

With Our  
Compliments...



# Stephenville

## Funeral Home

Serving Stephenville and Erath County for over 100 years

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Stephenville, TX 76401

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## VOTED BEST FUNERAL HOME IN ERATH COUNTY

# Welcome

Stephenville Funeral Home has been a part of the Stephenville and Erath County community for over 100 years. We are committed to providing our families with personalized, caring services, including Traditional Chapel, Church, and Memorial services, as well as, Direct Cremations.

At Stephenville Funeral Home we believe that every individual is unique and deserves to be memorialized in a special way. We include a free personalized video tribute of your loved one's life.

Our funeral home provides a fully equipped family center and kitchen to all our families.

Please call anytime for Pricing Information without obligation. (254) 965-3161. We hope that the information contained in this booklet is helpful and encourage you to contact us to share any thoughts that may assist us in serving you.

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# What Makes Us Unique

Ours is not just any funeral home. With our years of experience, and highly professional, friendly and compassionate staff, Stephenville Funeral Home is the first choice for hundreds of area families each year.

We are proud to embrace traditional values, diversity, and innovation in honoring the spirit and life of each person we serve. Stephenville Funeral Home offers a full selection of:

- Funeral and memorial services, ranging from traditional to uniquely innovative and personal
- Burial services and cremation options
- Natural choices, including Green Burial and Green Cremation
- Celebrant Services

Letting go of a loved one is usually a very difficult process. In order to provide your family peace-of-mind, Stephenville Funeral Home offers complete care, so that you can focus on comforting each other as you prepare to say goodbye to someone dear to you.

Although there are many decisions you may have to make, we assure you that we will guide you through the process every step of the way.

We hope you will turn to us for compassionate care and impeccable service. Our pledge is to honor your loved one and family with dignity, respect and personal attention to every detail.



# Our Story

Stephenville Funeral Home was founded in the late 1800's on the south side of the square in downtown Stephenville and was originally called Higginbotham Funeral Home. The name was changed to Stephenville Funeral Home in 1945.

Since our founding, the guiding principle of Stephenville Funeral Home has been the commitment to treating each family who comes to us as our own. With sincerity, pride, and dedication, we are committed to this time-honored tradition.

In recent years, we've gathered together a staff of highly-qualified and deeply caring individuals to assist us in continuing the funeral home's mission of providing excellence in funeral services to families in their time of need.

Whether you have an immediate need for our services or you wish to begin pre-planning a funeral arrangement for you or someone you love, call us. We will be proud to serve you.

# Our Facilities

We have made every effort to make our facility comfortable, while providing families a respectful, especially dignified place in which to commemorate the life of a loved one. Feel free to stop by our offices. If you wish a personal tour of our facility, we ask that you call us to set an appointment.

- State Room
- Chapel
- Spacious Chapel
- Family Center
- Spacious family Center offered to families free of charge
- Lobby of the Funeral Home



# Our Experienced Staff

Each of the staff members at Stephenville Funeral Home is committed to providing your family with the finest in personal end-of-life care. In fact, for years, it's been comforting for area families to know that we are available to help at any time of the day or night.

When a loved one dies, all you need to do is make one phone call. From that moment on, we'll take on the responsibilities of the physical care of your loved one, and the emotional care of those left behind.



# Stephenville

Funeral Home



**David Tomlinson**  
Funeral Director/  
Manager

David serves as a Funeral Director, and was named manager of Stephenville Funeral Home in January 2012, after his brother Billy retired, after 40 years of service to the funeral home, in December 2011. David has been with Stephenville Funeral Home since 1973.

David was born in Dublin, and graduated from Stephenville High School in 1971. He graduated from the Dallas Institute of Mortuary Science in 1975. David is very active in the community and his church. He is a member of the Tarleton State University Athletics Texan Club Board of Directors, Stephenville Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors and Stephenville Optimist Club. David was honored by Tarleton State University on June 1, 2013, receiving Hall of Fame honors from TSU Athletics for his continued support for athletic programs.

He is married to the former Margaret Burgan of Duffau, and they have a daughter, Kristi and son, Clint; four granddaughters, Elizabeth, Abigayle, Rachel, and Lucy; and grandson Benjamin. He and his family are members of the Graham Street Church of Christ.





## Our Difference

We know there are other funeral homes in the area to choose from. But we also know that families who turn to us during a time of loss, or for pre-arrangement services experience our very high standards of service. These standards include transparency in business practices and service pricing, as well as:

- Providing families with well-planned funeral arrangements in their time of need.
- Providing comfortable, soothing surroundings where families and friends can gather to remember and celebrate the life of a loved one.
- Helping families in our community to preserve longstanding traditions and customs.
- Offering innovative, truly personalized funeral home services and products.
- Assisting families and individuals making their pre-need plans.
- Reaching out to the greater community with educational seminars and grief support programs.

We offer professional guidance and personal and specialized attention before, during and after the loss of a loved one. Our reputation for honesty and integrity is very well-known, and it is our most valuable asset.

