

KEMPTON NEW CHURCH

FUNERAL PREPARATION GUIDELINES:

What To Do When Someone Passes Away

(This document does not contain information on home burial. You are invited to contact Arian Hungaski (610-756-6202) or Penny Rhodes (610-756-6253) if you would like informational support with a home burial.)

- If a person dies at home and has been on hospice, notify the visiting nurse. He or she is authorized to pronounce death and will call the coroner. In all other cases of unattended death (death outside a hospital)—of either a natural or an accidental cause—call 911. This will summon Emergency Medical Services and the police (by law they need to come). If they determine that the person has indeed died and there are no reasons to investigate further, they will summon the coroner, who is also authorized to pronounce death. (Berks County Coroner: 610-478-3280. Lehigh County Coroner: 610-782-3426.)
- If the deceased was registered for organ/body donation, which is time sensitive, follow whatever procedures have already been outlined for this circumstance by the organization that will be handling the donation.
- If a traditional burial is desired, contact the funeral home of your choice. Give them the deceased's Social Security number, date of birth, and the names of his or her parents. This will enable the home to draw up and provide you with the death certificate (as could the coroner, if needed). The funeral director will furnish any number of copies you ask for; it is practical to get at least ten. *(If you need more later, they can be ordered after 30 days from the Penna. Dept. of Health. Calling 1-877-724-3258 will connect you to its Division of Vital Records.)*
- One option for dealing directly with a funeral home that has a crematory:
 - Falk Funeral Homes and Crematory
1418 Main St.
Hellertown, PA 18055
610-838-9191
- The following funeral home is familiar with our burial customs and can also arrange a cremation (they don't have a crematory):
 - Robert S. Nester Funeral Home
8405 Kings Highway (Rt.143)
New Tripoli, PA 18066
610-756-6006

For researching funeral homes other than Nester's, or to arrange a direct cremation with a company other than Falk, the following website seems a good possibility for evaluating options: www.us-funerals.com. *(You may be able to locate a crematory at this website, for instance, that is closer to Kempton than Hellertown is.)*

- The family should ask a minister of their choice to give the *memorial service*, for which he will help arrange a date and time. He will also help with planning an *interment service*, which can be either public or private. (The family is responsible for selecting pallbearers—four to six—if they are needed.) This would also be the time for the family to decide if there will be a *reception* for the public following the service.
- Once the memorial service is scheduled with the minister, call the pastor's office (610-756-6140). This will set the phone chain in motion, notifying the congregation that someone has passed away, when the service will be, and if a reception is planned.
- If the deceased is to be buried in the Kempton New Church cemetery, the family should contact the head of the Cemetery Committee (listed on the back of the Kempton phone directory). This person will assist the family in selecting a grave site. He will also talk with the family about excavation options, as the gravedigger must be approved by the Cemetery Committee. If the head of the Cemetery Committee is unavailable, the family can call the church office for help with all of this.
- Asking a pianist to play for the memorial service is the responsibility of the family. If they want recorded music as well, they also need to ask someone to operate the sound system in the church. The church office can help steer the family toward people with this knowledge.
- The family is responsible for providing any flowers they would like to have at the memorial service and/or the interment service. Sometimes people from the society will offer to help with this if they have flowers in their gardens at the time, but this doesn't always work. The church does not provide flowers, but vases (found in the church kitchen) are available to anyone who needs them for a service.
- The family is responsible for arranging any food and/or drink for the reception, if desired. Friends would undoubtedly help, but the church itself does not make any such arrangements.
- If printed folders are desired for the memorial service, the family—or the minister doing the service—can contact the church office about having them made.
- See also the FUNERAL CHECKLIST (Generic) for further, helpful suggestions.

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