

Mount Vernon Unitarian Church Memorial Services Planning Guide 11/2022

In this time of bereavement, the staff and volunteers at Mount Vernon Unitarian Church (MVUC) offer our deepest condolences to you on the loss of a beloved family member. If you would like to honor your loved one with a Memorial Service/Celebration of Life at MVUC, this guide should ease some of your stress and help to answer most of your questions.

Services to honor loved ones who have passed away are very personal occasions. In Unitarian Universalist congregations, these services are developed by the family of the deceased and the presiding Minister to specially honor the memory of that individual. The services can take place any time after someone's death: from a few days to months later. Memorial Services in the Unitarian Universalist tradition encourage us to celebrate the life of the person who has died. While all services are different, a typical service might include the following elements:

- A eulogy
- Poems and other readings
- Prayer or meditation
- A time to remember the deceased with stories and memories
- Hymn singing or other music
- A time for personal reflection

To schedule a Memorial Service at MVUC, please contact our Church Administrator, at 703-765-5950, ext. 103 or admin@mvuc.org. They will be able to determine if the date you want is available and also to determine if the MVUC Minister, Events Coordinator, Music Director, Sound Tech and Property Manager are available on the date you select. If not, she will work with you to find another date.

Here are some things to consider before contacting the MVUC Administer to schedule your Memorial Service:

- What is the best date and time?
- Who will lead; who will participate?
- Will there be a tribute video, music?
- Will there be a reception following the service?
- What is your budget?

The following pages contain a list of frequently asked questions and answers about Memorial Services at MVUC that should serve as a good guide.

Who may have a Memorial Service at MVUC: Anyone may schedule a Memorial Service at MVUC whether or not they, or the deceased, are a member of MVUC. As explained below, the cost is different for members and non-members.

Whom do I contact to schedule a Memorial Service: You should send an e-mail or call our Church Administrator, (admin@mvuc.org / 703-765-5950 ext #103). They will check the calendar to see possible dates and also determine if the Minister, Events Coordinator, Music Director, Sound Tech and Property Manager are available. If the requester has a preferred date and the space is available but not the Minister, Events Coordinator, Music Director, Sound Tech or Property Manager then the Administrator will evaluate the availability of backups or help the requester find another date.

What if I want to request a specific date: MVUC will try to accommodate your request, but adjustments may have to be made if the space is previously reserved or the necessary staff is not available.

Can the service be held outside: MVUC has lovely grounds, but our weather is fairly unpredictable so families are encouraged to plan for indoor events. Indoor events also afford better acoustics.

Are MVUC's buildings handicap accessible: Yes

Once a date has been reserved, who are my primary contacts at MVUC:

Memorial Service Questions: Amanda Casey, our Events Coordinator, can provide guidance and assistance on all aspects of the event. She can be reached at hollinhallevnts@gmail.com or 703-298-6965.

Service creation: MVUC's Minister, Rev. Christian Schmidt, will help you create the service. If MVUC's Minister is not available, we will help you find another Minister who can assist. Rev. Schmidt can be reach at minister@mvuc.org or 979-450-2477.

Music coordination: Mark Zimmerman, our Director of Music, can assist in selecting hymns and others special music. Mark can be reach at mszofnote@gmail.com or 202-607-3849.

If the deceased is an MVUC member, who will notify MVUC about of the event: Our church administrator will include an announcement in our weekly newsletter. The family needs to provide an obituary.

How many hours am I allowed to use the Church for the service? Use of the Church for a Memorial Service is for four hours. Typically, the use/rental starts one hour before the service. Use of the Church for an additional hour costs \$250.

