



## POLICY PROCEDURE MANUAL

Policy Name: **Funeral Policy**

Effective Date: 02/12/2026

Review Date(s):

**Purpose:** To assure appropriate and consistent support for families during Funeral or Celebration of Life activities held at McFarland UCC

**Policy Statement:** The Funeral Team collaborates with the Pastor, family, and the Funeral Home to assist with organizing Funeral or Celebration of Life activities held at MUCC. This includes coordination with other MUCC volunteers and related teams (e.g., Buildings and Grounds, Liturgical Team, Hospitality Team, etc.).

### Procedures:

#### 1. Funeral or Celebration of Life Scheduling and Initial Planning

- a. The Pastor becomes aware of a potential Funeral or Celebration of Life.
  - i. Pastor has been engaged with deceased individual and family prior to death and family contacts the Pastor directly.
  - ii. A family member may call the church office.
- b. A date for Funeral or Celebration of Life services (and related visitation times) are determined by family.
- c. The church calendar is reviewed and dates/times for the upcoming Funeral or Celebration of Life are entered. If there are any conflicting events, the event planners are contacted by either the Pastor or Administrative Assistant to reschedule the event.
- d. The Pastor works with the family to plan the Funeral or Celebration of Life service, including readings, music (organist), need for tech support, etc.
- e. The Pastor contacts the team lead of the Funeral Team to begin coordination of the Funeral or Celebration of Life. Info provided includes:
  - i. Date(s)/time(s) of Funeral or Celebration of Life activities
  - ii. Contact person for family of deceased
  - iii. Identification of involvement of a Funeral Home

## 2. Funeral Team Activities

- a. Funeral Team Lead contacts the rest of Funeral Team with date(s)/time(s) of Funeral or Celebration of Life. A Funeral Coordinator for the upcoming Funeral or Celebration of Life is determined based on availability.
- b. Funeral Coordinator contacts family (via their identified contact person) to review family needs and plans. Funeral Coordinator activities with the family include:
  - i. Verifying visitation times and clarifying set up
  - ii. Identifying requests for food/hospitality, including anticipated number of attendees, food suggestions and requests, reimbursement for food expenses, specification of what MUCC can provide (beverages including coffee, family room setup, food service items [to avoid use of single-use plastic or paper])
  - iii. Verifying Funeral Home involvement and contact with the Funeral Director
  - iv. Offering to meet with family prior to the Funeral or Celebration of Life if needed
- c. Funeral Coordinator contacts the Funeral Home to coordinate and collaborate with the Funeral Director overseeing the planned Funeral or Celebration of Life. Funeral Coordinator activities with the Funeral Director include:
  - i. Reviewing visitation and service expectations.
  - ii. Presenting Sanctuary and Fellowship Space set up plans (setting up pictures on easels/tables, space needed for cards and guest book, place for casket/urn/picture of deceased).
  - iii. Sharing eco-friendly intent of church, especially reducing or eliminating single-use water bottles by providing pitchers of water and glasses.
  - iv. Clarifying how to handle flower deliveries and alerting Administrative Assistant of any possible flower deliveries during office hours.
  - v. Providing information about memorial designations, including the completion of the Memorial Designation Form (checking with the Pastor first to verify if there has been a prior discussion about memorials). Memorial information is shared with the MUCC Treasurer.
  - vi. Verifying if the deceased was a veteran and if there will be military recognition (e.g., flag, taps, honor guard).
- d. If the family is not using a Funeral Home to support the Funeral or Celebration of Life, then the Funeral Coordinator completes activities listed above in (c) with the family.
- e. Funeral Coordinator identifies tasks for the Funeral Team based on information and requests from the family and the Funeral Director, including:
  - i. Determine what food is needed from MUCC volunteers (e.g., salads and/or desserts) and what is purchased by the family
  - ii. Determine number of volunteers and times needed for setting up Fellowship Space, Sanctuary, and food service areas (e.g., buffet table, beverage stations).
  - iii. Work with a member of the Funeral Team to create signup sheets if there is enough time prior to the Funeral or Celebration of Life. If not enough time, engage the rest of the Funeral Team to contact possible volunteers to support the upcoming Funeral or Celebration of Life.

- f. Funeral Coordinator and available Funeral Team members attend the Funeral or Celebration of Life activities, including visitation, funeral service, any planned hospitality, and cleanup. Use checklist to guide actions (see addendum).
- g. For a cremation, Funeral Coordinator collaborates with the Pastor, family, and/or Funeral Director to determine if there is a plan to spread ashes at MUCC's Memorial Garden and if deceased will be added to the Memorial sign in the church entry.

***Policy Review***

This policy is to be reviewed by the Servant and Leadership Team (SaLT) and the Funeral Team annually.

