

# Planning a Funeral

at Highland Park United  
Methodist Church





# Table of Contents

Regarding Funerals.....	4
To the Family .....	5
General Policies .....	6
Sample Bulletin .....	8

# Regarding Funerals at Highland Park United Methodist Church

Christians believe that the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ gives them hope and cause for thanksgiving in the face of death. In this faith, we entrust those who have died to the infinite mercy and love of God.

—The Methodist Worship Book, England

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. As one of our creeds declares, “In life, in death, in life beyond death, we are not alone. Thanks be to God!”

A service where the body of the deceased is present is called a funeral. A memorial service is appropriate when the body of the deceased is not present. (Interment follows the funeral service; in the case of a memorial service, interment or inurnment occurs prior to the service.) Most of the services at Highland Park United Methodist Church are called A Service of Thanksgiving and Remembrance.

It is the commitment of the clergy and music leadership of Highland Park 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 that we offer to assist those who mourn, and those who look to tomorrow.

# To the Family

At the time of death, please contact one of our ministers and/or the Congregational Care Ministry office at 214.523.2241; during non-business hours the emergency phone, 214.802.1807, may be helpful. Conversations between the family and the minister will then proceed to define details about the funeral or memorial service. While it will be the minister who guides you and your family through this important 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 with regard to decisions about the funeral. It will be the minister's responsibility to decide who this person is, in consultation with the family.
- While friends and extended family certainly wish to help at the time of death, the staff will prepare, execute, and conclude the worship service. Ushers and greeters for the service will be provided by the church; Sunday morning class members, neighbors and friends will better serve in other ways.
- If there is a desire to have a reception at the church following the service, the minister will see to it that space for such a reception is scheduled. We suggest that Preston Hollow Catering, our in-house caterer, is the best option available. It is the family's responsibility to make arrangements with Preston Hollow Catering directly by calling 214.739.0350 or going to [catering@phcatering.net](mailto:catering@phcatering.net). If friends or a Sunday morning class wish to help at the reception or provide some kind of food service, it is still best to coordinate this with Preston Hollow Catering. Costs associated with a reception are determined by the caterer and the family.
- Music for the service, both choral 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. Love songs, show tunes, school songs, etc. are certainly appropriate at the reception. The minister will consult with HPUMC's Music Ministry to arrange desired selections. Music Ministry must approve all music for all venues.
- The central moment in any worship service, including funeral and memorial services, is the proclamation of the Word of God: It is the proclamation of a resurrection faith in a sermon or meditation. There are moments in a funeral for specific remembrances and thanksgivings by family and friends. Experience teaches us that two speakers with a combined length of 10 minutes is sufficient. We request that the personal words reflect the goodness and Christian virtues of the person. At the family's request and upon agreement with the officiating minister, the officiating minister may invite another ordained minister to assist with a funeral/memorial service. If the assisting minister is not United Methodist clergy, the assisting minister's participation is limited to the following: Call to worship, Affirmation of Faith, Words of Remembrance, and scripture reading. All Words of Remembrance must be submitted to the officiating minister, 24 hours in advance of the service.
- We reserve the right to intervene should the content or language be unbecoming of a Christian service. The minister will be free to monitor and implement time limits should a speaker step outside the boundaries.

# General Policies

1. Due to the size of our congregation, we regret we are only able to host member funerals.
2. Funerals are conducted Monday–Saturday, with Sunday reserved for worship only. On Mondays and Tuesdays, funerals are scheduled after 1:00 pm. Funerals on Fridays are scheduled in the morning and early afternoon.
3. In order to provide your family and our staff with adequate planning time, we require a minimum of three working days between death notification and a memorial service.
4. On Saturdays, 10:00 am is the time available for funerals unless no weddings are scheduled. Difficult experiences have shown that a wedding and a funeral cannot comfortably co-exist at or near the same time but in different worship venues. In the fall, the HPUMC facilities are not open on the Saturdays when SMU closes the HPUMC parking lot for home football games.
5. When considering a worship venue, keep in mind that Cox Chapel seats approximately 180 and the Sanctuary approximately 800.
6. Reserved seating will be arranged for the family according to their wishes. We are unable to reserve more than one row each for pallbearers and honorary pallbearers, and we are unable to reserve seating for their spouses. We are unable to reserve seating for civic clubs, service groups, or workplace friends and colleagues. Limited reserved parking is available on the west side of Bishop Avenue for the family and for funeral home accessibility.
7. Expenses incurred for funerals and memorials are as follows: \$500 for use of Cox Chapel and \$600 for use of the Sanctuary. This will cover the costs for the organist, bulletins, custodial services and other staff as needed. Please make your check payable to Highland Park UMC. An honorarium for the minister is at the family's discretion and is to be given directly to him/her. The recommended honorarium is \$250.
8. Should you wish to have a vocal or musical soloist, the music department can provide names of recommended individuals. The soloist fee is \$150. The Chancel Choir is available for a fee of \$1,500. Special choral or instrumental music may be arranged, with fees not determined by the church. Veteran carilloneurs are available to play The Porter Memorial Carillon prior to the organ prelude and opening voluntary. The cost is \$125. Please inform the Congregational Care office if you are interested in securing a carillonneur for a memorial service; or contact Scott Ayers, Senior Organist, for more information.
9. If a funeral home is not involved, guest registries will be provided.