What is the format of a typical Memorial Service: Each service is individualized to reflect the life of the deceased. In Unitarian Universalist congregations, these services are developed by the family of the deceased and the presiding Minister to specially honor the memory of the individual. A typical service lasts about one hour. The service might include the following elements:

Prelude Music

Welcome by the Minister

Chalice Lighting (Usually lit by a member of the family)

Readings (chosen by the family or Minister. The Minister, family member or a friend can read them)

Eulogy (Written and offered by the Minister, a family member or a close friend. It is an overview of the life of the member. More than a listing of events, it contains stories, and reflections on the values, interests and beliefs of the person as they matured. If appropriate, it may also offer insight into the final months or days of the deceased and how they faced death. About 10 minutes)

Personal Reflections (Usually family or close friends. About 3-4 minutes each)

Music – specially chosen hymns, solos, voice and/or instruments

Community Sharing (An invitation for attendees to come forward and briefly share memories. Usually 10-15 minutes total)

Prayer, usually led by the Minister

Benediction by the Minister

Postlude music

What is the cost of a Memorial Service: The actual cost of a Memorial Service can vary. The following provides an estimate of some of the typical costs. It does not include the cost of Music as that depends on the complexity of the music selected by the family which is explained below. Flowers and the cost of a reception are also extra. The *Costs and Payment Guide for MVUC Memorial Services* chart on the next page recaps costs and provides guidance on check writing.

MVUC Members in good standing pay \$550. This includes the cost of our Events Coordinator who will provide assistance and guidance on all aspects of the event, custodial support, and one audio-visual technician. There is no charge for the Minister or use of the grounds or buildings when the person who has died was an active member of the MVUC congregation. Note: If there is a family member or friend in the immediate area who is willing and able to coordinate the entire event you do not have to hire the Events Coordinator.

Non-MVUC Members pay \$1550. This includes the cost of an Events Coordinator who will provide assistance and guidance on all aspects of the event, the use of the buildings and grounds for 4 hours, custodial support, one audio visual technician, and the cost of a Minister. Although you are encouraged to use a Minister, if you chose not to, the cost will be reduced by \$400.

Costs and Payment Guide for MVUC Memorial Services

(Does not include the cost of Music)

(Flowers and the cost of catering a reception are also extra.)

	Member	Non-Member	Write Check To
4 Hour Building Rental	\$0	\$600	MVUC
Events Coordinator Services	\$300	\$300	Amanda Casey
Custodial Support	\$75	\$75	Derick Spencer
Audio support	\$175	\$175	Volunteer on duty*
Minister	\$0	\$400	Presiding Minister*
Total	\$550	\$1,550	

*Names will be provided prior to the day of the service

What is the cost for music: The Director of Music, Mark Zimmerman, and all musicians will determine their fees based on the complexity of the service, rehearsal time, amount and difficulty of the requested music. Checks are due the day of the ceremony before it starts. The Director of Music will provide the names of whom should be paid and the amount. The minimum cost for the music director is \$250, but this can often be appreciably higher.

What type of music is played at a Memorial Service: Music is typically played prior to the service (prelude) during the memorial itself (in service) and after the service (postlude). The genre depends upon the personal choice of the family. If the deceased had a favorite type of music, such as jazz, classical or folk, the Director of Music will strive to find the music and musicians to fill the family’s requests. Hymns can be sung, with consideration on how well a hymn is known by those attending. Recorded music can also be used and played through the sound system. It is easiest to email the recorded music ahead of the service; or put the music on a smart phone or thumb drive. CD's are also acceptable. Sound techs do appreciate the recorded items the week before.

What type of audio/visual support is available? MVUC has volunteers who will provide the following support:

One Audio Engineer can provide the following. The cost is \$175 and is included in the overall cost of the Memorial Service outlined above.

- *Sound in the chapel (setting up mics and playing recordings)
- *Recording of the event's sound, provided as an MP3 file.
- *Recording of static video (using only one camera angle) provided as an MP4 file.
- *Live streaming using one static camera (using only one camera angle) over YouTube Live

In addition to the above, if you would like a more elaborate recording and live stream as outlined below, we would have to hire a video engineer in addition to the audio engineer (Cost \$175). This cost is in addition to the cost included in the Memorial Service outlined above.

- *Recording of video from 2 cameras with multiple camera angles, provided as an MP4.
- * Live streaming from 2 cameras with multiple camera angles over YouTube Live

May we serve refreshments: Yes, it is common to have a catered reception following the service. The reception is normally held in the area that we call the “Commons” which is right next to the Chapel where the service will be conducted. It is up to you to decide how elaborate it is. MVUC or the caterer can provide 5-foot round or 6-foot rectangular tables. Chairs are provided by MVUC.

