

MOUNT BAKER PARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Funerals

INTRODUCTION

Whenever a member or friend of the Mt. Baker Park Presbyterian Church worshipping community dies, a number of decisions and plans have to be made in a brief span of time. This information is offered as a helpful tool for those making such decisions and plans.

WHEN SOMEONE IS NEAR DEATH

Whenever someone is near death, Pastor Leland Seese, Jr., should be notified without delay. He can be reached at the following phone numbers:

Church: 206.722.5884

Home: 206.323.8081

The pastoral staff is available to pray with family and friends before, during, and after the time of death. Formal prayer services, and informal prayer and support, are available at all times.

WHEN SOMEONE HAS DIED

When a member or friend of the worshipping community has died the ministrations of a pastor and the services of a mortician are immediately necessary. A call to the church and the funeral home should be made at once, notifying pastor and mortician about the name of the deceased and how a family member or friend can be reached to make plans for the ceremony.

It is entirely appropriate for family members and friends to gather for prayer before a formal funeral or memorial service is conducted. It is especially helpful for family members and close friends to gather for quiet prayer and meditation the day (or evening) before a church ceremony.

PLANNING A FUNERAL OR MEMORIAL SERVICE

There is no mandatory day and time for a funeral or memorial service to take place. Typically, funerals and memorial services take place within a few days after a death, as soon as congregation, family members and friends can gather. It is customary among Christians to hold funerals and memorial services on Sundays, the Day of Resurrection.

A funeral is a service at which a coffin or urn of ashes is present. In Presbyterian churches the coffin is kept closed before, during, and after the service, and is often covered by a pall. This is to emphasize that the service is a witness to the resurrection rather than a veneration of the dead or their worldly and material status. A memorial service follows the same liturgy as a funeral, but without the presence of a casket or urn.

Funerals and memorial services are worship services. Scripture readings, prayers, music, and reflections ought to honor this fact. As soon as possible after a death, family members or friends should arrange a meeting with the pastor to plan the service. Typically, such a meeting takes about an hour.

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Family members and friends often request a number of special arrangements for a funeral or memorial service. The following policies apply at Mt. Baker Park Presbyterian Church:

- Flowers – As much as is possible, flower arrangements ought to be limited to one arrangement on the Communion table. In lieu of flowers, family and friends are encouraged to make memorial contributions to the church or another charity.
- Photographs – A photograph of the deceased, or a mural, may be placed in the narthex of the church before the service, then moved to the reception area. No photos or memorabilia are allowed in the sanctuary or chancel.
- Fraternal Societies – When fraternal rites are desired, they must take place at another time and site. The only services offered at the church are those found in the *Book of Common Worship*.
- Military Honors – An American flag may be presented to the family or friends of the deceased by a military officer or non-commissioned officer at the end of a funeral, memorial service, interment, or inurnment.
- Cemetery or Mausoleum Services – An interment (burial) service may take place either immediately following the funeral or memorial service or at a later date. Neither is mandatory.
- Guest Book – Family or friends may provide a guest book for those who attend to sign.

RECEPTIONS

The church is available for receptions following funerals or memorial services. Either the Social Hall downstairs (not disabled accessible) or the Fellowship Hall on the main floor is available.

The congregation is not able to provide lunches or other meals. Family members and friends may provide a meal, or hire a private caterer. The Mt. Baker Park Presbyterian Church Board of Deacons is available to serve coffee, tea, and cookies.

FEEES

For members of MBPPC, Pastor Seese charges no fee for his services at funerals or memorial services. There is no fee for use of the sanctuary for funerals or memorial services.

The following fees are charged (checks payable to individuals):

- Lee Seese (for non members): \$200.00
- Richard Grace, Organist: \$175.00
- Timmy Tran, Custodian: \$ 55.00
- Church Soloist (if used): \$ 75.00
- Deacons' Fund (suggested): \$ 75.00