO LAST?

Most guests will visit for 1 to 1½ hours. Typically, families are packed up and leaving the church within 2 hours of the service ending.

WILL WESTWOOD ASSIST WITH DONATING FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS AFTER THE SERVICE?

We ask that you appoint several friends or family members to remove all flower arrangements and memorabilia following the hospitality. We encourage you to think ahead about how much vehicle space you'll need to transport these items as you leave Westwood.

Thank you for allowing us to come alongside you in your loss. Please contact us with additional questions. Contact Community Care at 952-224-7322 for further assistance.