10. If the family desires to display pictures of the deceased, we ask that they be placed on any of the several tables outside the worship venues and/or they be used at a reception.
11. Flowers are not a requirement for a service. If family and friends wish to have flowers, they will work directly with their chosen florist. We suggest that arrangements be limited to no more than two at the altar, and these are usually provided by the family or on their behalf; additional arrangements will be placed in the narthex (entry) and/or transported to receptions held at our facility. Family and friends are urged to take arrangements with them when possible. We are unable to deliver them to hospitals or care facilities.
12. A standardized bulletin for the service is provided (see pages 8–9) with artwork depicting the Sanctuary or Cox Chapel. No outside bulletin will be permitted to be distributed at the worship service. Consult with the minister about providing additional printed biographies, prayer cards or pictures. Such items need to be delivered to the church at least two hours before the service time. The order of service includes an opening and closing voluntary, words of greeting, call to worship, hymns of the faith, special music as arranged, scripture readings, pastoral prayer and the Lord’s Prayer, and Words of Faith and Remembrance. The Porter Memorial Carillon is generally pealed at the close of the service. The minister working with the family will assist with details regarding the bulletin.
13. The church is closed or has limited availability for scheduling funerals on the following days, as noted:

New Year’s Day Martin Luther King Day Memorial Day Fourth of July Labor Day	The church is closed on the “observed” holiday duration, usually meaning a three-day weekend; funerals will not be scheduled before 1:00 pm on a Tuesday following such a weekend — i.e. a funeral following a Memorial Day Monday would be scheduled no earlier than 1:00 pm on Tuesday.
Holy Week/Easter	The Thursday, Friday and Saturday prior to Easter Sunday provide limited availability for funeral services, and the facility is closed on the Monday following Easter Sunday.
Thanksgiving Day Weekend	The church is closed on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving Day and remains closed through the Saturday following.
Christmas Holidays	Christmas Eve and Christmas Day are not available for funerals, as are several days between December 26 and January 2; available dates will be posted in November.







# Sample Bulletin, Front Page

A SERVICE OF CELEBRATION AND THANKSGIVING

For

Deceased's Name

Date of Birth

Date of Death



Time

Date of Service

Cox Chapel or Sanctuary  
Highland Park United Methodist Church  
Dallas, Texas

# Sample Bulletin, Inside Page

## ORDER OF WORSHIP

Opening Voluntary

Words of Greeting

Call to Worship

Hymn

Affirmation of Faith 881

The Apostles' Creed

Prayer

The Reading of Holy Scripture

The Pastoral and Lord's Prayers

Words of Remembrance

Words of Faith

Hymn

Closing Prayer

Benediction

Closing Voluntary

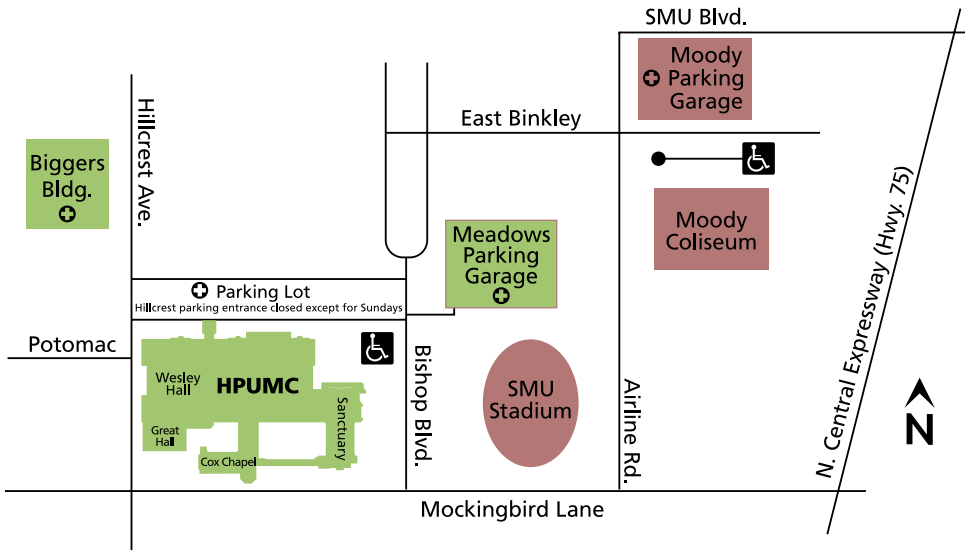
Pealing of the Porter Memorial Carillon

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Name, minister

Name, organist

Name, soloist



## Parking is available in:

- the parking lot north of the church
- the garage of the Meadows Museum (northeast of the church)



## HIGHLAND PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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