- Traditional Funerals
- Personalized Funerals
- Memorial Services and Graveside Ceremonies
- Various Cremation Service Options
- Veterans' Funeral Services

We encourage you to contact us to discuss your family's unique needs. Each of us is confident that we can, and will, do our utmost to meet – and exceed – your expectations.

# Planning A Funeral

Most of us are not prepared to plan and carry out a funeral ceremony for someone we love. And so much of the information available on this critically important subject fails to focus on what is most important: having a personalized, meaningful funeral that helps families and friends begin the healing process of mourning after the death of someone we love.

Our dedicated and experienced staff are here to help you and can play a critical role in planning and carrying out a meaningful funeral or memorial service. Our licensed funeral directors are intimately familiar with the funeral planning process, key decisions a grieving family must make, and the necessary legal documentation that is required during this difficult time. Our funeral professionals can handle all of the details and help you create a unique service that meets your needs and values.

Funeral ceremonies can make a significant difference in how families channel their grief towards health and healing. During the funeral, the community comes together and responds to the reality that someone has died, and also to the reality that those remaining will need support, compassion, love, hope, and understanding. The funeral encourages you to think about the person who has died and to explore the meaning of their life and the ways in which they touched the lives of others.

The remembering, reflecting and choices that take place in the planning and conducting of the funeral service are often an important part of the process of grief and mourning. And ultimately, this process of contemplation and discovery creates a memorable and moving funeral experience for all who attend.

*The following list of information will be needed when funeral arrangements are being made:*

- Full Name of Deceased
- Date of Birth
- Place of Birth
- Social Security Number
- Father's Name
- Mother's Maiden Name
- Last or Usual Occupation
- Education Level
- Name of Minister Officiating at the funeral
- Cemetery Information- if available
- Veteran Information - if available





# Pre-Planning

## *The Advantages of Planning Ahead*

The idea behind planning ahead is simple. One day, a great deal of vital information about you or a loved one will be needed by your family and anyone whose responsibility it is to assist them. Those who plan ahead can be assured that, not only will their personal wishes be fulfilled, but other unnecessary difficulties will be avoided.

Both you and your loved ones can benefit when funeral arrangements are made well ahead of need. It can be beneficial to include your immediate family in these plans, ensuring those left behind are aware of your wishes and able to plan a meaningful funeral that will help them begin their mourning. By discussing plans in advance, you can take time to make decisions about cremation or burial, the type of ceremony and other elements of the funeral.

You may want to discuss your thoughts and decisions not only with your family but also a funeral service professional. This planning guide can be used to capture your wishes and biographical information in advance. Upon completion, simply store it in a safe place with your other important documents.

Most of us plan ahead in life. We plan for our wedding, our children's education, family vacations, and other significant expected life events. We also plan for the unexpected events of life by purchasing home, auto and medical insurance.

Understanding the benefits of pre-planning has prompted many to take the step to plan their own arrangements.

## Why Pre-Plan?

### **PEACE OF MIND**

Pre-planning takes the burden of making important decisions off your loved ones during a difficult time.

### **FINANCIAL ASSURANCE**

Pre-payment of your funeral through our Funeral Home will render the costs associated with your final expenses inflation proof.

### **LONGEVITY**

Pre-planning your funeral will make certain that your choices are respected and carried out, without leaving your family to wonder what your wishes may have been.

There are many different ways to begin the "planning ahead" conversation. You know your family and how your loved ones might best respond to the topic. For some families, it might be a casual conversation over dinner or another family gathering. For other families, a formal meeting might be better suited.

Regardless of your approach, the conversation is much easier to have when death is not imminent. Discussing the subject with loved ones earlier in life when they are younger, and most likely healthier, makes the topic easier to talk about and keeps the focus on the celebration of life rather than an impending loss.

# How Would A Pre-Need Help?

Pre-Planning is a loving gift you can make for your family and survivors that provides complete peace of mind to everyone involved.

## *Why should you make Pre-Arrangements for your funeral?*

- You can plan together as a family, rather than alone (after the death)
- You help spare your loved ones from having to make difficult decisions
- It ensures your wishes are well-documented and carried out
- It ensures all your personal documents are organized and easy for your survivors to locate
- It helps control costs and reduces emotional overspending
- Eliminates the need to enter a casket selection room at the time of death
- You can personalize your plan to reflect your unique personality

## *Here are some tips that may help you start the advance planning conversation with your loved ones:*

Set a time to have the conversation. Schedule it as an appointment with your loved ones, whether you want to share your plans with them or ask them to make their plans to share with you.

Tell your parent or loved one that you want to ensure their final arrangements are done according to their wishes, and you need their help to make that happen.

## *To open the discussion to learn more details about your loved one's wishes, ease into the conversation with questions such as:*

- “Have you ever thought about where you would like to be buried?”
- “What type of funeral would you like to have?”

