



*Specializing in Home Funeral Vigils, Green Burials & Life Celebrations*

## Memorial Service Planner

### Choose a location

- Place that reflects their personality or interest
- Place convenient for friends and family
- Remember that more than one service can be held

### Select a date

- Date can be several weeks after the death
- Pick a date that allows for travel plans of friends and family
- You may choose a special date to have the service (i.e. birthday, anniversary, first day of Spring, Fall, etc.)

### Will there be a primary purpose or theme for the service?

- You may want a purpose or theme for readings, etc.
- For what will your loved one be remembered?
- Their charity, love of music, active lifestyle, etc.

### Write the obituary

- See A Sacred Moment's guide to writing an obituary
- We will post your loved one's obituary online for a year
- Special memorial to loved one through Light a Candle

### Notify out-of-town family and friends

- Those you want included at the service need to be notified by phone or email so they can make travel arrangements
- You may want to include a list of nearby hotels
- A Sacred Moment will post online directions to the address of the service for visitors to freely access

### Choose a leader/moderator for the service

- This may be a clergy person, Celebrant, or a member of the family or close friend, if they are able to do so

### Consider creating a printed program or memorial cards

- You can include photographs, names of speakers, copies of the readings, favorite memories, and information about your loved one
- Copies may be sent to those unable to attend the service.

### Decide on speaker(s)

- You may want family and friends such as an adult son or daughter, spouse, friend, or sibling to part of the service, provided they are able and willing to do so.
- One speaker is usually asked to give highlights from the life of your loved one
- Others may read a favorite religious passage or prayer, poem, or memory.
- All attendees may be given an opportunity to share memories, with the service leader serving as a moderator to keep things moving and bring the discussion to a close at an appropriate time.

### Flowers

- You may decide to purchase flowers
- Gather bouquets from your own garden
- Use those provided as gifts delivered to the family
- Some families choose to send home flowers with guests after the service.

### Music

- Many memorial services open and close with music.
- Music may also be played during a candle lighting or similar ritual during the service
- You may choose to play your loved one's favorite song on CD
- You may want to have musicians play or sing as part of the service (guitar, piano, flute, harp, bagpipe)
- You want to have guests sing a hymn or familiar song

### Readings

- If you belong to a faith group, consult your clergy person and prayer book.
- Others may choose to use special poems or passages from favorite books.
- Family or friends may wish to write something special to be read at the service.

### Collect photographs or memorabilia

- Display photos or favorite objects that exemplify and reflect your loved one's personality.
- Some people put together memory books or boards to be displayed at the service
- Video tributes using photographs or video clips with contributions from family and friends, set to music is another creative way to express your loved one's life in a service.

- Video tributes can also be posted to A Sacred Moment's obituary page for your loved one, to share with those not able to attend the service.
- A reflection book may also be provided for guests to write down favorite memories.

### Memorial keepsake

- Memorial keepsakes are a way for guests to remember your loved one.
- They may be as simple as potted plants used in the ceremony, or a photo of the deceased attached to their favorite quote.
- Keepsakes can also follow the theme you may have chosen to reflect your loved one's life.

### Memorial gifts

- If your loved one had a favorite charity, providing the name and address will make it easier for guests to make a memorial gift.
- A Sacred Moment can post whatever charitable organization you would like memorial gifts given on your loved one's obituary page
- Charitable organizations often have pre-addressed donation envelopes which they would be happy to make available to have on hand at the service

### Reception

- Make clear to your guests if/when/where a reception will be held following the service.
- Details (time, location, light refreshments, potluck etc.) regarding the reception can also be posted to A Sacred Moment's obituary page for ease of communicating to guests
- It may be held in a private home, activities center of a retirement community, park, or other convenient location.
- You may choose to provide simple or more elaborate refreshments.

## Order of Service

1. Music

2. Opening Words

3. Candle Lighting or other Ritual

4. Eulogy

5. Readings

6. Personal reflections by one or more family members or friends

7. Readings

8. Final thoughts

9. Closing words

10. Music