

A background image showing a person's hands holding a single white rose. The person is wearing a dark, patterned long-sleeved top. The image is softly blurred and has a warm, golden-brown tint. A large, light teal circle is overlaid on the lower half of the image, serving as a design element for the text.

# Planning a Meaningful Funeral

## A reflection of a life worth celebrating

Collect your thoughts and direct your planning efforts by noting a few thoughts regarding these aspects of your loved one's life.

Most important accomplishments include....

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People who had the greatest impact on my loved one's life are....

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Favourite music...

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Hobbies and interests...

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Other things that gave him or her enjoyment...

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Causes and beliefs my loved one was passionate about...

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My fondest memories of him or her are...

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If my loved one were planning this service, he or she would include...

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*“My mother was a talented pianist and loved the classics. As a tribute during her funeral, we had a close friend play from her sheet music. Mom would have loved that.”*

## Planning a meaningful funeral service

No two lives are exactly the same, and no two funeral services should be the same either.

A funeral service that is both meaningful and memorable should be as unique as the individual being celebrated. It should be a ceremony that reflects personal values, interests and experiences – all of the things that form the rich tapestry of a life worth celebrating.

Planning any funeral service, though, requires making many decisions during a difficult and painful time. Organising an event that honours and highlights your loved one's life can be very challenging given the emotions and responsibilities that naturally follow the death of someone close to you.

Our friendly staff can provide knowledge, high-quality service and the breadth of experience necessary to help you plan the best funeral possible. We can be your greatest source of help, support and direction as you sort through your options and begin to make plans. We are experienced in working with grieving families and will be able to provide information, advice, understanding and empathy at a time when everyone needs a little guidance.

A meaningful funeral service is an essential life occasion that truly helps family and friends begin the healing process. To assist us, there are steps you can take to create an event that will enable everyone to say goodbye and pay tribute to the life being celebrated.

## Special touches make a world of difference

As you begin planning for this unforgettable experience, let your loved one's life be your guide. Here are some ideas that can make a world of difference in your service:

**Personal effects and reminiscence** – to begin personalising a funeral, consider what was unique and memorable about your loved one. Think about his or her special qualities, passions, hobbies and pastimes. Was your husband an amateur painter? Consider holding a retrospective of his work. Was your grandmother a teacher? You may want to ask the school choir to perform at the service or invite a former student to speak. Your creativity will provide a lasting, honourable representation of your loved one.

**Music, Video and Webcasting** – Music can be a powerful way to remember your loved one. Today, many services feature a mix of religious and secular music. Video tributes can also be created to incorporate both visuals and music that were meaningful to your loved one. Webcasting and online memorials enable even distant friends and family to participate and pay their respects.

**Involve Family and Friends** – While you might be somewhat reluctant to ask, family and friends may feel honoured to be involved in your loved one's funeral. In addition, we can help you create an interactive experience to help people who are grieving, especially children.

**Speakers** – Think about asking key individuals to contribute a remembrance, reading, poem or favourite story. Many times, such contributions can go a long way towards capturing the essence of your loved one.

**Special Touches** – One way of making a ceremony more special is to create decorative touches such as candles, a special covering to drape over the coffin or a photograph montage of the person whose life you are celebrating. Consider placing chairs in a semicircle or in small, intimate clusters around the room.

**Mementos or Remembrances** – Hand out a small keepsake as friends and family leave the funeral, something that will later bring your loved one to mind.

**Memorials** – Dedicating a memorial to your loved one is a wonderful way of honouring him or her. Planting a tree or making a contribution to a relevant charity can create a lasting memory that will also benefit others.

We have our own in-house design and media team. Let us create something memorable for you.

If you would like information about planning a meaningful funeral service, talk to our friendly staff or visit our website for other brochures that provide information and guidance on topics including healing after the loss of a loved one, helping children through their grief, understanding cremation and planning your funeral in advance.

***"I'll never stop grieving for my wife. But because we created a funeral that celebrated her life, I'm beginning to deal with the pain and learning to live with my loss."***



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