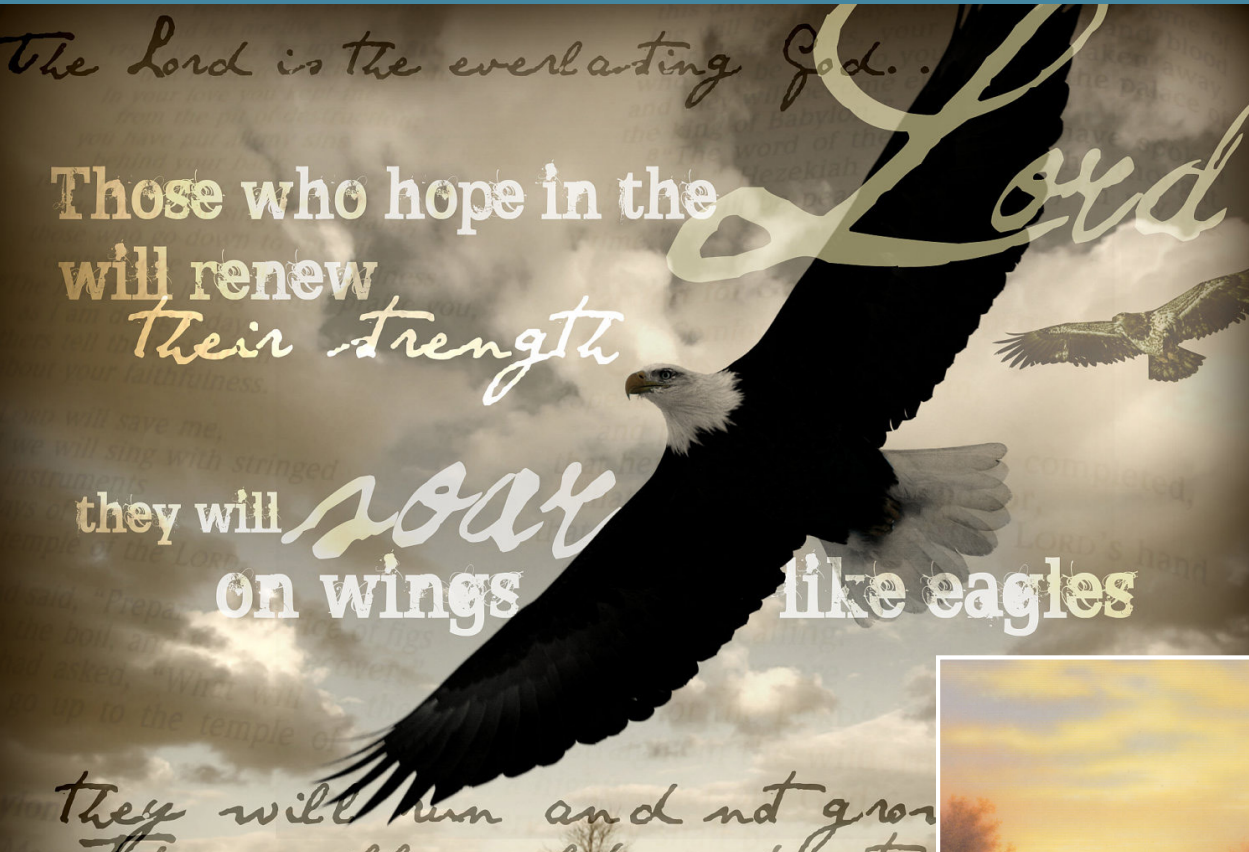


Planning a Celebration of Life



NEW COVENANT
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Planning a Celebration of Life Service at New Covenant United Methodist Church

A worship service following the death of a loved one does at least two things: it enables us to face the reality of our mortality and comforts us in the celebration of another reality — life after death in God.

It is the commitment of the clergy, worship, and music leadership of New Covenant United Methodist Church to claim and present a properly balanced and theologically sound experience for all who see God through worship at the time of death. To this end, the following are guidelines and suggestions offered to assist those who mourn, and to those who look to tomorrow.

To the Family

At the time of death, please contact the Congregational Care Ministry office at (352) 750-4529. Conversations between the family and the Care Office staff will then proceed to define details about the Celebration of Life service, including assigning clergy for support. While it will be the Officiant who guides you and your family through this time, there are a few things that only the family of the deceased can do.

