

Funeral Policy

Even for Christians, the death of a loved one is a difficult journey. We grieve for our loss and yet we do not sorrow as one with no hope. Gramling United Methodist Church considers it a blessing to minister to families of our congregation and our community in their time of need. It is through the Word of God that we have hope at the time of death. This policy is provided to assist our families in planning and providing a Christian funeral.

The difference between a funeral and a memorial service?

The body of the deceased is at a funeral service, whereas the deceased remains or no remains are at a memorial service.

1. Our order of worship, A Service of Death and Resurrection, is a Christian worship suitable for funerals and memorial service. It should be held in the church if at all possible, and at a time when members of the congregation can be present. The church is familiar, designed for worship, and is rich with the symbols of our faith. However, the Pastor will support the family in their decision of where the service will be held - church, cemetery, chapel or funeral home.
2. The pastor of Gramling United Methodist should be notified immediately of the death of a member or constituent of the congregation. (A constituent is someone who attends regularly but is not a member). All arrangements should be made and approved in consultation with the pastor.
3. Pastoral ethics require that Gramling's pastor conduct all funeral services held at Gramling United Methodist. For another pastor or lay person to officiate or assist in the service must be invited by Gramling's pastor.
4. Gramling UMC members and their family are welcome to celebrate the life of their loved one with a funeral in the church. Burial in the cemetery must follow cemetery guidelines (under the Board of Trustees.)
5. The Funeral Director's staff will personally contact the Pastor of Gramling UMC to confirm the date and time of funeral and of all the arrangements. The Administrative Assistant will contact the Food Group responsible for providing the bereavement meal.
6. A Gramling United Methodist Usher, Trustee, or Member of Church Council must be on Gramling UMC grounds for funerals. He/she will open facilities no later than one hour prior to scheduled time to begin funeral, or visitation. He/she will also be available to operate the elevator. They will be responsible for locking all doors and making sure all lights are out.
7. The church does not provide nursery staff for funeral services.
8. A funeral is a service of Christian worship. Therefore, sacred or Christian music is appropriate. The use of congregational hymns or songs is encouraged and may be selected with the pastor in consultation with the family during the worship planning process.
9. An outline of responsibilities:
 - I. Funerals and memorials for members of the church family will be directed by the Pastor, who will work closely with the family in planning the worship.
 - A. It is important that the pastor meet with the family as soon as possible to help with the grieving process and plan the worship.
 - B. The pastor will handle funeral details as follows:
 - i. Contact Administrative Assistant to alert the Food Group, Trustee/Usher and Custodian.
 - ii. Contact musicians
 - iii. Prepare funeral worship bulletins.