



Epworth United Methodist Church

249 East Center Street, Marion, Ohio 43302 740-387-8344

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Epworth United Methodist Church Funeral Policy and Practice Guidelines

Funeral and Memorial Services

The death of a loved one is a difficult experience, even if the death of a loved one has been expected. We grieve the loss of one who has been close to us. It is our privilege as a congregation and staff to minister with church members, community members, and friends during this time of great need. It is through God's grace and hope that we make this journey together.

These guidelines are provided to assist members and friends of Epworth United Methodist Church, funeral homes, and cremation societies in planning and providing a Christian funeral. Although funeral and memorial services can be held in funeral homes and other locations, the most appropriate place for conducting a funeral or memorial service upon the death of person of faith is in the church to where he or she held membership. By having the funeral or memorial service in the sanctuary of the church, we are reminded of our hope and assurance in Christ, we are surrounded by the familiar symbols of our faith experience, and we are surrounded and supported by a worshipping community. The parlor of the church is similarly available for smaller funeral services or memorials. All members and friends are encouraged to use the church for their funeral and memorial services. There are no charges for the use of the church for active members, homebound members, or those who actively attend Epworth United Methodist Church. Members of the community who are not associated with Epworth United Methodist Church and would like a Christian funeral are also invited to use our church for their funeral or memorial services, subject to our funeral policy and practice guidelines and the church use expenses and honoraria listed below.

There are alternative methods of conducting services at the time of death. One option can include a traditional funeral service in the sanctuary of the church or at the funeral home following a death with the body or cremains present. Another option can include an immediate interment of the body or cremains with a graveside service. A memorial service in the sanctuary of the church could then be conducted at a later date, without the body or cremains present. Still another option can include a public or private graveside service without a funeral or memorial service. Our pastor is always available to consult with the family when choosing which method best meets the family's needs. This decision will be made in coordination with the funeral home and the pastor at the time arrangements are made.

Our pastor is available to go with the family to the funeral home to assist in making arrangements if desired. Our pastor will meet with the family prior to any services in order to plan the service and will call you to schedule this meeting.

God's Love In Action...Growing Disciples Through Compassionate Relationships

Date and Time of Funerals and Memorial Services

We understand that funerals and memorial services are very time-sensitive; however, dates and times for funerals and memorial services must be arranged in consultation with our pastor's schedule, our church calendar, and the preferences of the deceased's family. Funerals or memorial services cannot be conducted on Sundays and must be planned around already scheduled events. Our pastor must approve all funeral or memorial arrangements prior to them being publicized. Recognizing that grief and loss are the strongest in the days following the death of a loved one, funeral services, memorial services, calling hours, and graveside services are scheduled as soon as possible so that healing may begin to occur.

Calling Hours

In addition to hosting funeral and memorial services, and depending upon the church calendar, Epworth United Methodist Church is also available to host calling hours. Calling hours can be held in the sanctuary or in the church parlor. Calling hours are usually held a day prior to the funeral service or one to two hours prior to the actual funeral or memorial service. This decision needs to be made in coordination with the funeral home and/or our pastor. In addition to Epworth United Methodist Church staff, the funeral home must provide staffing at the church for the duration of the calling hours and funeral service whenever a body is present. The church in no way assumes responsibility for the casket or cremains and they may not stay in the church overnight. There are no charges for the use of the church for active members, homebound members, and those who actively attend Epworth United Methodist Church.

Who will Officiate?

United Methodist Church pastoral ethics require that the pastor appointed to Epworth United Methodist Church must conduct all funeral and memorial services held at the church, unless the pastor appointed to the church invites another pastor to share in or act on behalf of the pastor. This applies to pastors who have previously served the Epworth United Methodist Church and who are now retired or who have been appointed to serve another congregation. It is not our usual practice to allow non-United Methodist ordained clergy to solely conduct funeral or memorial services in the church. Conducting a service for those who have no connection with the church is a normal part of the ministerial obligation; however, the use of the church and participating clergy is at the discretion of the pastor.

Structure of the Funeral or Memorial Service

A funeral or memorial service held at the church is considered a service of worship. While celebrating the deceased person's life, we will acknowledge the promise of eternal life and the grace we receive through Jesus Christ. Consequently, all parts of the service, including music and visual images, will be consistent with the present worship practices of the church.

The service of worship will take on a traditional United Methodist format. The family may suggest other items to be included in the service, but these must meet the approval of our pastor. The pastor will meet with the family prior to any services to personalize and plan the service.

Closed Casket

Consistent with a funeral service being a service of worship, all caskets must be closed and placed at the altar prior to the beginning of the service. The church has a funeral pall that can be used to cover the casket.