We request that only one person speak for the family about decisions regarding the service. It will be the Officiant's responsibility, in consultation with the family, to determine who this person will be.

While friends and extended family will wish to help at the time of death, the staff of New Covenant UMC will prepare, execute, and conclude the worship service.

- ❖ Funerals may be conducted Monday–Saturday during normal building hours and based on space availability.
- ❖ We do not schedule more than one memorial service per day.
- ❖ Services may not be scheduled when the building is closed for a holiday.
- ❖ Services may not be scheduled during Holy Week or the week between Christmas Eve and New Year's Day.
- ❖ A minimum of three business days between death notification and a service is required to adequately prepare for a Celebration of Life.

Officiant

The Officiant of the service must be a staff member of New Covenant UMC.

- ❖ At the family's request, and only upon approval by the Senior Pastor of New Covenant UMC, the officiating staff member may invite another ordained minister to assist with the service.
- ❖ If the assisting minister is not United Methodist clergy, their participation is limited to the Call to Worship, Affirmation of Faith, Words of Remembrance, and scripture reading.

Reserving Space and Seating for the Service

Services may be held in the Chapel, the Christian Life Center, or the Columbarium. The seating capacity of the chapel is 120 persons, and any service projected to exceed that number will be scheduled in the Christian Life Center. The Columbarium provides seating for ten.

On the day of the service, should capacity in the Chapel reach 120, the staff reserves the right to relocate the service to the Christian Life Center prior to the start of the worship service.

Reserved seating will be arranged for the family based on their request.

We are unable to reserve seating for Sunday School classes, civic clubs, service groups, workplace friends and colleagues, or other groups of persons desiring to sit together.

Flowers, Pictures, Bulletin, Guest Registry

Flowers are not a requirement for a service. If family or friends wish to have flowers, they should work directly with their chosen florist.

- ❖ Deliveries should be made the day of the service approximately two hours before the scheduled start of worship.
- ❖ Family and friends are urged to take the arrangements with them following the service.
- ❖ We are unable to deliver flowers left at the church to hospitals or care facilities.

If a family wishes to designate an organization for memorial contributions in lieu of flowers, please provide the name and address of the organization to the Officiant or Care Ministry Specialist.

Pictures, for display at the service, should be limited to one photo/portrait which may be displayed in the chancel area.

Service Bulletin, a standardized bulletin for the service will be prepared by church staff and provided for the service.

- ❖ If a picture of the deceased is used for the cover, the church assumes no responsibility for reproduction quality.
- ❖ Consult with the Officiant about providing additional printed biographies, prayer cards, or pictures to be distributed to guests.
- ❖ Such items need to be delivered to the church at least two hours before service time.

A Guest Registry, if desired, must be provided by the family and delivered no later than two hours prior to the start of the service.

Preparing for the Worship Service

The central focus in any worship service, including a Celebration of Life, is the proclamation of the Word of God. The order of service, as determined by the Officiant, includes an opening and closing, words of greeting and grace, hymns of the faith, special music as pre-arranged/pre-approved, scripture reading, pastoral prayer, the Lord's Prayer, and Words of Faith and Remembrance.

If requested, there may be moments in a service for specific remembrances and thanksgivings by family and friends. Experience teaches that two persons with a combined speaking length of 10 minutes is appropriate.

- ❖ We request that the personal words reflect the goodness and Christian virtues of the person.
- ❖ We reserve the right to intervene should the content or language be unbecoming of a Christian service.
- ❖ The Officiant will be free to monitor and implement time limits should a speaker step outside the boundaries.

Music Selections for the Service

Music for the service, both vocal, congregational, and instrumental, must follow the same guidelines as for Sunday worship.

- ❖ Selections should be scriptural in nature and primarily focus on God, God's attributes, and giving thanks to God.
- ❖ We cannot utilize track music. We offer a pianist or organist in the fee structure.
- ❖ The Officiant will consult with the Care Ministry Specialist to arrange for the desired selections to be performed and to secure musicians.
- ❖ When music selections are questionable, the Director of Worship may be consulted for appropriateness.

Life Inventory Form

When the deceased has a Life Inventory Form on file at New Covenant UMC, those requests will be reviewed with the family and the Officiant prior to finalizing service details.

Volunteer Support-Service

Ministry volunteers are available to serve as Ushers, Greeters, and Guest Book attendees and will be scheduled by the Care Ministry Specialist.

