

Guidelines for Grief Ministries at Trinity United Methodist Church

As a member of the church, we wanted to let you know that we have some guidelines in place at the time of death to help you through the process of dealing with those days leading up to the funeral.

The first step of the process involves your contacting the church and/or the pastor and letting us know of the death. In many cases, we will have been praying for the person that died in others it may have been a sudden and unexpected death. Regardless, we ask that you please inform the church and/or pastor as soon as possible following a death.

Once we are aware of the death, we will then seek to do several things:

The pastor will want to arrange a time that he can meet with you to discuss arrangements. If you plan on having another pastor perform the funeral ceremony, you should let the church pastor know this as soon as possible. If you want the pastor of the church to perform the funeral ceremony, he will need to know the plans you have in mind, especially dates and times. On rare occasions there may be other obligations to which he has already committed and might not be available on the dates and times you have chosen. Most funeral homes will contact the pastor and see if he is available.

You should know that the church is always an option for the funeral service. You would have to talk with the funeral directors about the process and costs of having the service moved to the church, but there is no cost from the church's side to hold the funeral at the church.

If the service is to be held at the church, then we would need to check on the availability of one of the church musicians, if you wanted piano or organ music as a part of the worship service. It would be your responsibility to determine payment for their services. We do not set prices for such service nor is it required in their job description. If available, though, they would be more than willing to play.

It is customary that the women of the church prepare a meal for the family. This is done in one of two ways. The meal may be held at the church following the graveside rites or the food may be taken to your home. In either case, they would need to know an approximate count of the number of people for which they would need to prepare.

Our Shepherd Team would also like to bring to your house a Grief Kit that contains paper products: towels, napkins, plates, cups, etc so that you can more easily serve food to the extra family members and guests that might be coming into town for the funeral. One of the team members would get in touch with you to arrange a time to bring in these items.

Above all, it is our goal to minister to you in a kind a loving manner letting God's love, grace and peace flow into your life at this time of loss. We are available for prayer. We are available to help. Please contact us and let us know how we can ease this time of grief in your life and, if it is within our power, then we will do our best to make it happen.



Bereavement Kits are Available for Use in Church and Community

The Shepherd Team has completed two Bereavement Kits that can be used in our church or in the community. Each kit (see above) contains an assortment of paper products that can be useful when there is a death. At the time of a death, food is often brought into the home. These kits supply some of the basic items that a family could use right away at such an unexpected time. In addition, to supplies, the kit also contains a grief resource entitled "We Grieve With You." The family may not look at it right away, but at some point, we feel that they will bring it out and reference one or more of the articles to help them through their grief.

Here's how it will be used. When there is a death, a member of the Shepherd Team will take a kit to the home of the family who has experienced loss. The family will be able to use the items. We'll leave the tub and pick it up later or unload the tub and bring it back to the church. We'll do this automatically when there is a death in our church family.

However, we also want to use this ministry resource in the wider community. So, if you know of a Friend, Relative, Associate or Neighbor (FRAN) in our community that experiences loss, we'd also like to reach out to this family. It would be really appropriate if you would take it by their home on behalf of the church. You could then bring the tub back to the church.

The approximate cost of filling one of these tubs is going to be \$25. If you would like to sponsor one or more of these Bereavement Kits, that would be a wonderful way to extend the ministry of the church to our members and FRAN's in the community. Simply mark your donation as Bereavement Kit.