Can you recommend a caterer: Yes, you will find a list of approved caterers at the end of this guide.

May we serve alcohol at the reception: Alcohol may be served in moderation and in compliance with the ABC laws of Virginia.

Should there be a printed program for the service: Normally a printed program is created by the family to give to people who attend the service. Typically, the front cover has a photo of the deceased and the program includes an obituary and an order of service.

Is it appropriate to have flowers at a Memorial Service: Yes, flowers are a nice addition to any Memorial Service.

Is there a local florist that you would recommend? While you may use any florist, below is information on an excellent florist who frequently provides flowers to MVUC. The florist will deliver the flowers to the Church the morning of the service to ensure that they are fresh.

The Virginia Florist 703-765-3355: <http://www.thevirginiaflorist.com/>

If you would like, MVUC would appreciate having the flowers used for the Memorial Service donated for our Sunday worship. A note will be put into the Sunday Bulletin acknowledging the donation.

Should we have a guest book: Yes, we highly recommend buying a guest book, as it is a nice remembrance and an excellent way to keep track of who attended the service. We will provide a welcome table for the guest book. Please remember to bring a nice pen.

Is it appropriate to display photos: Yes, it is a wonderful idea to set up a display of photos for the welcome table and/or photos can be displayed on poster boards and placed on easels (MVUC will provide up to 3 easels).

What if the deceased has been cremated, is there a place at MVUC for the remains to be interred: Yes, MVUC has a Memorial Walks on the property dedicated to the remembrance of those we love. This area is about a 3-minute walk from the chapel. Memorialization within the Memorial Walks is open to MVUC members, their spouses, life partners, and immediate family members. If the interment is to occur just prior to the Memorial Service, there is no extra charge for the minister to preside at a brief service at the Memorial Walks. The fee structure is set forth below:

1. Interment of ashes in the Columbarium with name, birth and death dates engraved on the niche cover and name, birth and death dates displayed on the Memorial Walks wall plaque is \$2400.

2. Name with birth and death dates displayed on the Memorial Walks wall plaque only is \$650. Note: This option is used primarily in cases where family traditions call for burial elsewhere.

If an interment is planned, how long does it take to have the niche cover and wall plaque engraved. Typically, it takes about 6 weeks after the order is placed.

If an interment is planned for the day of the Memorial Service, when does this usually occur: Typically, an interment will be held about 45 minutes prior to the start of the Memorial Service. This is usually attended by a small group of family members and the Minister who says a few words. The interment takes about 15 minutes. If the interment is to occur just prior to the Memorial Service, there is no extra charge for the Minister to preside at a brief service at the Memorial Walks. For MVUC members, there is no charge for the Minister to preside at an interment.

Whom do I contact for more information about interment at the Memorial Walks: Please send an e-mail to memorialwalks@mvuc.org.