Take advantage of funeral-related opportunities. Attending the funeral of a friend, family member or colleague or watching a movie or television show with funeral scenes may naturally prompt the discussion with your own loved ones. Talk about what you liked or didn't like about the services you saw or attended.







# Life & Trust Fund Insurance

Life Insurance will pay a fixed amount based on the face value of the policy. Generally, the face amount is not the same as the amount of the services, merchandise and cemetery costs selected or required. Unless the pre-need contract is guaranteed, the actual costs may be greater than the policy proceeds at the time of need and additional funds may be required from the survivors.

Funeral Insurance can be purchased in an amount to pay the costs of the services, merchandise and cemetery costs selected or required. If the prices are guaranteed, the survivors will not be charged more than the contracted amount. Before you purchase Funeral Insurance, you should know, in writing, exactly how much you will pay over the length of the contract and what will happen if you cannot, or do not, pay the premiums.

Funeral Trusts can be purchased in an amount to cover the costs of the services, merchandise and cemetery costs selected or required. If the prices are guaranteed, the survivors will not be charged more than the contracted amount.

## ***Before you buy a Funeral Trust, you should know:***

- If the prices are guaranteed
- The terms of cancellation
- If the funds increase in value who will receive any remaining funds after the contract is fulfilled
- What happens if the death occurs before the trust is paid in full

Savings Accounts or bank-held trusts are accounts established by you to pay funeral expenses. These are generally not guaranteed cost contracts by the service and merchandise provider. You would need to notify the provider and your family of their existence. You have complete control of your funds.



# Funeral Arrangements

Whether you're planning for yourself or for a loved one, the funeral service is one of the most important elements of a person's final arrangements.

There's no one, right way to plan a funeral service - we truly believe that each funeral should be individual and memorable. And by providing you with the opportunity for personalization the funeral service can truly reflect the uniqueness of the life it honors.

When planning your own funeral service in advance, think about the way you want to be remembered.

Perhaps you'd like a traditional funeral aligned with certain religious or ethnic customs. Or, a celebration focusing on great memories made with family and friends may be your preference. Maybe it's a combination of both. You can have one service, or several, to honor your life.

***Regardless of whether you or your loved one have opted for burial or for cremation, the funeral or memorial service fills an important role. It can:***

- Honor, recognize and celebrate the life of the deceased
- Allow friends and family to say their last good-byes
- Provide closure after the loss of a loved one
- Allow friends to console the family of the loved one



# What Is A Funeral?

## BURIAL PLANS

When considering final arrangements for yourself or a loved one, one of the first decisions you might make is whether you prefer a burial or a cremation. This decision will often influence other important considerations, such as elements of the funeral service and the type of cemetery property.

## MEMORIAL OR TRIBUTE SERVICE

At a Memorial or Tribute Service, a casket or urn is usually not present. Otherwise similar to a funeral or visitation, a Memorial Service gives family and friends a time to come together in your memory and celebrate your life.

## FUNERAL SERVICE

A formal or informal ceremony or ritual prior to burial, a Funeral Service often provides a sense of closure to family and friends. Although your faith or culture may dictate some of the elements, you may want to personalize other aspects of the service. At a Funeral Service, a casket or urn is present, though you may choose to have the casket open or closed.

## VISITATION, WAKE OR VIEWING

Held the night before or immediately prior to the Funeral Service, the Visitation - also called a "Wake" or a "Viewing" - provides a way for friends and acquaintances to pay their respects and offer condolences to your family. As with the Funeral Service, you may want to decide if you want an open or closed casket, should one be present.

## GRAVESIDE SERVICE

As its name implies, a Graveside Service may be held at the grave site, just prior to burial of a casket or urn. It usually consists of final remarks, prayers or memories. The service may occur after or in place of a Funeral Service.

Regardless of the service or services you choose to include in your Funeral Plan, you can personalize them in almost any way imaginable. For example, just consider the following questions:

- Where should the funeral be held? At your place of worship? At the funeral home?
- Who should officiate the service?
- Will your service adhere to the traditions of your faith or culture?
- Do you want a eulogy, and who should deliver it?
- Would you like an open or closed casket?
- What music should be played?
- What readings would you like to have?
- Is there a special poem you'd like shared with the guests?
- Are there any special photographs or other memorabilia you would like displayed?



# Practical Information For Your Survivors

In addition to pre-planning your funeral, completing a Personal Information Form and giving a copy to your estate trustee, spouse and children will give you the peace of mind of knowing they will have all the information they need to properly handle your wishes and the details of your estate.

Don't put this form in your safety deposit box as these can remain sealed until after the funeral.

## ***About cremation***

Cremation is an alternative to earth burial or mausoleum entombment: it does not limit the funeral in any way. Should you choose cremation, you will still have the same options for memorialization that any other family has. Cremation can take place before or after the Funeral Service.

In this section, we've answered the most common questions we are asked about cremation. If you require further information, please contact us at any time.

