

All Faiths Seminary International

Guidelines for Funeral Service Development

These are suggestions for a funeral service. Each minister will develop his /her own style as you develop as a minister. Use any of these suggestions in addition to doing your own research.

As an interfaith minister your role as a funeral officiant is to personalize the funeral service ceremony according to the wishes of the family and friends of the deceased.

Interview Process: Prepare questions that the family members can answer before you develop the funeral service. Where the wake or funeral will be, what time and the date. You will need facts about the deceased, his/her family, his/her career, his/her hobbies, spiritual, and faith tradition and so on... This pertinent information will help you develop the best ceremony for the family; will make it personal and memorable. Remember to ask how much time you have for the ceremony and what time it will start. The length of the service is usually 30-45 minutes. If it is too long people may become uncomfortable. (If the deceased is a celebrity the service may be much longer) Limit the time that each family member will speak to 1-3 minutes.

Does the family want any inclusions in the ceremony? Did the deceased have any requests or instructions regarding his/her funeral service? Example: music, soloist musician or singer, scripture reading, poetry, blessing with holy water, family or friends to speak or special prayers. Fee: Determine your fee based on how much time you will need for preparation and round trip travel.

Suggested Order of Service

Invocation

Opening Prayer

Scripture reading, poem, or sacred reading

Family/Friends contribution/participation

Sermon or message (5-10 minutes)

Closing Prayer, Benediction and remarks

All Faiths Seminary International

Graveside Ceremony

Ask for specific details: Date, time, place, directions. Cemeteries are usually large so ask where you should park and the exact location of the grave. The ceremony is usually about 15 minutes unless the family requests inclusions. People are standing and grieving, keep it concise and memorable.

Order of Service:

Opening Prayer, flower or stone placement on grave by the family and friends, last words of friends and family, scripture reading, closing prayer.

Determine your fee based on the prep time needed, celebrity status and round trip travel time .

Question

If I called you today and asked you to do a funeral service for my mother who just passed what would you say? How would you proceed? What questions will you need to ask me? What information do you need?

What will the order of service look like? Where will it be held? What date ,time, place? Is this a Memorial?

Will family or friends be speaking? Where in the service will you put these testimonies? Music? Singer? You select the opening invocation and the prayers that are appropriate for the family .This funeral service assignment will be a blueprint for all the funeral and memorial services you will do in the future. Prepare this funeral service with as many details as you think you will need if it were a real service.

Blessings,

Rev. Kathleen