



## Harmony Baptist Church Funeral Policy and Guide

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Harmony Baptist Church

## Funeral Policies and Practices Monroe, GA

### **Funeral Services**

Even for Christians, the death of a loved one is a difficult experience. We grieve the loss of one who has been close, but we do not sorrow as those who have no hope (1 Thessalonians 4: 13). It is our desire and privilege to minister to the families of our congregation in their time of need. It is through the Word of God that we have hope at the time of the death of a loved one (Romans 15: 4). This policy is provided to assist our families in planning and providing a Christian funeral.

Although funeral services may be held in funeral homes, the best place for conducting a funeral service upon the death of a Christian is in the sanctuary of the church to which he or she belonged. By having the service at the church, all who attend will be reminded of our hope and assurance in Jesus Christ. Therefore, all members of Harmony are encouraged to use the church building for funeral services. The sanctuary is also offered for the funeral services of Christians whose membership is in another church.

There can be alternative methods for the conducting of services at the time of death. These could include a private graveside service for family members as soon after death as possible and/or a public service of worship (a memorial service) conducted at the church later. However, funeral worship services will only be conducted in the church sanctuary. The pastor is available to go with the family to the funeral home to assist in making arrangements if desired. The pastor will be happy to meet with the family to plan any funeral worship arrangements.

### **Date and Time of Funerals**

Dates and times for funerals at Harmony are to be arranged in consultation with the pastor based on availability and the preferences of the deceased's family. The pastor must approve all funeral arrangements at Harmony Baptist and its cemetery. Decisions concerning areas outside the scope of this funeral policy shall be decided at the discretion of the pastor.

Funeral services will need to be planned around already scheduled events such as weddings, conferences, workshops, etc).

### **Who Will Officiate?**

Pastoral ethics require that Harmony's pastor conduct all funeral services held at Harmony, unless by agreement with another pastor, he/she is invited to share in the funeral or act on behalf of the pastor of Harmony. Any requests for another pastor or lay person to officiate or assist in the service must be approved by Harmony's pastor.

### **Structure of the Funeral Service**

A funeral service held in the church is a service of worship, celebrating the deceased's life and the promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ. Consequently, all parts of the service are to be consistent with the present worship practices of the church. Generally, the outline for the funeral and burial service will take on a traditional Baptist form. The family may suggest other items to be included in the service, with the approval of the pastor.

### **Funerals for Non-members and Inactive Members**

Conducting funerals for people who have no connection with the church is a normal part of the ministerial obligation. However, it is up to the discretion of the pastor to allow himself or the church to participate.

### **Funeral Music**

Only music appropriate to a worship service shall be used. Harmony Baptist does not have paid staff musicians. All musical arrangements (pianist, soloist, etc.) must be arranged for and taken care of by the family. If possible, we will make every effort to help you, but please remember that time and date may affect the availability of our musicians. As with weddings, a funeral is a service of Christian worship. Therefore, sacred or Christian music would be appropriate. Taped instrumental and accompaniment music, soloists and solos, anthems, and guest musicians must have the approval of the pastor. The use of congregational hymns is encouraged and may be selected with the pastor in consultation with the family during the service planning process.

In cases where an outside organist/pianist is desired, permission must be secured from the pastor. Additional musicians or soloists may be utilized. Please note that the use of taped music or pre-recorded accompaniments is discouraged.

### **Video Presentation**

If a video is to be used during the service, it must be submitted to the church office 24 hours prior to the funeral service for review. All presentations should be in DVD format (not Power Point) and should not exceed five minutes in length.

### **Decorations**

Families may wish to display the deceased's remains, as well as certain mementos or photographs of the deceased and his/her family. The following guidelines would be applicable in these situations:

- Any displays or pictures must be appropriate to a worship setting.
- No nails, tacks, staples or screws shall be put in the walls or attached to the pews.
- All decorations must be removed within 3 hours of the conclusion of the service.
- No furniture shall be removed from the church building.

### **Flowers**

Only fresh cut flowers and planters may be used in the sanctuary.

### **Closed Casket**

All caskets must be closed for the burial service, but may be open during the viewing (or preceding the viewing, for the family only), if desired. When closed, the flower blanket, flag or coverlet covers the casket. The casket remains closed throughout the service. When the service is in the funeral chapel, the casket will be closed before the ceremony begins. The funeral director in concert with the pastor will have direction over such matters as timing, closed caskets, music, flowers, etc.

### **Nursery**

The church does not provide a nursery for funeral services. If needed, the family is responsible for securing an attendant.

### **Parking / Traffic Assistance**

Parking assistance is generally provided by the funeral home. The church does not have any resources to assist in traffic control.

### **Family Meal**

The church will do everything reasonably possible to accommodate a member's request for a family meal before or after a funeral service. The meal is prepared under the direction of the church's Food Service Ministry Team. Only **active members**\* of the church and their immediate family (spouse, parents, children, siblings) will be eligible for this ministry.

