



Memorial & Funeral Services: How do I plan a Memorial Service or Funeral?

How do I plan a memorial or funeral?

Having a Memorial Service or Funeral Service can be a wonderful way to celebrate your baby's life and continue the difficult process of saying goodbye. It is important to remember to incorporate what matters most to you and your family for the service and to worry less about memorial or funeral service traditions. This checklist is only a guide to help generate ideas and provide a jumping off point to begin planning a service if you so choose.

Prior to the Service

- Memorial book (for guests to sign)
- Contact/coordinate:
 - Facility
 - Officiant(s)
 - Musicians
 - Speakers
 - Transportation for the family to/from the service
 - Special arrangements such as balloon/dove releases
 - Pallbearers
 - Family entrance/exit plan
 - After-service lunch/gathering
 - Processional from the service to the cemetery
- Create Memory folder (if desired)

At the Service

- Place / arrange flowers, memorial books, memorial flowers, photo displays, urns, candles, etc.
- Organize for special arrangements such as balloon or dove releases
- Verify presence of officiant, musicians, & sound technicians
- Test microphones, sound, video, etc.
- Arrange tissues around the room
- Distribute checks to vendors (if necessary)
- Invite attendees to the burial (if service is not a grave side service and you wish to invite others)
- Invite close family/friends/other attendees to a luncheon after the service if applicable



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Following the Service

- Consolidate memorial books & cards
- Gather excess memorial folders, mementos for the family, flower tags, photo displays
- Remove/transport flowers
- Do one last walk around the room to ensure that no one has left anything behind

**Things to Consider

- Transportation for the family: Driving yourself to and from the service can be difficult with the overwhelming emotions of the day. A lot of vendors will suggest utilizing a limo or car service for the family's transportation to and from the service, however this can increase costs. Consider asking a trusted friend or family member to drive you instead.
- After service: A traditional event after the service is to have a gathering with close friends and family. This can be a healing time to spend with people who love and care for you and your baby and can be a great time for the parents to "let down" after the heaviness of the day. Consider, however, that you may want to have an exit strategy in place in case it becomes too much for you and you wish to be alone or with your spouse and/or living children.
- Memory Folders: Memory folders are a beautiful way to personalize the service and are a wonderful keepsake for the attendees. Service providers will often present you with numerous choices for memory folders; if you don't like the options they present to you consider asking a friend or family member to help you create one that better represents you, your family and your baby.
- Flowers: Flowers are a wonderful accompaniment to a service and several of your family and friends may send flowers to the service. If you wish to have flowers at your service, your service provider can help arrange for the purchase and delivery of the flowers for you. This can increase costs so consider asking a family member or close friend to create flower arrangements instead or work with a floral shop directly.