

Guide to Pre-Planning



Honoring Your Life

The purpose of this guide is to help you and your family members determine the best way to celebrate your life – a life well lived, a life worth commemorating. Planning a funeral is a deeply personal and oftentimes emotional matter. However, planning *your* funeral doesn't have to be a time of great sadness. Your funeral or memorial service will be a reflection of you and the life you lived. It can be as traditional or creative as you would like.

The following pages will help you plan and personalize your service, and will also guide you through the decisions that must be made. While these pages are here to serve as a guide, it is advisable that you meet with a funeral director to discuss your choices and make final plans.

At Austin Funeral & Cremation Services, we would be honored with the opportunity to get to know you - to sit down and talk about your wishes and to answer your questions, all in a place that is convenient and comfortable for you. Certainly when we meet, there is no obligation to use our services or to make any type of payment. We are here to serve you and your family, and would be honored with the opportunity to carry out your wishes when that time comes.

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Reasons Why People Choose to Plan Ahead

Peace of Mind

Arranging today, before death has occurred, is handling a family matter. Arranging at the time of death is dealing with a family crisis. By planning ahead you will have true peace of mind knowing that you have taken care of your family and all the details involved with your funeral.

Fix the Cost

If you decide to prepay, you guarantee today's prices, and can also take advantage of affordable payment plans. This could amount to a significant savings if you pre-fund your funeral years in advance because you will be protected against inflation.

Personal Choice

Planning a funeral is a deeply personal matter and should be given much thought by you and your family members. Planning ahead provides you with the time needed to make practical decisions that reflect your standards, lifestyle, taste, and budget. And at the time of death, you can rest assured that our staff will carry out your final wishes as planned.

Gift to Family

Many people who have undergone the emotional strain of arranging a funeral immediately following the death of a loved one have made the choice to plan their own funerals in advance. Doing so lifts the burden of having to make countless decisions during a time of grief and emotional stress. Planning ahead also prevents emotional overspending.

So How Do I Get Started?

1. Understand Your Options
2. Decide What Kind of Services You'd Like to Have
3. Decide If You Will Be Buried or Cremated
4. Record and Communicate Your Wishes
5. Select Merchandise (casket, vault, urn)
6. Finance the Funeral (optional)



Types of Services

The choices you make to celebrate life may be as simple or as elaborate as you wish. There are many options with both traditional burial and cremation. Following are several choices; however, keep in mind that each service can be customized. If there is some type of service or variation that you would like to have that is not listed, please let us know.

Visitation. Visitations provide a time and place for friends to offer their expressions of sorrow and sympathy to the family of the deceased. Depending on a family's wishes, the body of the deceased may or may not be present. Visitations usually take place prior to any type of service, but can be held after a service. Although visitations can sometimes be physically draining for families, most family members find great comfort in the support and kindness shown to them at the visitation.

Funeral Service. A funeral service is a ceremony commemorating the deceased **with a casket present** during the service. Pallbearers will escort the casket to the funeral coach and then proceed to the cemetery for a committal service and burial. Often families will choose to have a formal funeral procession from the service to the cemetery.

Committal Service. A committal service takes place at the grave, usually following the funeral service. A brief passage of scripture and prayer are offered prior to the burial. Families may choose to leave after the committal service or may choose to stay while the casket is being lowered into the ground.

Graveside Service. The entire funeral service takes place at the grave. Oftentimes a graveside service is the choice of those who want a simple service or a small gathering. Some families will choose a graveside service for elderly family members who have outlived their peers.

Memorial Service. A memorial service is a ceremony commemorating the deceased **without a casket present** during the service. Some families choose to have a burial prior to the service. For families who have chosen cremation, a memorial service can take place either with or without an urn present.

Reception. Receptions are usually held after services, and are a time for friends and family to gather together for a meal. This time gives everyone a chance to talk and share stories in a more relaxed setting. Sometimes friends will prepare food ahead of time for this gathering. Other times receptions will be held at restaurants, hotels, country clubs, or be catered at a park, church, or someone's home.



