

Questions to consider when planning a Memorial Meeting for Worship/Celebration of Life at the Chapel Hill Friends Meeting

Because the Care and Counsel Committee is responsible for oversight of Memorial Meetings for Worship, one or more members of that committee will be in communication with family members of the deceased to arrange memorial celebrations. The list below might be helpful to committee members as they work with the family to plan the memorial worship.

1. Are you familiar with the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) and the manner in which we worship? Are you familiar with a Memorial Meeting for Worship/Celebration of Life in the manner of Friends? (If not, an explanation will be provided)
2. Is there time to meet at the Meetinghouse with family members and a member of the Chapel Hill Friends Meeting to show the facilities and review the plans for the Memorial Meeting?
3. Date and time: Is the Meeting house available? Is the adjacent Schoolhouse available if needed? What events are planned at UNC that may impact travel and parking? [The Meeting resident will have information about Meetinghouse availability on specific dates. Check the calendar on the unc.edu website to see if there are campus events scheduled.]
4. Has the family prepared an obituary?
5. Facilities needed: Meeting room? Library? Schoolhouse for a reception? Nursery?
6. Estimated attendance: How many people are expected to attend? The meeting room can seat approx. 100 people. Folding chairs can be set up to increase the capacity to approx. 125. Are folding chairs needed? [If additional seating might be needed, members of C & C should take folding chairs from the Schoolhouse to the library before the Celebration. As guests arrive, committee members can set up additional chairs as needed.]
7. Is childcare requested? A nursery in the basement and a playground are available. How many children may attend? We welcome children to participate in the Meeting for Worship. Do the parents want this? [If requested by the family, C & C can arrange childcare with the assistance of the Children's Religious Education committee. A teen or young adult from the Meeting can usually be identified who is willing to provide this service. The family will cover the cost of childcare.]
8. Will there be a printed program to hand out to attendees? (sample wording available) [C & C will work with the family to create the printed program. The family of the deceased will either prepare the programs or will cover photocopying expenses. If desired by the family, members of C & C and/or Hospitality can be available to pass out the printed program.]
9. Are there particular requests from the deceased or from the family for the Memorial Meeting? Special music? Poetry? Readings? Members of the family may want to share these as they participate in the Memorial Meeting. [There is a piano available in the Meeting room but the family must make arrangements for the pianist.]
10. Set up: Will the family bring a guest book? (podium available)
Will there be flowers? (table for flowers) Provided by family? Or provided by the Meeting? [If the family wants flowers provided by the Meeting, the arrangement will be informal with flowers purchased from the local farmers' market. We need a volunteer to do this.]
Will the family bring photographs or other items to display? (table/tripod) [C & C is responsible for setting up before the worship and returning podium and table to "normal state" afterwards.]

11. Will there be a reception? With food and beverages? If so, is the Schoolhouse available (see #1)? Who will provide the food and beverages? What set up is needed? Tables, plates, cups, punchbowl, serving equipment? Who will oversee the reception? Family/friend/Hospitality Committee members? Who will clean up? [C & C will work with the family and the Hospitality committee to arrange set up and clean-up.]
12. What are the plans for the remains of the deceased? The Chapel Hill Friends has no graveyard. If the deceased has been cremated, arrangements may be made to place the ashes in the Meeting's memorial garden.
13. Fee: There is no cost for a memorial service held for a member of the Chapel Hill Friends Meeting, other than to cover costs that might be incurred for childcare, printing, and flowers. Donations are always welcome. If the deceased is not a member or regular attender of the Chapel Hill Friends Meeting, the rental fee determined by the Buildings and Grounds Committee will apply.