Military Honors, Masonic Rites, Inurnment

Military Honors

All arrangements for Military Honors are the sole responsibility of the family of the deceased. The Officiant must be advised of those arrangements at the time the service is scheduled. If a gun salute is scheduled on-site at New Covenant, the Care Ministry Specialist must be advised no later than 24 hours prior to the service date/time.

Masonic Rites

Discussions regarding inclusion of Masonic Rites during a service or at an inurnment on-site at New Covenant must be held with the Officiant at the time the service is scheduled.

Inurnment

For those persons who are to be inurned in the Columbarium at New Covenant UMC, the inurnment may be scheduled immediately following the service or a later date. The date/time of the inurnment should, when possible, be confirmed when booking the Celebration of Life service.

- ❖ Family chairs (10 seats) will be provided by the church.
- ❖ Flower arrangements may be left at the Columbarium for two days following the service; the family is responsible for removing the flowers.
- ❖ Refer to the Serenity Garden Columbarium brochure for additional information.

Reception

A reception is a time to greet the family and offer words of comfort and encouragement. Receptions will be held in the East Narthex and scheduled for a maximum one-hour time following the conclusion of the service. Use of New Covenant facilities for receptions are scheduled only for those services held on-site at New Covenant. There may be times when Receptions will not be offered due to extenuating circumstances.

Beverages and cookies will be prepared by staff of New Covenant.

New Covenant UMC is a non-smoking campus and the use of any form of alcohol is strictly prohibited.

Audio Visual and Memorabilia Displays

Photo displays, including video, or other memorabilia may be displayed at the reception. Memorabilia should be limited to tabletop displays requiring a maximum of two, eight-foot tables. All displays should be appropriate for the setting, and the Officiant may request removal of any questionable display.

Magnet boards and easels are available for use to display photos.

- ❖ For those persons wishing to use the magnet boards for display, photos may be arranged the day prior to the service but must remain on church property.
- ❖ If not available prior to the day of the service, the display may be arranged two hours prior to the start of the service.
- ❖ Any audio/visual displays (flash drives, CDs, etc.,) must be delivered to the Officiant or Care Ministry Specialist no later than three business days prior to the service.
- ❖ Late receipts of audio/visual materials cannot be accommodated due to technical staff/equipment requirements.
- ❖ Silk floral table centerpieces may be provided upon request; additional decorations are not allowed.

Volunteer Support-Reception

Ministry Refreshment Volunteers will be provided by the church.

- ❖ Volunteers will place refreshments on the serving tables and ensure adequate supplies of all paper products and beverages before and during the reception.
- ❖ At the end of the reception, volunteers will prepare food to be removed by the family or designees.

Fees

Often families are uncertain as to what the usual and customary fees are for the various services that are needed for a Celebration of Life. In an effort to provide assistance the following fee outline is provided for both our members and non-members.

Members: Full, Associate, Affiliate

Memorial Service: The fee for the use of the Chapel or Christian Life Center is \$350 and the fee for the Columbarium is \$100, which is payable at the time the service is booked and space reserved on the church calendar. This fee covers the cost for the organist/pianist, bulletins, custodial services, and other staff as needed. Checks are payable to “New Covenant United Methodist Church.”

Officiant: The clergy that officiates at the service receives an honorarium of \$200 and is payable directly to the Officiant prior to the day of the service.

Soloist (Vocal or Instrumental): Should you wish to have a soloist, the Care Ministry Specialist may solicit those upon your request. The fee of \$100 is payable directly to the soloist prior to the day of the service.

Reception: For services held on-site, the fee for using the East Narthex of New Covenant United Methodist is \$75 and is payable at the time the reception is booked and space reserved in the church calendar. This covers the set-up, paper products, cookies, and hot/cold beverage service.

Non-Members (Prospects, Visitors, Others)

Service: The fee for the use of the Chapel or Christian Life Center of New Covenant United Methodist is \$550, which is payable at the time the service is booked and space reserved on the church calendar. This fee covers the cost for the organist/pianist, bulletins, custodial services, and other staff as needed. Checks are payable to “New Covenant United Methodist Church.”

Officiant: The clergy that officiates at the service receives an honorarium of \$300 and is payable directly to the Officiant prior to the day of the service.

Soloist (Vocal or Instrumental): Should you wish to have a soloist, the Care Ministry Assistant may solicit those upon your request. The fee of \$100 is payable directly to the soloist prior to the day of service.