## ***What is cremation?***

Cremation is a process of reducing the body to bone fragments by applying intense heat for a period of two to three hours. The cremated remains are removed from the cremation chamber before being processed into finer fragments and placed in a temporary container. They weigh typically between three and six pounds. An urn may be selected for the final disposition of the cremated remains.

## ***Do we need to buy a casket?***

Texas State Law requires that at a minimum, the deceased must be placed into a combustible container. Many options of caskets and containers are available to you.

## ***Can we place personal mementos in the casket prior to cremation?***

Many personal items may be placed in the casket; however, some items may need to be removed prior to the cremation process. All items left in the casket will be destroyed during the cremation. Your funeral director can advise you on which items may stay and which items must be removed from the casket.

## ***Do we need to have a funeral if we select cremation?***

Cremation does not limit the type of Funeral Service that may be chosen. The same options that apply to earth burial are available with cremation. Some of these choices include: casket type, location of the service and visitation, music selection, open casket and the display of personal mementos. Some families elect to have a complete service at the funeral home or place of worship. Others prefer to have a procession to the crematorium, similar to that often done to the cemetery, for an earth burial.



### ***If Cremation:***

- Would you like to use our chapel for a short service prior to the cremation?
- What type of urn would you prefer (metal, wood, marble, ceramic, etc.)?
- What type of final resting place would you prefer for your loved one (choice of burial, above ground niches or scattering of cremated remains)?
- Would you like other members of the family to be with your loved one in the future? This determines the size of the resting place

### ***Decisions to be made regarding burial of an urn:***

- What type of memorial do you prefer (bronze or granite marker set flush with the ground or an upright memorial)?
- Would you like to protect your loved one's urn with a concrete vault?

### ***Decisions to be made regarding above ground niches:***

- Would you like the niche to be inside a building or outside?
- What type of material would you like the niche to be constructed from? Granite or bronze are choices for outdoor niches and marble or glass are choices for indoor

### ***Decisions to be made regarding scattering:***

- Would you like to be present for the scattering?
- Would you like a memorial to be placed in the area?

### ***If Casket Burial:***

- Would you like other members of the family to be with your loved one in the future? This determines the size of the plot
- What type of memorial do you prefer (a marker set flush with the ground or an upright memorial)?
- Would you like to protect your loved one's casket with a concrete vault
- What type of presentation would you prefer for the burial service e.g. a tent canopy, chairs, mats leading to the grave etc.?

### ***If Casket Entombment:***

- Would you like other members of the family to be with your loved one in the future? This determines the size of the crypt
- What type of memorial package would you prefer?



## *Cemetery Property*

In addition to funeral services and the choice of burial or cremation, cemetery property, or “interment rights,” is another consideration when you’re making final arrangements, either for yourself in advance, or for a loved one.

## *Burial*

Most people are familiar with the concept of burial, or “interment,” but may not be aware of the variety of options that are often available. Many cemeteries offer one or more of the following:

- Ground Burial: burial of the casket below ground. A “vault” or “outer burial container” is required at many cemeteries
- Mausoleum, or Community Mausoleum: a large building that provides above ground entombments
- Private Family Mausoleum: a small structure that provides above-ground entombment of, on average, two to twelve decedents
- Companion Crypt: permits two interments or entombments side-by-side
- Private Family Estate: a small section of a cemetery, usually bordered by gates, shrubbery, or other dividers, that allows for ground burial of several members of the same family

## *A few facts about cremation:*

- Cremation cannot occur until there is a signed Death Certificate by a doctor.
- There is a 24 hour waiting period before cremation. This alleviates misidentification and allows time for the family to reconsider their choices
- If you choose cremation for your loved one you can still have a service
- You have numerous options for the final resting place
- You can place the cremated remains in a special urn to display at home
- You can bury an urn in a cemetery, providing a permanent resting place where family and friends can visit
- You can place a portion of cremated remains in an urn and a portion in a columbarium niche, providing a permanent location where you can pay your respects
- You can scatter the cremated remains





# What Can We Do With The Cremated Remains?

## **BURIAL**

The cremated remains may be buried in an existing cemetery plot or a new plot may be purchased.

## **INURNMENT:**

The urn may be placed in a niche in an above ground structure called a columbarium.

## **SCATTERING:**

Cemeteries have scattering areas on their property. Please check local laws for scattering.

## **KEEPING:**

Many people prefer to have the urn at home with them.

## **SHIPPING:**

You may wish for the cremated remains to be shipped to another country. We can look after these arrangements for you. You may also be permitted to take the cremated remains yourself to another country. Check with us first and we can assist you.



# Experiencing Grief

*When someone close to us passes, the confusion and mixed emotions we feel can often become overwhelming. However, it is important to recognize that there is no standard way of experiencing loss and no right way to grieve. It is completely normal to feel a mixture of shock, anger, guilt, despair and relief, along with many other different emotions. There are, however, some things that you can do which may help you to cope, along with people who can support you, if you need it, during this period in your life.*

## RECOGNIZING GRIEF

Losing someone we love is something that we all have to go through at some point in our lives. Each experience is personal and different, and can be influenced by many factors. Your feelings are likely to be affected by the relationship you had with the person, your cultural background, and your religious beliefs.