The staff of Austin Funeral & Cremation Services will arrange for services to be held at the location of your choice. We encourage each family to select a setting where they feel comfortable, such as a place that holds special meaning to them. For many, this will be in their home church or place of worship. We can assist you in recommending, selecting, and securing a location if you are uncertain of the best setting.

Unique Ideas for Services

Funeral services can and should be as unique as the life that is being celebrated. Over the years we have found that the most meaningful services were those that were most personal. There are many ways to add personal touches to funeral and memorial services, and our staff can arrange or assist with any of these.

- **Display Pictures.** Display framed pictures at the visitation and/or service.
- **Video Tribute.** Have a picture DVD created to play at the service. It can be set to a favorite music selection(s) or traditional hymns.
- **Participation from Family & Friends.** Have friends or family members participate in the service. They could read a favorite scripture passage, quote, or poem of yours.
- **Musicians.** Arrange for special musicians such as a bagpipe payer, harpist, pianist, violinist, organist, or vocalist.
- **Military Honors.** If you served in the armed forces, arrange for military honors.
- **Unique Processional.** Plan a special route to the cemetery (stop by an old home, school, or park). If you were a firefighter or other type of serviceman or woman, have the funeral procession led by the respective vehicle.
- **Encourage Others to Share Memories.** Have note cards at the visitation and/or service so people can write comments or share stories with your family.
- **Parting Gifts.** Provide parting gifts to those who come to the service. This could be a favorite recipe, a packet of flower seeds to plant in your memory, or a personalized bookmark with your picture and favorite quote or scripture passage.
- **Symbolic Ceremony at the Cemetery.** At the cemetery, arrange for a dove, butterfly, or balloon release.
- **Reception.** After the services, request that your family and friends have a reception. During this time, those closest to you will be able to share stories and special memories with one another in a supportive environment.



Burial Options

A burial may take place either before or after funeral services, depending on your preference. Some families have found it comforting to have the burial first, and then conduct services to celebrate their loved one's life following the burial. Yet, many people still prefer the traditional funeral service, with a processional and burial to follow. The decision is completely up to you.

When choosing traditional burial or mausoleum entombment, you will need to select a grave or mausoleum space in addition to a monument or marker. Below is a listing of area cemeteries. The staff of Austin Funeral & Cremation Services is accustomed to working with any of the local cemeteries, and can make arrangements with out-of-town cemeteries as well. If you would like assistance in selecting cemetery property or information on other burial options, our staff would be glad to assist you.

Calvary Cemetery

1001 Lebanon Road
Nashville, TN 37210
(615) 256-4590

Christ Church Memorial Gardens

15354 Old Hickory Boulevard
Nashville, TN 37211
(615) 834-6171

Harpeth Hills Memory Gardens

9090 Highway 100
Nashville, TN 37221
(615) 646-9292

Middle Tennessee State Veterans Cemetery

(for veterans, spouses, and dependent children only)
7931 McCrory Lane
Nashville, TN 37221
(615) 532-2238

Mount Olivet Cemetery

1101 Lebanon Road
Nashville, TN 37210
(615) 255-4193

Williamson Memorial Gardens

3009 Columbia Avenue
Franklin, TN 37064
(615) 371-9200

Woodlawn Memorial Park

660 Thompson Lane
Nashville, TN 37204
(615) 383-4754



Cremation Options

When choosing cremation, you have all the same choices that you would have with a burial; the only difference is the final disposition. Cremation offers a variety of choices, from a simple gathering to a traditional ceremony with the body present. Some families choose to have the cremation take place after a funeral service, so that their loved one's body can be present during the visitation and funeral service. Other families choose to have the cremation done prior to services and have the cremated remains present at the memorial service. No matter what you choose, we will help create an experience that fits the needs of you and your family.

Cremated remains may be buried in the ground, placed in a columbarium or mausoleum, scattered, or kept by your family. Some people will purchase keepsake urns so that several family members can keep a portion of the cremains. Others will purchase one decorative urn and keep the cremains on a bookshelf or mantel. Some families find comfort in scattering the cremains in a place that holds special meaning to the family. And like the traditional ground burial, some families enjoy coming back to the cemetery or columbarium to remember their loved one and pay their respects.