Funeral or Memorial Service Music

Only music appropriate to a worship service will be used. Our church organist/pianist shall be used for all funeral and memorial services, and our pastor will work with you in choosing appropriate music. Soloists or instrumental soloists are also welcome to participate in the service, but a rehearsal must be scheduled in advance prior to the funeral or memorial service. The minimum honorarium for our organist/pianist is listed below in the section discussing church use charges.

Video Presentations

If a video presentation is to be used prior to the service or during calling hours, it must be submitted to the Church Office 24 hours prior to the funeral or memorial service for review and to make sure that it is compatible with our projection system.

Care for Grieving Family and Friends on the Day of the Service

Depending upon availability and scheduling, the church can provide a funeral meal following a funeral or memorial service that is conducted at the church. Our pastor will ask you for an estimate as to how many friends and family members you think will be attending the meal. It is not our usual practice to provide funeral meals for services that are conducted outside of the church nor to provide funeral meals at a different location other than in the Fellowship Hall of the church. We consider the funeral meal a ministry to grieving families and their friends, and there is no charge for the funeral meal; however, donations are always accepted.

Nursery

The church does not provide a nursery for funeral or memorial services.

Memorials

Families may wish to request contributions to the church or to a charitable organization. Such a request should be directed to the funeral home so that the request may receive publication in the obituary. It is usual practice for the funeral home to collect such contributions at calling hours and/or at the funeral or memorial service on behalf of the family. Contributions may also be mailed directly to the church or the charitable organization. Memorial Funds received by the church are usually considered undesignated funds. Memorial Funds may also be designated by the family for a previously established fund consistent with Epworth United Methodist Church's policy on giving. The Church Office will send out thank you acknowledgements to all of those who have made a memorial contribution and will provide a list of those who contributed to the deceased's family. This list will be provided a month after the funeral or memorial service. Those who may also be interested in estate giving may contact the pastor and/or the Church Financial Secretary.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR LOVED ONE DIES

- Contact other family members and close friends
- Contact your pastor and/or the Church Office
Rev. Jennifer M Bass – 614-580-6834 (cell)
Epworth United Methodist Church Office – 740-387-8344
- Choose and contact a funeral home
Please provide the funeral home with the pastor's name and phone number
- Notify the employer of the deceased and your own employer
- Before going to the funeral home, it will save you considerable time and phone calls if you have the following information available:

Full name of deceased (include nickname or other names person may have used)

Date of Birth _____

Place of Birth _____

Father's Name _____

Mother's Name (Maiden) _____

List of relatives and relationship to the deceased _____

List of church, professional organizations, clubs and other organizations in which membership was held

If you wish, indicate memorial to be designated in obituary in memory of the deceased

Compile a list of individuals who might be available to serve as pallbearers (if needed)

Possible dates/times of the calling hours, funeral, or memorial service _____

If a memorial or funeral service is announced in the newspapers, take extra precaution for security at the home of the deceased during the indicated time of the service.

The following information will be needed for the Funeral Home and for the planning of the service.

Family Contact _____ home phone _____ cell phone _____
Relationship _____

Schedule of Church Use Fees/Honoraria for Funeral and Memorial Services

Church Use Fees (payable to Epworth United Methodist Church) for Church Funeral/Memorial Service (including up to 2 hours of visitation prior to the service)

Sanctuary

(active and attending or previous homebound members and family)	No Charge
(non-active and non-attending members and non-members)	\$250.00

Parlor

(active and attending or previous homebound members and family)	No Charge
(non-active and non-attending members and non-members)	\$150.00

Calling Hours Hosted at Church on Day Prior to Funeral/Memorial Service

(includes up to 4 hours of visitation)	
(active and attending or previous homebound members and family)	No Charge
(non-active and non-attending members and non-members)	\$250.00

*Pastor's Honorarium

Service Conducted at Church/Funeral Home and Graveside	\$200.00
Service at Graveside Only	\$100.00
(payable to Rev. Jennifer Bass)	

Organist/Pianist Honorarium for Funeral/Memorial Service

(payable to Kathy Walczak)	\$150.00
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Sound/Video Projectionist / Custodial Services Honorarium

(includes service and any calling hours)	\$100.00
(payable to Aaron Breece)	

*For active and attending members or previous homebound members and their family members, the pastor's honorarium is a suggested amount.

The honorarium and/or fees for additional vocal and instrumental music or additional participating clergy are the responsibility of the family.

The honoraria listed above for staff and volunteers are suggested honoraria and are considered minimums consistent with the time and gifts of our staff and volunteers. All honoraria or gifts received by staff or volunteers are the income and property of the staff or volunteers and not the church. Please make out checks for the use of the facility to Epworth UMC. Please make out the checks for the honoraria to the individuals listed above.

The honoraria and fees may be given to the church office, the staff members directly, or processed through the funeral home making the arrangements.

The above fees are subject to change.