



The Fort Bend Church Funeral Policy and Guide

Funeral Policies and Practices

Even for Christians, the death of a loved one is a difficult experience. We grieve the loss of one who has been close, but we do not sorrow as those who have no hope (1 Thessalonians 4: 13). It is our desire and privilege to minister to the families of our congregation in their time of need. It is through the Word of God that we have hope at the time of the death of a loved one (Romans 15: 4). This policy is provided to assist our families in planning and providing a Christian funeral.

Although funeral services may be held in funeral homes, the best place for conducting a funeral service upon the death of a Christian is in the sanctuary of the church to which he or she belonged. By having the service at The Fort Bend Church, all who attend will be reminded of our hope and assurance in Jesus Christ. Therefore, all members of The Fort Bend Church are encouraged to use the church sanctuary for funeral services.

There can be alternative methods for the conducting of services at the time of death. These could include a private graveside service for family members as soon after death as possible and/or a public service of worship (a memorial service) conducted at the church later. However, funeral worship services will only be conducted in the church sanctuary. The Minister of Congregational Care will be happy to meet with the family to plan the funeral worship arrangements.

Date and Time of Funerals

Dates and times for funerals at The Fort Bend Church are to be arranged in consultation with the Minister of Congregational Care based on availability and the preferences of the deceased's family. The Senior Pastor must approve all funeral arrangements at The Fort Bend Church. Decisions concerning areas outside the scope of this funeral policy shall be decided at the discretion of the Senior Pastor.

Funeral services will need to be planned around already scheduled sanctuary events (such as weddings, conferences, workshops, etc.).

Who Will Officiate?

Pastoral ethics require that The Fort Bend Church's Senior Pastor or an Associate Minister from The Fort Bend Church conduct all funeral services held at The Fort Bend Church unless by agreement with another pastor, he/she is invited to share in the services or act on behalf of the Senior Pastor of The Fort Bend Church. Any requests for another pastor to officiate or assist in the service must be approved by The Fort Bend Church's Senior Pastor.

Structure of the Funeral Service

A funeral service held in the church sanctuary is a service of worship, celebrating the deceased's life and the promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ. Consequently, all parts of the service are to be consistent with the present worship practices of the church. Generally, the outline for the funeral and interment services will take on the traditional form of The Fort Bend Church. The family may suggest other items to be included in these services, with the approval of the Senior Pastor of TFBC.

Funerals for Non-members and Inactive Members

Conducting funerals for people who have no connection with the church is a normal part of the ministerial obligation. However, it is up to the discretion of the Senior Pastor of TFBC to allow the funeral of a non-member or inactive member to be held at The Fort Bend Church.

Funeral Music

The Fort Bend Church Minister of Music will coordinate the selection of the music for all funeral services.

Video Presentation

If a video is to be used during the viewing, it must be submitted to the church during normal office business hours (10:00AM-6:00PM M-Th) two days prior to the funeral service for review. All presentations should be in DVD format. The background music on the DVD must be pre-approved by Minister of Music of TFBC.

Decorations

Families may wish the deceased's remains to lie in repose, as well as display certain mementos or photographs of the deceased and his/her family. The following guidelines would be applicable in these situations:

- Any displays or pictures must be appropriate to a worship setting;
- No nails, tacks, staples or screws shall be put in the walls or attached to the pews;
- All items must be removed within 1 hour of the conclusion of the service;
- No furnishings shall be moved or removed from the premises of TFBC.

Flowers

Only fresh cut flowers and planters may be used in the sanctuary during funeral services.

Closed Casket

All caskets must be closed during the funeral services, but may be open during the viewing (or preceding the viewing, for the family only), if desired. When closed, the flower blanket, flag or coverlet will cover the casket. The casket remains closed throughout the service. The funeral director in cooperation with the Senior Pastor of TFBC will have direction over such matters as timing, closed caskets, music, flowers, etc.

Childcare

The church does not provide childcare for funeral services.

Parking / Traffic Assistance

Parking assistance is customarily provided by the funeral home. The Fort Bend Church will not assist in traffic control.

Family Repast

NOT AVAILABLE OR APPLICABLE AT THIS TIME.

Use of Sanctuary

	Active Member*	Non-member/Inactive Member
Use of Sanctuary	Free	\$500
Musician	\$125	\$125
Soloist	Honorarium	Honorarium
Sound System Operator	Honorarium	Honorarium
Andrea Baty	\$125	\$125

***Active Member**

For the purposes of this policy, active members are defined as those members of The Fort Bend Church who regularly attend church services and contribute to the church as they generally provide regular financial and personal support for the church. This designation is also extended to the following:

1. Homebound members
2. Those who have served as former pastors of The Fort Bend Church

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR LOVED ONE DIES:

- 1. Contact Other Family Members and Close Friends and Contact Your Church
- 2. Notify employer of the deceased and your own employer; If children are in school, notify their school
- 3. Choose a Funeral Home

4. Have the following information available before going to the Funeral Home:

- 1. Full name of deceased (include nickname or other names person may have used). _____
- 2. Date of Birth _____
- 3. Place of Birth _____
- 4. Father's Name _____
- 5. Mother's Name (Maiden) _____
- 6. List of relatives and relationship to the deceased _____

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

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

9. Compile a list of individuals who might be available to serve as pallbearers:

10. 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.

Funeral Home Information

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

Name of Deceased _____
Family Contact _____ Relationship _____

Family Address _____
Family Phone _____ Other Contact Phone _____
Funeral Home _____
Address _____ Phone _____
Funeral Director _____ Phone _____
Number of Immediate Family Members _____
Family Hour/Viewing Scheduled Yes/ No _____
Location _____
Floral Requests/Others _____

Funeral Service Information

Service Location: The Fort Bend Church, 1900 Eldridge Road, Sugar Land, TX 77478 or Other Venue _____

Date & Time of Service _____
Funeral Format provided by The Fort Bend Church
(Open tributes are discouraged)
Video Presentation DVD/Movie _____
Time of Viewing _____
Cemetery _____
Pallbearers _____

Honorary Pallbearers _____

How many expected to attend funeral _____
Sample Program _____