Your Wishes

On the following pages, you will have an opportunity to record your wishes. These pages will be helpful as you are trying to think through some of the decisions to be made. Please note that you do not have to complete the guide prior to meeting with Austin Funeral & Cremation Services, but are certainly welcome to do so if you would like to get started.



CONTACTS / FAMILY MEMBERS

Person or persons who can be called upon to assist with arrangements.

Name _____

Name _____

Relationship _____

Relationship _____

Phone _____

Phone _____

Funeral Provider to be called upon to make arrangements.

Name of Funeral Provider _____

Phone _____ Funeral Director _____

FINAL DISPOSITION PREFERENCE

Burial Cremation Anatomical Donation

Burial Preferences

Cemetery Name _____

Burial to take place: _____ Location of Burial Space _____

Prior to Service

After Service

My ideal clothing and jewelry would be _____

I would like the following to be buried with me (if anything) _____

I would like my grave marker to say _____

Cremation Preferences

I would like my cremains to be:

I would like the cremation to take place:

Buried in a cemetery

Prior to Service

Placed in a columbarium

After Service

Given to family

Scattered

Other Special Requests _____

MY WISHES REGARDING THE SERVICE(S)

I would like to have the following services:

- Visitation
- Reception
- Funeral Service (casket is present)
- Memorial Service (casket is not present)

Visitation Preferences

Location of Visitation:

- My Church or Place of Worship
- Private Residence
- Other _____

Visitation is Open to:

- Anyone
- Family and Close Friends Only

Casket or Urn Present:

- Yes
- No

If casket is present, I would like the casket to remain:

- Open
- Closed
- Let my family decide

Funeral / Memorial Service Preferences

Location of Service:

- My Church
- Graveside
- Other _____

Minister(s) Requested: _

Other Speakers to Participate in Service:

Musical Selections _____

Requested Musicians _____

My Ideal Funeral Would Be _____

Other Special Requests (Military or Fraternal Rites, Picture DVD Displayed at Service, Butterfly Release, Special Flowers)

Active Pallbearers

Honorary Pallbearers

CONTRIBUTIONS

- No Memorial Contributions
- Charity of Choice
- Specific Organization (please specify ⇨)

Contributions May Be Made To:

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The following information may be helpful for those involved in planning your service.

Favorite Passage of Scripture or Quote

Favorite Songs

Proudest Moment

Proudest Accomplishment(s)

Favorite Memories...

As a Child _____

As an Adult _____

With my Children _____

How I Would Like to be Remembered _____

Pertinent Information for Your Funeral Director

Your funeral director will need to collect the following information in order to prepare the death certificate at the appropriate time. A death certificate is simply the official documentation to prove that there has been a death, and your family will use certified copies of the death certificate to settle your claims. Insurance companies, social security administration, investment companies, and banks are a few examples of organizations that will require a death certificate. Your funeral director will prepare and file the death certificate with the county clerk and will obtain certified copies for your family.

Full Legal Name (first, middle, maiden, last) _____

Home Address _____

Social Security Number _____ Date of Birth _____

Place of Birth (city, state) _____ Highest Level of Education Attained _____

Marital Status _____ Race / Ethnicity _____

Occupation (most of your career) _____ Industry _____

Mother's Full Name _____ Father's Full Name _____

Did you serve in the Armed Forces? _____

Next Steps

Many families have found the benefits of funeral planning very helpful, and we commend you for planning ahead. Please know that it's important to communicate your final wishes to those closest to you. If you have taken the time to record your wishes in this guide, at the very least we suggest that you let your family know where your wishes are written down. We recommend that you discuss these plans with your family if you are comfortable doing so.

We also recommend that you meet with one of our funeral directors to discuss and finalize your plans. As you may know, there are still other details to cover such as selecting a casket and vault or urn. We also understand that you have many questions for us as well. We would be honored with the opportunity to meet you to discuss your options, customize services according to your wishes, or to simply answer your questions.

It is our sincere hope that this guide has been a helpful resource for you. We understand that making these plans can at times be difficult and want you to know that we are here to help in any way we can. Again, please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns. We are here to serve you and look forward to meeting you soon.



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