

# **SAMPLE CHURCH FUNERAL POLICY**

## **(For the Family)**



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# The BGCVA Sample Church Funeral Policy

## Church Funeral Guidelines For the Family of the Deceased

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## TO THE FAMILY

### INITIAL CONTACT & VISIT

At the time our services are needed, please contact the church at \_\_\_\_\_ and advise us of your loss. The \_\_\_\_BC Diaconate/Congregational Care Ministry will make the initial visit and contact with your family and remain your point of contact from \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church for all funeral related accommodations. During the initial visit, the date and time of the service and repast will be discussed and the Deacon's Ministry will also minister to the family through prayer on behalf of the Pastor and the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church family. Persons representing the family of the deceased are asked to contact \_\_\_\_\_ should you have need to notify a ministry or church official with funeral arrangements. Guests of \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church are asked to contact \_\_\_\_\_ with any funeral related needs you may have.

### ARRANGEMENTS

\_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church members and guests should not make any plans for participation in the wake, Homegoing service, burial, or family meal without prior approval from the Pastor. The \_\_\_\_BC Diaconate/Congregational Care Ministry will ascertain the desires and wishes of the family, but make no decisions that will commit or bind the Pastor or the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church Ministry in any way.

The Diaconate/Congregational Care Ministry will also work in coordination with the family and funeral director on the following arrangements:

- ❖ Preferred date and time of service;
- ❖ Estimated number of attendees;
- ❖ Special needs, i.e. wheelchair access, etc.
- ❖ Draft and finalize the service program;
- ❖ Equipment desired, i.e. guest register stand, reserved seating signs, etc.
- ❖ Location of the service, i.e. sanctuary or Funeral Home;
- ❖ Time deceased will be brought to the church;
- ❖ Delivery of flowers and other articles.



## TO THE FAMILY

### ARRIVAL OF YOUR LOVED ONE

Your loved one should arrive at the church 1 hour prior to the visitation hour. The hearse should park in the church's rear entrance. Your loved one will be brought into the church through the rear entrance and placed in front of the pulpit. Flowers should be brought in the same way and arranged in a manner not to impede the entrance to the pulpit or the choir loft areas. These matters will be arranged by your mortician.

### PARKING

The hearse and cars belonging to the funeral home and family should be lined just outside the rear entrance. Upon conclusion of the service, cars going to the interment should line up as instructed by the Funeral Director.

### PROCESSIONAL

Family members are to be seated prior to the start of the service beginning with the 2<sup>nd</sup> row on the left side (facing the pulpit) of the sanctuary. The first row is to remain vacant.

The order of line-up is as follows:

- ❖ The Pastor
- ❖ Officiating Minister
- ❖ Other Clergy
- ❖ Others participating in the service
- ❖ The Family of the Deceased

The processional will proceed down the center aisle with individuals walking in pairs.

The Pastor and pulpit participants should continue to the rostrum. Other clergy, diaconate and program participants should continue processional and seat to the right of the pulpit (facing the pulpit) beginning on the second row. Individuals who are designated pallbearers should sit to the right of the pulpit on the first row of the center section. All other guests will sit in the rows behind the family and rows as instructed by the ushers.

At the conclusion of the service, the funeral director will give flowers to the designated flower bearers who will proceed up the center aisle and line up on the sidewalk at the rear entrance to the church. The pallbearers will follow the direction of the funeral director and place the casket into the hearse. The processional will exit up the center aisle at the direction of the funeral director.



## TO THE FAMILY

### **HOMEGOING SERVICES** (Days available for...)

Funeral services may be held on any day except for Sunday. Dates and times are at the discretion of the Pastor or his designee.

After having met with the family, the Diaconate/Congregational Care Ministry will share with the Pastor the family's desires and wishes for the program order of service. The Pastor or their designee will make the necessary changes and/or corrections to the program and will have the final word on the finished document.

### **FUNERAL PROGRAMS/BULLETINS**

All programs and bulletins for services to be held within \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church must be approved by the Pastor before the program is printed. All decisions relative to music selections, solos, musicians, etc. are at the discretion of the Pastor. All requests for changes to the order of worship must be submitted to the Pastor for their approval not later than two days prior to the date of the funeral service.

The Pastor shall officiate all funeral worship services in \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church except as they delegate this responsibility to other ministers at their discretion. Requests for guest ministers to officiate or serve in any capacity during \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church funeral services must receive prior approval from the Pastor. The Pastor will also bear the responsibility for the burial and administering of the final rites.

### **ORDER OF SERVICE**

The casket is open during the scheduled time of the family visitation and thereafter closed. Funeral services will not begin or be conducted with an open casket. The order of service must be approved by the Pastor prior to printing of the bulletin. The funeral service itself should follow as printed in the program. Licensed ministers and guest soloists should use the pulpit podium for scripture reading and solos.

### **CARDS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Cards and letters of acknowledgement will be received by the Church Secretary not later than the day of the funeral service. Although they will not be individually read, they will be referenced by the Church Clerk or the Pastor during the funeral service and provided to the family for their private reflection during their personal quiet time.



## TO THE FAMILY

### AVERAGE FUNERAL SERVICE TIME

Funeral worship services average 60 minutes (1 hour) or less for \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church and provide a ministry of comfort to the family and friends of the deceased. Persons giving “Special Comments” in respect to the deceased as a part of the worship service should limit their comment time to not more than 2 minutes.

### THE FAMILY MEAL (REPAST)

The family may choose to have a repast for family and friends which normally takes place at after returning from the interment at the graveside. The family is responsible for coordinating and paying for repast related events to include catering, food service, and venue negotiations.

### SERVICE LIVE STREAMING

Live streaming services are available for all funeral services held in \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church. The live stream link/access credentials will be provided by the church office once the funeral service has been confirmed and scheduled on the church calendar. Live streaming information for funeral services to be held in the funeral home chapel will be provided by the funeral home staff.

### SERVICE TAPES/RECORDINGS

Recordings of live streamed funeral services held within \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church are provided to the family free of charge if available. Additionally, if available, one DVD recording of the service is given to the family free of charge. Additional DVD's may be purchased by prior arrangement for a fee to be established at that time.

### OTHER COSTS

If your loved one is a member of the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church, there is no charge for the use of the sanctuary, Officiant and musician. If the deceased is not a member, applicable costs will be discussed by the Deacons at the time of the initial visitation.

### CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS MASONIC, SORORITY, MILITARY, AND FRATERNAL SERVICES

Masonic, Eastern Star, Sorority, Military, and Fraternal organizations desiring to participate in funeral services are encouraged to do so in the wake, burial, or repast activities. All participation in \_\_\_\_\_ BC funeral/worship related activities that will take place in the church facilities are at the discretion of the Pastor.