

Funerals at Johns Creek UMC

Quick Reference and Guidelines

Introduction

Johns Creek United Methodist Church is honored to make its facilities available for Funerals and Memorial Services. Whether your loved one was a church member or a member of the community, we are here to help you as you mourn his or her loss.

A funeral or memorial service in a church is a worship service where God is praised for the life of the deceased and the grace of God is invoked for healing and renewal of those who mourn. The following policies and procedures have been formulated to help provide for meaningful funeral services.

Please also review our pamphlet “Funeral and Memorial Services,” which can help you understand what to expect with funeral services at JCUMC.

Requirements for Funerals at JCUMC

- A JCUMC pastor will be involved in at least the planning phases of the service. He or she will use his or her discretion in inviting other clergy and worship leaders to participate.
- As soon as possible, coordinate a date, time, and space for the service. A JCUMC pastor can assist with this process.
- A Building Use Agreement is generally not required, nor are fees generally assessed for a funeral or memorial service. However, in some circumstances (e.g., a very large funeral service) the officiating pastor may ask the family to work with the Business Manager to draft a Building Use Agreement that clearly establishes expectations and responsibilities to promote a smooth experience for the family of the deceased, other mourners, and the church.

Scheduling the Service

Please contact a JCUMC pastor as soon as possible regarding the date you wish to schedule. He or she will want to know how many guests could be expected, your preferences for the service, and any other requests you may have (e.g., will you host a reception before or after the service). He/she will coordinate the necessary spaces with the church Scheduling Coordinator on your behalf. For complex arrangements, the pastor may arrange a conversation between the family, Scheduling Coordinator, and other church leaders.

The Pastor

The pastor(s) of Johns Creek United Methodist Church lead all worship services at JCUMC, including funerals and memorial services. Guest clergy may assist or lead with the approval of the Senior Pastor or his/her designee.

You may request a specific pastor, who will work with you to plan a date that he or she is available. However, another JCUMC pastor may be assigned in the event of scheduling conflicts. Note that Johns Creek UMC does not discriminate based on gender.

Venues and Times

Funerals at Johns Creek UMC may be held in the Sanctuary, Chapel, Gathering Room, or Memorial Garden. These spaces each have different features.

- Sanctuary - Seats approximately 1,700 people on permanent pews. The room is decorated in warm reds and beiges and has ample natural light. Features a large pipe organ, grand piano, and large chancel (stage) area.
- Chapel - Seats approximately 175 people in moveable chairs. The room is decorated in cool tones and has some natural light from high clerestory windows. Features a small upright piano and a small platform.
- Gathering Room - Seats approximately 175 people in “worship” format (chairs in rows facing the front) or 75-100 in banquet format (around tables). The room is decorated in warm reds and beiges, with ample natural light, and a large functioning fireplace. Features a grand piano, ample natural light, and a catering kitchen.
- Memorial Garden - This is an outdoor courtyard in which cremains of church members are interred. There is standing room for 20-25 people. Though there is no permanent seating, temporary seating for 8-10 people may be arranged.

Access times for the building and grounds will be allocated for each specific event, but funerals are typically booked with a four-hour window.

Interment in the Memorial Garden

The Memorial Garden provides a place for the interment (burial) of the cremains of church members. The Trustees maintain a separate policy and agreement for interment in the memorial garden, which includes fees for memorial markers and other services. Memorial services and funerals are permitted to be held in the Memorial Garden even if the cremains will not be interred therein.

Funeral Team

The church provides a Funeral Team to support you before, during, and after the service. The Funeral Team will be coordinated by the Department of Music and Worship. Their responsibilities include

- ensuring the appropriate spaces are ready for the service,
- coordinating audio set-up,
- arranging a space in the narthex for a guestbook and memorabilia table,
- assisting mourners as they arrive,
- greeting and assisting the funeral home representatives, florists, and others supporting the service,
- ensuring the church is cleaned after the service, and
- overseeing any other facilitation needs within the church.

Music and Liturgy

The funeral or memorial service is a service of worship. All music played or sung during the funeral should express a Christian message appropriate to the occasion. The selection of all music is accomplished through consultation with the officiating pastor, who will provide final approval of all service music.

All liturgical (worship) elements, including prayers and readings, must be Christian in nature or content. The JCUMC pastor will be responsible for approving the order of service and service content.

Communion during the funeral service will be offered only if it is open to all in attendance.

Flowers and Decoration

Flowers are to be provided by the family of the deceased or other mourners. The church does not provide flowers. Decorations of any kind may not be attached to the pews, chairs, or any other furniture by gluing, nailing, pinning or taping. The family and florist should consult with the Department of Music and Worship about the way decorations may be placed on the ends of pews. All decorations, flowers, candles, etc. must be removed from the building following the service.

No decorations, furnishings, or liturgical appointments belonging to the church may be moved without the permission of the officiating pastor. The pulpit, lectern, gospel lectern, and communion table, are an essential symbolic and functional resource for Christian worship services and cannot be removed for funerals.

Certain worship decorations at Christmas, Easter, and other holy seasons will remain in place for funerals. The officiating pastor can help you know what to expect based on the season of the service.

The florist may not arrive before 9:00 on the day of the service.

Candles

In the Sanctuary the worship candles on each side of the communion table will be in place for the service. No candles are provided for other service spaces.