

**A Short List of the Many Details
for which a funeral home provides expert assistance in planning a
Checklist for Planning a Funeral/Memorial Service**

1. ___ Discuss with all involved their ideas about a service that is personal and provides meaning and support. Items such as where the service will be held, when and who will be involved, what will be said and done to commemorate the life, and whether to have at time of fellowship prior to or following the service should be addressed.
2. ___ Verify with the clergy or other leaders the date, time, and place of memorial service before the funeral home notifies the newspapers. We must send this information to the newspaper no later than 2 p.m. on the day before it is to run in the paper. On weekends, deadlines vary. Please consult with us early in the process to verify deadlines.
3. ___ Contact others who will be participating and confirm their availability. Some possible contacts will be musicians, the church office, friends, and/or family participants and those arranging fellowship.
4. ___ If burial of the cremated remains is the final disposition, contact the cemetery 24 hours prior to your arrival. They will advise you about the hours of service. Most cemeteries require payment of their fee prior to the interment and may have documents for you to complete.
5. ___ Contact all florists, if flowers are desired and arrange for delivery time and place. The church hostess must be notified of the name of the florist, the time of delivery of the flowers, and the family's wishes for the disposition of the flowers following the service.
5. ___ Arrange for a guest register book, memorial folders and/or prayer cards, if desired. For bulletins, the leader of the service and the church staff may assist you in developing the service order and printing it in handout format.
6. ___ Collect memorial items or photos, that are appropriate for the visitation/reception, but these are not permitted in the Sanctuary or Chapel. Arrange for tables, stands, and easels to on which to display these items.
7. ___ Collect honoraria for the participants in the memorial service.
8. ___ You may want to provide the funeral home with the phone number for a family member who has voice mail or cell phone. The funeral home can refer calls about services, etc. to this number. Be prepared to receive calls at all times of the day or night.

The Day of the Service

9. ___ Several hours in advance of the service, parking areas for the family should be identified and reserved.
10. ___ If the memorial service is in a public place, provide a minimum of two individuals to assist with seating of guests, plus others who may assist in parking of vehicles.

11. ___ A representative from the family should arrive at the location of the service at least one hour prior to the service to: (1) receive and arrange flowers on stands, tables, floor, etc. (2) reserve seating for the family.
12. ___ Have someone available who is knowledgeable about the location of restrooms, water fountains, and exits in case of emergency.
13. ___ If it is raining, you may wish to appoint people to bring large umbrellas to assist people from their cars to the building.
14. ___ Someone should have a cell phone to summon medical assistance in case of emergency.
15. ___ Have someone stationed near the entrance to encourage those attending to sign the register book. If a register book has not been purchased, you may want to have some type of stationary so people can note their attendance.
16. ___ Display boards, tables for showing photographs, reserved seating signs, umbrellas, parking signs, register stands, easels, memorial tables, and flower stands are not provided by most churches or public facilities. You should have in mind how these things will be substituted. A rental agency might be considered and you might appoint someone to arrange getting these items for you.
17. ___ At the conclusion of the service an invitation may be extended for those in attendance to join for fellowship. It may be necessary to ask someone to make that announcement.
18. ___ All honoraria should be distributed to participants who might include clergy, musicians, sextons, church custodians, sound technicians, church hostess, fellowship coordinators, etc.
19. ___ If you are traveling to a cemetery for the committal service, it will be necessary for someone to organize automobiles in an orderly fashion to provide for a smooth, safe flow. Police escorts are no longer provided in Spartanburg County. A person also should be designated to care for the urn and any paperwork with cemetery officials.

Following the Service

20. ___ Following the service it will be necessary for someone to remain to care for flowers, register book, and general “pick up” of the facility. Most churches expect the sanctuary to be restored to the condition it was in prior to the service.
21. ___ You may want floral pieces to be delivered to places of special meaning, such as the family residence, nursing home or cemetery. Someone should be designated to take care of this detail.
22. ___ You will need to return all items rented or borrowed for use during the service.
23. ___ Appropriate acknowledgement should be made to participants and others who supported through food, memorial gifts, flowers, etc. We have a selection of acknowledgement cards available for this purpose.