It is important to remember that grief may be displayed in different ways for each individual.

Grief can manifest itself in a range of emotions:

**Shock** – you may have thought that you were prepared if the death was expected or because you've experienced a loss previously. But whatever the circumstances it is common to feel an initial sense of shock at the passing of someone close to us.

**Anger** – it is very common to feel anger whilst you are grieving; this can be because they passed before their time, things that happened between you or did not happen, or anger that they are no longer there.

**Guilt** – people often feel a sense of guilt that they themselves have not passed, or guilt at certain circumstances involving their loved one.

**Despair** – a grieving person can feel despair and feel at a loss as to how they will cope and what their future life will hold.

**Numbness** – it can often feel like you are living in a “fog” after the loss of a loved one. You may feel numb or worry that you have not cried, but feeling numb is often a coping mechanism when experiencing intense emotional situations. Gradually over time the feeling of numbness subsides, allowing us to start functioning and healing.



## PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS OF GRIEF

When grieving it is common to experience physical symptoms, such as:

- Loss or increase in appetite
- Difficulty in sleeping
- Lethargy – feeling drained, having no energy
- Headaches

It is important to be kind to yourself and give yourself the time and care that you need to transition through the grieving process.



## COPING WITH GRIEF

As with the many different factors that contribute to how we express our grief there are also various processes that can help us to cope:

***Give yourself time*** – focus on one day at a time, helping you to cope with your emotions and get through simple, everyday tasks.

***Recognize your emotions*** – recognize the reasons for your emotions and symptoms, even the physical ones. When experiencing them give yourself time to work through them.

***Support from family and friends*** – having a support network of family and friends can be extremely helpful. If you do not have this type of network then support can often be found through counseling services.

***Talk about your grief*** – talking, whether about your feelings or about your loved one, with family, friends or a dedicated grief counselor is an important part of the grief process.

Sometimes our grief can become overwhelming and it is important to recognize when to get additional help. Part of the process is to acknowledge that life will not return to *normal* - it is about understanding that your life has changed and finding a balance between the two.

Working through your grief is not about forgetting the person but about learning how to live your life with the grief that you feel.

Over time your life will take on a new shape and meaning.

*“There are things that we don’t want to happen but have to accept, things we don’t want to know but have to learn, and people we can’t live without but have to let go.”* – Author Unknown



# Helping A Friend Cope With Loss

Above all, just listening and showing your concern, along with your presence will be of great help.

## *Before the funeral*

1. Offer to notify his/her family and friends about funeral arrangements
2. Help answering the phone and greeting visitors
3. Keep a record of everyone who calls, visits or has been contacted
4. Help coordinate the food and drink supply
5. Offer to pick up friends and family at the airport and arrange housing
6. Offer to provide transportation for out-of-town visitors
7. Help him/her keep the house cleaned and the dishes washed

## *After the funeral*

1. Prepare or provide dinner on a day that is mutually acceptable every week for two to three months
2. Offer to help with yard chores such as watering or pruning
3. Feed and exercise the pets, if any
4. Write notes offering encouragement and support
5. Offer to drive or accompany him/her to the cemetery regularly
6. Offer to house sit so he/she can get away or visit family out of town
7. Make a weekly run to the grocery store, laundry, or cleaners
8. Help with the "Thank You" notes and/or other correspondence
9. Anticipate difficult periods such as birthdays, anniversaries, holidays, and the day of death
10. Always mention the deceased by name and encourage reminiscing



# Expressions Of Sympathy

## **LISTEN WITH YOUR HEART**

Helping begins with your ability to be an active listener. Your physical presence and desire to listen without judging are critical helping tools. Don't worry so much about what you will say. Just concentrate on listening to the words that are being shared with you.

## **BE COMPASSIONATE**

Give your friend permission to express his or her feelings without fear of criticism. Learn from your friend; don't instruct or set expectations about how he or she should respond. Never say, "I know just how you feel." You don't.

Think about your helper role as someone who "walks with," not "behind" or "in front of" the one who is mourning.

## **AVOID CLICHÉS**

Words, particularly clichés, can be extremely painful for a grieving friend. Clichés are trite comments often intended to diminish the loss by providing simple solutions to difficult realities. Comments like, "You are holding up so well," "Time heals all wounds," "Think of all you still have to be thankful for" or "Just be happy that he/she is out of his/her pain" are not constructive. Instead, they hurt and can make a friend's journey through grief more difficult.

## **OFFER PRACTICAL HELP**

Preparing food, washing clothes, cleaning the house or answering the telephone are just a few of the practical ways of showing you care.

## **UNDERSTAND THE UNIQUENESS OF GRIEF**

Keep in mind that your friend's grief is unique. No one person will respond to the death of someone loved in exactly the same way. While it may be possible to talk about similar phases shared by grieving people, everyone is different and shaped by experiences in their own unique lives.