Policy developed, reviewed, and approved by MUCC Funeral Team, May 2025

- **Determine Funeral Coordinator based on availability.**
- **Funeral Coordinator contacts family to:**
  - Verify visitation and service times.
  - Clarify set up for visitation, service, and hospitality.
  - Provide information about memorial designations, including the Memorial Designation Form.
  - Review requests for food/hospitality, including:
    - Anticipated number of attendees.
    - Food suggestions and requests.
    - Specify what MUCC can provide (coffee, family room setup, food service items to avoid use of single-use plastic or paper).
    - Clarify what family is responsible for (this is typically the entrée of a meal); Funeral Coordinator orders food and family is billed.
    - Offer to meet with family if needed.
- **Funeral Coordinator contacts Funeral Home** (note: if no Funeral Home assisting family, activities are reviewed with family):
  - Review visitation and service expectations.
  - Present Sanctuary and Fellowship Space set up plans (see details below for Visitation and Hospitality setups).
  - Share eco-friendly intent of church to reduce or eliminate single-use water bottles; provision of pitchers of water and glasses.
  - Clarify how to handle flower deliveries; alert Administrative Assistant of any possible flower deliveries during business hours.
  - Verify if deceased was veteran and if there will be military recognition. Work with VFW or military representative along with family to coordinate military honors, including assuring there is a flag available and any other specific set up needed for taps and a gun salute.
- **Funeral Coordinator works with Building and Grounds Team to:**
  - Determine if Sanctuary or Fellowship Space is clean and ready for a visitation and service; vacuum if needed.
  - Add chairs and tables as needed to the Sanctuary for visitation and Funeral. Maximum number in Sanctuary is 150.
  - Set up tables and chairs in Fellowship space to accommodate number of expected guests for hospitality/meal (maximum number in Fellowship space is 150).
  - Set up buffet tables in tiled area of Fellowship Space.
  - Check on condition of and supplies in the four restrooms; clean and replenish as needed.
  - Check on condition of entrances and sweep/shovel and salt as needed.
  - Verify if additional parking is needed and request volunteers to assist with parking.
  - Tear down tables and chairs after hospitality/meal is done.
- **Funeral Coordinator collaborates with the Administrative Assistant to:**
  - Assure the church calendar reflects funeral times, including set up time requirements
  - Identify possible flower deliveries during church office hours

- **Funeral Coordinator identifies tasks for Funeral Team for hospitality/food needs:**
  - Determine what food is needed from MUCC volunteers (typically salads and/or desserts) and what is ordered and purchased by the family.
  - Determine number of volunteers and times needed for:
    - Food service area setup.
    - Food serving
    - Cleanup
  - Create signup sheets and request assistance via Sunday announcement and/or Pulse article. If not enough time prior to planned funeral, rest of Funeral Team contacts possible volunteers to assist.
- **Visitation and/or Funeral/Celebration of Life setup includes:**
  - Clarifying number of expected guests and assuring enough chairs available (maximum is 150).
  - Working with family and/or Funeral Director to arrange pictures, flowers, memorabilia (use church tables as needed) in Sanctuary (tables work well along back Sanctuary window).
  - Placement of casket/urn/picture of deceased in front of Sanctuary with stool or chair for family to sit as needed and table with water and glasses.
  - Tissue boxes dispersed (located in Liturgical closet).
  - Reserved signs for family as needed (located in Usher closet).
  - Placement of guest book and card box (MUCC box can be found in the usher closet) – works well on high top table in Fellowship Space or Sanctuary near double door entry to the Sanctuary.
  - Family room setup in the Multipurpose Room if needed
    - Signs on door indicating for family use only.
    - Beverage/food set up for family, may include water, hot beverages, snacks (fruit, cheese and crackers, cookies) as appropriate for family.
  - Check on supplies in the four restrooms and replenish as needed during visitation and service.
- **Hospitality/meal set up includes:**
  - Buffet tables on tiled area; set up for two-sided access; black tablecloths with attached skirts are located above the freezer in the kitchen.
  - Plates for buffet can be stacked in kitchen serving window. Silverware and napkins are best at end of buffet line.
  - Depending on number expected, may need to set up desserts on table(s) in front of Sanctuary window.
  - Determine if any signs are needed for food items (e.g., sandwich options).
  - Beverage stations – One station is in kitchen serving window per usual Sunday morning setup. If greater than 50 expected, set up second beverage station in Fellowship Space near Sanctuary window.
  - Dirty dish/garbage station – set up second station in Fellowship space; check on trash cans.
- **Clean up includes:**
  - Sanctuary is restored to usual set up (tables, extra chairs, tissue boxes, etc. are removed).
  - Family room is cleaned up.
  - Hospitality dishes in dishwasher and/or washed and put away.
  - All leftover food is distributed (desserts may be packaged and frozen for future Sunday morning use); offer to package purchased food for family.

- Additional tables and chairs are cleaned; B& G return tables and chairs to table/chair closet.
- Vacuum floor in Fellowship Space as needed.
- Linens and towels are collected to be washed by a member of the Funeral Team
- **Funeral Coordinator collaborates with the Treasurer to:**
  - Identify family wishes regarding memorial designations (check with the Pastor to verify if there has been a prior discussion)
  - Obtain completion of the Memorial Designation Form
  - Provide completed Memorial Designation Form