MVUC Preferred Caterer List

Avalon Caterers International

109 Clermont Ave, Alexandria, VA 22304

Contact: Anita

202-337-2000

www.avaloncaterers.com

anita@avaloncaterers.com

Catering By Seasons

5105 Berwyn Rd, College Park, MD 20740

Contact: Misty Zani

301-477-3508

www.cateringbyseasons.com

Mzani@cateringbyseasons.com

Catering by Windows

5724 General Washington Dr, Alexandria, VA 22312

Contact: Andrew Gerstel

703-519-3500

703-752-9485 fax

dcouick@catering.com

Heart 2 Heart Catering

Northern Virginia

Contact: Mary Beth Franklin

703-302-9511

www.Heart2heartcatering.net

Heart2heartcatering@gmail.com

Main Event Caterers

3870 South Four Mile Run Dr, Arlington, VA 22206

703-820-2028

Info@MainEventCaterers.com

www.maineventcaterers.com

To Your Taste Catering

5701 General Washington Dr, Alexandria, VA 22312

Contact: Diego Delgado

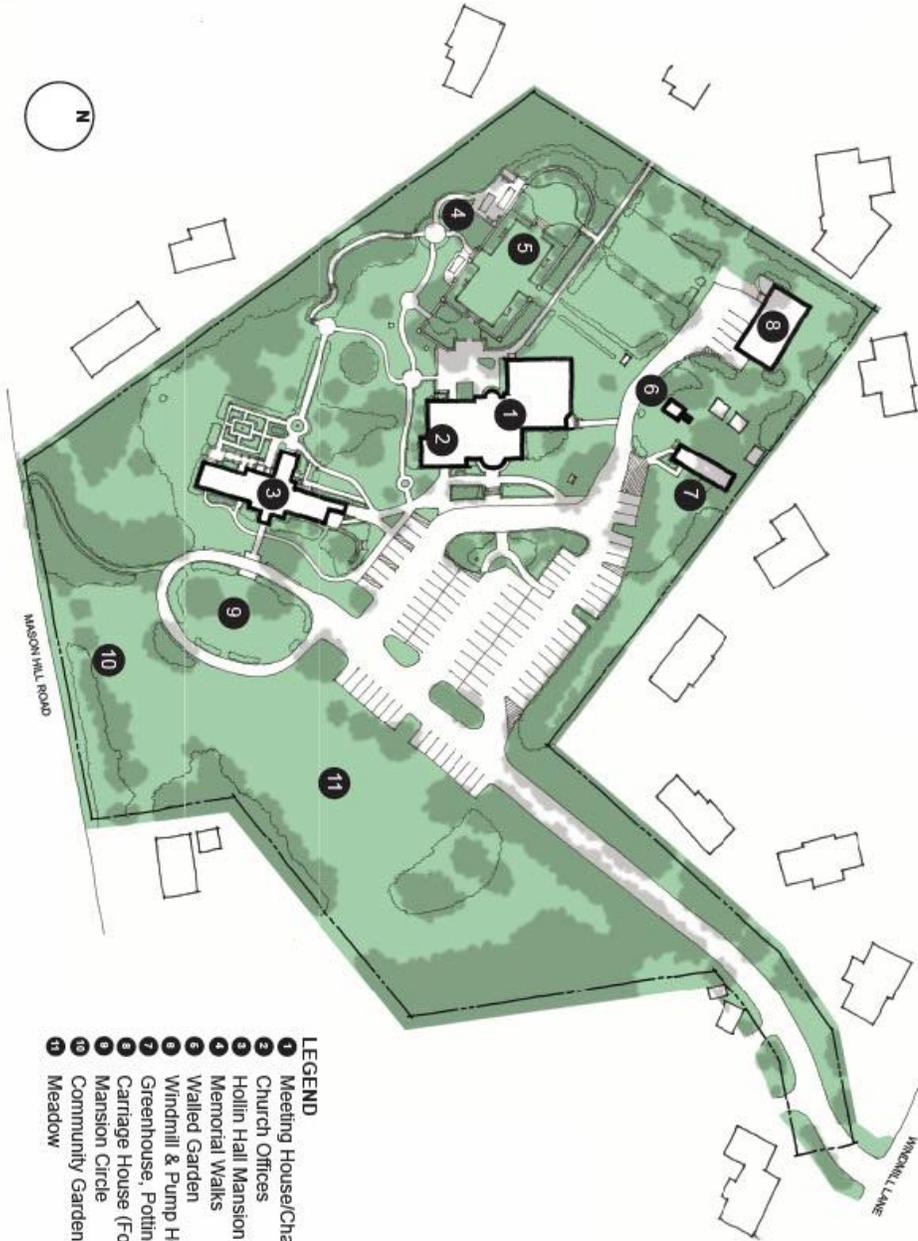
703-539-8646

www.toyourtastecatering.com

diego.delgado@toyourtastecatering.com

MVUC GROUNDS

1909 WINDMILL LANE



- LEGEND**
- 1 Meeting House/Chapel & Commons
 - 2 Church Offices
 - 3 Hollin Hall Mansion
 - 4 Memorial Walks
 - 5 Walled Garden
 - 6 Windmill & Pump House
 - 7 Greenhouse, Potting Shed & Garage
 - 8 Carriage House (Fort Hunt Preschool)
 - 9 Mansion Circle
 - 10 Community Gardening Plots
 - 11 Meadow