## **MAKE CONTACT**

Your presence at the funeral is important. As a ritual, the funeral provides an opportunity for you to express your love and concern at this time of need. As you pay tribute to a life that is now passed, you have a chance to support grieving friends and family. At the funeral, a touch of your hand, a look in your eye or even a hug often communicates more than any words could ever say.

## **SHARE A FAVORITE MEMORY OF THE PERSON WHO DIED**

Relate the special qualities that you valued in him or her. These words will often be a loving gift to your grieving friend, words that will be reread and remembered for years. Use the name of the person who has died either in your personal note or when you talk to your friend. Hearing that name can be comforting, and it confirms that you have not forgotten this important person who was so much a part of your friend's life.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## ***Why is having a funeral ceremony important?***

Throughout human history, and around the globe, people have gathered together to acknowledge the death of a member of the community. No matter who the deceased was, a funeral ceremony is the one (and sometimes the only) opportunity for everyone to come together to acknowledge their death, recognize the community's shared loss and share the burden of grief.

## ***What is the average cost of a funeral service?***

The National Funeral Directors Association states that the national average cost of a funeral in 2014 was \$7,181 (however, if a burial vault is required by the cemetery—and it usually is—the average cost can rise as high as \$8,508). These statistics aside, the cost of a funeral service is wholly dependent on the specific services and products selected by the family member(s) responsible for making funeral arrangements. Your funeral director will thoroughly explain all options, ask the important questions about your family's budget restrictions; and otherwise do everything he or she can to provide you with a funeral, memorial service or celebration-of-life that meets your emotional and social needs, all the while staying in line with your financial expectations.

## ***How does the cost for a funeral ceremony compare to the cost of a memorial service or celebration-of-life?***

Attempting to compare the costs of the three is rather like trying to compare oranges, mangoes and apples; it can't be done. Perhaps it's easier to see funerals, memorial services and celebrations-of-life as three points on a spectrum—a range, if you like—of ceremonial formats. At one end is the funeral; at the other, the celebration-of-life, and in the middle, the memorial service. The funeral is most commonly the most expensive of the three; which is especially easy to see when you consider the cost of the casket is a significant expense. The cost of any of the three is totally dependent on the choices you make during the arrangement conference.

## ***Is it necessary to have flowers at the ceremony?***

Flowers create a background of warmth and beauty which adds to the dignity and consolation of the funeral service. "Necessary" may not be the right word; but there's no doubt flowers at a funeral or other end-of-life ceremony serve many valuable purposes including a means of a visual expression of sympathy, love and respect or a means of lending support.



### ***Who should be invited to a funeral?***

It's a lot like asking 'who should be invited to a wedding?' people who would want to be there. A person's role at a funeral is two-fold: one, they are there to demonstrate support for the bereaved family. Two, funeral guests are there to tend to their own sorrow; to begin to come to terms, in the safety of a shared collective experience, with the death of someone they held dear. While it's not common to send out invitations to a funeral (generally, the service details are published in the newspaper or online, and those who wish to attend, do); it does make a certain amount of sense to reach out to certain individuals by phone, email, or social media to ensure they are aware of the service date/time (and express your desire for their presence).

When preparing the guest list for a funeral service, you should both listen to your heart and use common sense. You know the people that mattered most to your loved one, as well as those who mattered least. Whatever you do, don't invite more people than the venue can comfortably handle.

### ***What does the phrase "in lieu of flowers" mean?***

You may have read this phrase in an obituary: "In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to...". Derived from the French phrase, "en lieu", strictly speaking "in lieu" means "in place"; so it can be said to be a directive sentence: "In place of flowers, contributions may be made to...". But it's really important to realize that its use doesn't imply you can't send flowers to the service; it is only meant to offer you a choice of ways to show your sympathy for the family and show your respects for the deceased. Only when the obituary states "no flowers please" are you being requested to abstain from sending floral tributes or sympathy arrangements.

### ***If one is requested, am I obligated to make a memorial donation?***

Certainly not; it's important to never feel obligated to do anything in response to the death of a community or family member. Your actions (whether sending flowers, preparing a casserole and taking it to the family home, or making a donation) should always come from the heart.

### ***What's involved in preparing the body for viewing at a visitation or funeral?***

The preparation of the deceased can involve a number of different tasks performed by trained and licensed embalmers and restorative artists. Without going into too much detail; the body is temporarily preserved by embalming, refrigeration, or a combination of the two. It is washed, dressed and otherwise groomed; then placed in the chosen casket for viewing. Should you wish to know more about the process, contact us. There are also many excellent articles online describing the process in greater detail.

### ***If it makes people uncomfortable, why is it necessary to view the body in the casket?***

Human beings are interesting creatures: sometimes we need to see in order to truly believe. It's a way of confirming the fact that, indeed, this individual is dead; but it's also an opportunity to say your "good-byes". You may find it a cathartic time where you can quietly share a long-held secret, let go of any anger or resentment, and otherwise come to terms with their death.



