

## **Williamsburg Community Chapel**

### **Bereavement Planning Guidelines**

#### INTRODUCTION

You may be reading this brochure at a very difficult time in your life. Someone you loved dearly has died and life has become confusing, or you are anticipating the loss of a loved one. We hope that this brochure will help answer some of the questions you may have. The pastors and staff of Williamsburg Community Chapel will be happy to assist you in any way possible.

#### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE SERVICE?

Funerals and memorial services at Williamsburg Community Chapel are intended to honor those who have died, comfort their family and friends, and proclaim a witness to the resurrection in Jesus Christ. A funeral service is one of the ways God brings comfort when we are mourning. The Scriptures, prayers and music, the recollections and meditations in the company of family and friends can help to support and strengthen us in our sorrow. The service can also be an important transition point for us as we begin to look forwards. It can bring a sense of gratitude for the past and courage for the future as we begin to cope with our loss.

#### WHERE SHOULD A FUNERAL TAKE PLACE?

Your church, where many happy experiences have taken place, is a natural and appropriate place to celebrate, take comfort and remember our loved ones. The Chapel worship room is large but can be made into an intimate space for any number of participants. The foyer provides ample room for receiving guests, sharing memories, and enjoying food and fellowship. Parking is ample. In many ways it may be preferable to a funeral home simply because the building carries so many associations of our lives together. Graveside services are sometimes preferred for brevity and simplicity, and may be the expressed wish of the deceased. Considerations such as weather conditions and guests with mobility challenges might help guide the decision as to what is best for your family. Simplicity and comfort are often important considerations.

#### WHAT DOES A FUNERAL OR MEMORIAL SERVICE INCLUDE?

Typical elements of a service include:

- Welcome and Prayer
- Scripture Reading
- Homily
- Shared Remembrances from Family and Friends
- Hymns, Praise Choruses or Special Music
- A PowerPoint Reflection of the Person's Life
- Prayer for the Family

- Benediction

Decisions regarding the elements of the service can be made during a meeting with the pastoral staff. Your family can discuss which Scripture readings, hymns/praise songs, etc. you would like to include.

#### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Flowers: an arrangement of flowers is typically placed in the front of the worship room during the service. Your family may wish to use a local florist to deliver an arrangement or the Chapel has artificial flower arrangements available.

#### WHAT ABOUT A RECEPTION AFTER THE SERVICE?

Funeral and Memorial services at the Chapel are usually followed by a reception in the foyer which allows for friends to visit with family and loved ones. The reception includes:

- Finger foods (small sandwiches, cheese, fruit)
- Desserts
- Coffee and water

#### WHAT ELSE IS INCLUDED?

Funerals and memorial services at the Chapel also include the following:

- a printed order of worship including a brief biography and photo
- a prelude, a postlude, and accompaniment of soloists and congregational hymns as requested
- a compact disc (CD) recording of the services in the sanctuary
- a video of the service can also be arranged

#### WHAT ABOUT VISITATION?

Visitations are commonly held the day before the service in a funeral home. If you wish, and scheduling permits, this time of greeting friends can be held in the Chapel foyer (depending upon availability).

#### HOW DO I PLAN A SERVICE?

Contact the Pastoral Care office at the Chapel (757-229-7152) to set up a time to meet with a pastor to plan the service.

#### WHAT DOES THE SERVICE COST?

**At Williamsburg Community Chapel, funerals and memorial services are conducted at no charge to the family.**

## WHAT DO I SAY WHEN FRIENDS COME TO CALL?

Thank them sincerely for their kindness. They may not feel they really know what to say. Receive their hugs and handshakes as comfort from the Lord for you. Don't be afraid to talk about your family member who has died. That will help visitors in turn to tell you things that will encourage and comfort you. Their kind words about your loved one can bring encouragement and even thankful joy for the blessings the Lord has given you.

## HOW LONG WILL DEEP SORROW LAST?

Be patient with yourself. Don't be afraid to cry or tell God how you feel. Seek him in prayer and ask for his comforting help. It may be months before you feel like yourself again, but that is not unusual. If the sorrow persists in a deep and agonizing way, beyond that point, it would be important to find some special help. Speak to one of the pastors. Bereavement counsel and support is also available at the Chapel through Turning Point and Grief Support (call 757-229-7152 for more information).

## IN THE EVENT OF A DEATH, WHAT MUST I DO?

1. Call the Chapel phone number 757-229-7152 and ask for the Pastoral Care Office. A pastor can help family members if you need assistance.
2. Call the funeral home or cremation society of your choice. Later, they will ask you to come and meet with the funeral director and make choices about the service and burial times.
3. Select a final resting place if you have not already done so. Keep in mind the coming generations who will be interested in the life and character of your loved one.
4. Lean into God's love and care for you. The following Scripture passages will help you experience the Lord's help, comfort and strength.

Psalm 1	John 14.1-6
Psalm 23	1 Corinthians 2.9
Psalm 24	2 Corinthians 5
Psalm 27	Romans 8.35-39
Psalm 34	1 Peter 1
Psalm 57	Revelation 22
Psalm 139	