There is no fee charged for this meal ministry, nor is there any cost for preparation and serving; however, free will donations are accepted. Members of the church provide this service as a ministry in the spirit of Christian love. Their mission is to serve willingly and pleasingly, inspired and led by God.

Non-members and inactive members may utilize the Fellowship Hall but are responsible for the indicated building expense use fees and for providing the food or refreshments.

### **Memorials**

In certain circumstances, the family might request a contribution to the church or a charitable organization in lieu of flowers. The church will not manage, receive or distribute designated funds for an outside institution. Undesignated funds and funds designated for an established project at Harmony will be received by the church. Funds designated for a project or ministry not previously established will be designated for such only with approval of the Deacons.

### **Fees**

If the deceased or a member of their immediate family (spouse, parents, children, siblings) is an **active member**\* of Harmony there is no fee for the use of the facilities. For all other individuals, additional fees will be assessed. Those who have been members of Harmony but now are considered **inactive members** will pay the same fees as **non-members**. Fees are payable (by cash or check made payable to "Harmony Baptist Church") on or prior to the day of the funeral. Normally, honorariums for the pastor, pianist, or musicians are paid following the service or through the funeral director.

\***active member** (defined on page 5)

The following fees apply:

**Active Member**

**Non-Member &**

		<b><u>Inactive Member</u></b>
Use of Sanctuary	No fee	\$275
Use of Fellowship Hall	No fee	\$125
Pastor	Honorarium**	Honorarium**
Pianist/Organist	Honorarium***	Honorarium***
Soloist	Honorarium***	Honorarium***
Sound System Operator	\$50	\$50

\*For the purposes of this policy, active members are defined as those members of Harmony Baptist Church who regularly attend church services and contribute to the church as they generally provide regular financial and personal support for the church. These privileges are also extended to the following:

1. Homebound members.
2. Faithful attendees of the church who attend regularly but who have not officially joined the church as an official member and...
3. Those who have served as former pastors of the church.

\*\*There is no fixed fee for the services of the Harmony minister; however, it is customary to give an honorarium to the officiating minister. Checks should be made payable to the individual minister.

\*\*\*If the family has made arrangement with an available musician and/or soloist, typical honorariums for them range from \$75 - \$150 per person. Checks should be made payable to the individual musician(s) or soloist(s).

## **WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR LOVED ONE DIES...**

- Contact Other Family Members and Close Friends
- Contact Your Church

- Notify employer of the deceased and your own employer
- If children are in school, notify the school
- Choose a Funeral Home

***Before going to the Funeral Home...***

It will save you considerable time and phone calls if you have the following information available.

1. Full name of deceased (include nickname or other names person may have used). \_\_\_\_\_

2. Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

3. Place of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

4. Father's Name \_\_\_\_\_

5. Mother's Name (Maiden) \_\_\_\_\_

6. List of relatives and relationship to the deceased \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. List of church, professional organizations, clubs and other organizations in which membership was held \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. If you wish, indicate memorial to be designated in obituary in memory of the deceased \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Compile a list of individuals who might be available to serve as pallbearers:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

10. If a memorial or funeral service is announced in the newspapers, take extra precaution for security at the home of the deceased during the indicated time of the service.

***The following information will be needed for the Funeral Home and for the planning of the service.***

Name of Deceased \_\_\_\_\_

Family Contact \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Family Address \_\_\_\_\_

Family Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Other Contact Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Funeral Home \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Funeral Director \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Family Members \_\_\_\_\_

Family Hour/Viewing Scheduled Yes  No

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Floral Requests \_\_\_\_\_

**Funeral Service Instructions**

Service Location: Harmony Baptist Church, 1310 Harmony Church Rd.,  
Monroe, GA or \_\_\_\_\_

Date & Time of Service \_\_\_\_\_

Minister \_\_\_\_\_

Scripture \_\_\_\_\_ Prayer \_\_\_\_\_

Eulogy or Tribute \_\_\_\_\_

***Persons doing Eulogy MUST be Named. Open tributes are discouraged.***

Video Presentation DVD/Movie

Format \_\_\_\_\_

Viewing (Beginning of the Service or After the Service) \_\_\_\_\_

Interment (Cemetery) \_\_\_\_\_

Pallbearers

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Honorary Pallbearers \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Music Provided by \_\_\_\_\_

Family Meal     Yes     No    How many expected \_\_\_\_\_

**Sample Program**

Processional of Ministers and the Family  
Welcome/Reading of Scriptures



Prayer  
Music/Solo (if wanted)  
Eulogy  
Music/Solo (if wanted)  
Message  
Prayer  
Recessional

## **WHERE TO FIND HELP TO DEAL WITH YOUR GRIEF...**

**Our church offers Stephen Ministry to anyone who requests it.** It is especially helpful, supporting members who have lost loved ones. If you are interested, please contact Pastor Brant Callaway. He can be reached through the church office at 770-267-5717.

- Adopted September 2012