### ***How long is a funeral service?***

Simply put, “it depends on the service”. Just as no two movies or novels are the same length or cover the same emotional ground; no two end-of-life ceremonies are the same.

### ***How can I best prepare my children to attend a funeral?***

When asked this question, we like to tell people it's best done with honesty and awareness. Let them know basically what they can expect. Advise them there will be people there who will be sad and may cry openly; tell them there will be time for some people to stand up and talk about how much they loved the person (but they won't be required to do so). Let them ask all the questions they need to ask, reassure them you'll be right next to them throughout the experience. Never force them to go to a funeral, and always give them the opportunity to change their mind about attending.

### ***What is a Celebrant?***

The Celebrant Foundation and Institute define Celebrants as “trained professionals who believe in the power and effectiveness of ceremony and ritual to serve basic needs of society and the individual. The Celebrant's mission is to help the client create a ceremony that reflects his or her beliefs, philosophy of life, and personality.” A life-cycle Celebrant is especially valuable when a family has no religious affiliations or ties to a clergy person or minister who can officiate the funeral service. Involving a Celebrant in the funeral planning process has been found to enhance the funeral experience for all concerned. “The Celebrant comes to the table with no agenda,” shares the Institute's website, “and no preconceived notion of what the ceremony should or must look like. Instead, through careful interviewing, the Celebrant elicits what is meaningful for each client.” If you think hiring a Celebrant is the right choice for your family's situation, contact us for more details.

### ***Must I wear black to the funeral ceremony?***

Black used to be the only color to wear to a funeral; but not anymore. Today things are less formal than they once were, and it's not totally uncommon for families to ask prospective guests to altogether avoid wearing black clothing. Should you have additional questions about funeral attire or etiquette, please contact us.

### ***What else would you like to know?***

This list of frequently-asked-questions was compiled through our professional experiences. But really, the thanks go to the hundreds of inquisitive, questioning families and individuals we've had the privilege of serving over the years: people who have asked the most commonly-asked questions you see here. If yours isn't listed here, get the answer you need by calling us at 254-965-3161.



# What To Do First - A Checklist

## *Notify these people as soon as possible:*

- ☐ The funeral home to arrange for the transfer of the deceased (usually this can be done within 1-2 hours although it may take longer to obtain a release from the hospital) and set an appointment with you to make further arrangements
- ☐ Relatives, executor/executrix and friends
- ☐ Employers (the employer of the deceased and relatives who will need time off)
- ☐ Insurance agents (life, health and accident)
- ☐ Religious, fraternal, civic and veterans organizations and unions, if applicable
- ☐ Lawyer and accountant

## *Secure the vital statistics of deceased*

- ☐ Full legal name - other names must be identified by "also known as" (AKA)
- ☐ Home address and telephone number
- ☐ Name of business or employer's name, address and telephone number
- ☐ Industry and occupation
- ☐ Military Service Serial Number
- ☐ Date and place of birth
- ☐ Citizenship
- ☐ Father's name and birthplace
- ☐ Mother's name, maiden name & birthplace
- ☐ Locate the Will

## *Pay for:*

- ☐ Ambulance services, if any
- ☐ Funeral arrangements, including clergy, florist and transportation
- ☐ Cemetery and memorialization services
- ☐ Current and urgent bills (i.e. mortgage, rent, taxes, telephone, etc.)

## *Meet with the funeral home within a few hours to decide:*

- ☐ Whether your loved one is to be buried, cremated or entombed
- ☐ The Funeral Director will ask if you have made any arrangements with a cemetery or crematorium. If you have not done this, you will need to visit the cemetery
- ☐ Service details - would you like a visitation period, formal service, a reception?
- ☐ Whether a member of the clergy will be engaged for the service
- ☐ Casket selection
- ☐ Clothing that the deceased will be buried or cremated in
- ☐ Pallbearers, music, pictures, flowers, scripture or other readings
- ☐ If you would like a charity to receive donations in lieu of flowers

# To My Loved Ones

I wanted to spare you as much anxiety, doubt and confusion as possible at the time of my death, so in this booklet I have suggested some arrangements in advance.

This booklet includes vital statistics, funeral service guidelines and cemetery requests, which are all important to the funeral director while assisting you to plan the details of my service.

I've also included some personal material for eulogies, obituaries and other remembrances.

Please accept these arrangements in the spirit in which they are given; with love, hoping to give you comfort and helping you to remember the times we shared.

Signature: ..... Date: .....

Witness: ..... Date: .....

## First Person To Be Notified Upon My Death:

Name: .....

Address: .....

Telephone: .....

Relationship: .....

Notes:



# Vital Statistics About Me:

Name: .....

Address: .....

City: ..... State: ..... Zip Code: .....

Social Security Number: .....

Date of Birth: .....

Gender: .....

Place of Birth: .....

Occupation: .....

Employer: .....

Business/Industry: .....

Military Service: .....

Marital Status: .....

Maiden Name: .....

Name of Spouse: .....

