

What is the purpose of an Institutional Funeral Service?

1. To provide comfort and hope with a sensitive caring attitude. Acknowledge the pain of grief and affirm the hope of the Gospel. Every culture throughout history has marked death with a ritual or ceremony. Primarily, it is an opportunity to remember the life of our loved one. Such remembrance is a strategic time of reflection on the value and meaning of life. A service helps to comfort those who are in grief and provides hope and encouragement to those who remain.

What are the common themes or procedures when preparing for a Funeral?

2. Schedule time to meet the family. Listen to family members and use liturgy of their denomination to make them feel comfortable. Interview members to inquire about their faith group background. Be very sensitive and tactical when inquiring about the deceased person's spiritual life or religious background.

Is there a specific format/structure or venue for a Funeral Service?

3. Funeral services are usually kept brief and to the point. Traditional Funeral Services include Introductory Scripture, eulogy, Scripture, funeral sermon, prayer, and benediction. Hymns, songs, and poems from the family can be included. Most funerals are conducted either in a funeral home or in a church but can also be conducted at the grave site. The funeral home offers a comfortable atmosphere for visiting hours and is suitable for funerals of persons who do not have close ties with the church.
4. Burial/Committal service follows the Funeral Service. There may be a procession to the cemetery. It is customary for the minister to walk in front of the casket when it is being carried to the hearse or to the grave site. The committal service is very brief, and the minister will usually preside at the graveside service. The service may consist of a short prayer, a sentence of committal or very brief remarks, and a benediction.

Sources

Hiscox, Edward, *The Star Book for Ministers*. Valley Forge: Judson Press (2014)

Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, *The Chaplains Handbook: Information, Prayers, Guidelines* (2018)

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