Father's Name: .....

His Place of Birth: .....

Mother's Name: .....

Her Place of Birth: .....

# My Preferences For The Service:

☐ Stephenville Funeral Home

☐ Reception Room

☐ Place of Worship and Address: .....

☐ Other Location and Address: .....

Clergy or Officiant: ..... or ☐ Funeral Home to Recommend

Name: .....

Contact Information: .....

Personal Items:

Eyeglasses:

☐ Remove

☐ Leave On

Jewelry:

☐ Remove

☐ Leave On

Clothing:

☐ Purchase at the time

☐ Selected

Musical Tributes: .....

Soloist: .....

Organist/Pianist: .....

Congregational Hymns: .....

.....

Favorite Genre or Artist: .....

Community Organizations or Clubs that may participate: .....

.....

# Cemetery Instructions:

Name of Cemetery: .....

Address: .....

City: .....

State: .....

Property, crypt or niche owned?

If yes, specify location written on Cemetery Purchase Agreement:

.....

Final Resting Place:      ☐ Earth Burial                      ☐ Mausoleum  
   ☐ Interment following Cremation      ☐ Other

Marker or Monument: .....

Purchased:                      ☐ Yes                      ☐ No

Monument company name: .....

If no, inscription instructions: .....

Reception Location:      ☐ Reception Room                      ☐ Place of Worship                      ☐ Other

☐ Reception to follow Cemetery

☐ Reception to follow Service

Notes:



# Information For Newspapers - A Guideline:

Place of Death: .....

Date of Death: .....

Spouse, Widow or Widower of: .....

Married for (number of years):.....

Children, their spouses and their places of residence:

.....

.....

Grandchildren, their spouses and their places of residence:

.....

.....

Siblings, their spouses and their places of residence:

.....

.....

Education:.....

Clubs and Lodges: .....

Military Service:.....

Special Interests, Hobbies and Pets, etc: .....

Memorial Donations:.....

.....

# SCOTT'S

## FLOWERS ON THE SQUARE

At Scott's Flowers, we understand the difficulty in sending sympathy flowers. We are here to help you send your condolences with a tasteful arrangement. We also carry a variety of lush green and blooming plants to choose from. Our attention to detail can make any tribute more personal and thoughtful.

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- 200 W. College, Stephenville TX 76401
- [www.stephenvillescottsflowers.com](http://www.stephenvillescottsflowers.com)



**Losing a loved one can be a difficult time for many people. Our aim is to help families deal with the aftermath of such loss in a careful and efficient manner.**

Sueann Porter CPA, PLLC is one of the areas most trusted CPA firms. We are meeting the financial and tax needs of individuals, New Business, Established Businesses, Estates and Trusts, by providing timely, accurate and reliable services. We are accessible and take the time to listen to our clients, their needs and value the relationships we build.

**Services we offer that may help at this difficult time:**

Inheritance Tax Issues, Estate Planning, Retirement Planning

# Glasgow, Isham & Glasgow, P.C.

**Our experienced attorneys and legal professionals have the expertise to guide you through the process of administering your loved one's estate.**

Take our hand and be reassured by our client centered approach during one of life's most distressing times. Having handled Estates both large and small, simple and complex, involving Wills and Trusts, contested Wills, guardianships, out of state assets, and Estates with no Will, you can trust our attorneys when you most need advice and counsel.



Robert J. Glasgow, Jr • Robert J. Glasgow • R. Shay Isham  
505 North Graham Street, Stephenville, TX 76401  
Phone: 254-965-5069 • [www.giglawfirm.com](http://www.giglawfirm.com)



**Stephenville**  
Funeral Home

120 West South Loop,  
Stephenville, TX 76401

Phone: 254-965-3161  
Fax: 254-965-2699

[www.stephenvillefh.com](http://www.stephenvillefh.com)  
[stephenvillefh@embarqmail.com](mailto:stephenvillefh@embarqmail.com)



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# Important Notes

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## Integrity Financial Services

*Trusted Advisors Since 2005*

Office: 254-968-2560    Cell: 254-396-5018

Email: [cary.strohmeyer@ceterafs.com](mailto:cary.strohmeyer@ceterafs.com)  
P.O. Box 1135, Stephenville, TX 76401

**Cary Strohmeyer**  
*Financial Advisor*



## This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

**W** [www.partnerplusmedia.com](http://www.partnerplusmedia.com)



# Integrity Financial Services

*Trusted Advisors Since 2005*



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# Stephenville Floral

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## **Funeral Flowers**

When you order funeral flowers from Stephenville Floral, our skilled and compassionate florist will work directly with the funeral home to ensure that your delivery is timely and accurate. Same-day delivery is often available.

## **Tapestry Throws - Remember loved ones in a unique and personal way**

Tapestry throws create beautiful bereavement arrangements for viewings and memorials. Tapestry pieces available from Stephenville Floral are lasting keepsakes the whole family can cherish. Choose from a variety of throw designs and arrangements to suit your commemoration needs.

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