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# SANCTUARY

BIRMINGHAM · MI



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P: 248.644.0550  
F: 248.644.0559

300 WILLITS AT BATES STREETS  
BIRMINGHAM • MI 48009-3300

SANCTUARY-CHURCH.COM

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## A Funeral Handbook

*For those not currently within the congregation*

Thank you for considering having the funeral or memorial service for your loved one in our church facility, and in the vibrant context of the Christian faith. A funeral is a sacred occasion of remembrance and thanksgiving for our loved one's life, and we are committed to assisting you and your family during this time. Giving thoughtful consideration to the components and flow of the service while respecting the church building environment will help to create a very meaningful event. This Handbook will help clarify the process for holding a funeral or memorial service at Sanctuary.

You and your family do not have to be members to have a funeral or memorial service at Sanctuary; however, there is a difference in fees for members and non-members. (In order to receive the member fee structure, the person who has passed away, or their parent or child, must have been an active member in good standing of Sanctuary within the past two years prior to the scheduled service date.) To begin the reservation process, please fill out and submit the online form [here](#).

### SUPPORT STAFF

Will Lobb | Creative Arts Director | [will.lobb@sanctuary-church.com](mailto:will.lobb@sanctuary-church.com)

### ABOUT SANCTUARY

*Sanctuary gathers in downtown Birmingham:* a vibrant center for shopping, commerce, and entertainment in the northwest area of metropolitan Detroit. Our members live, serve, and work in a twenty-mile radius from the church facility.

*This progressive-leaning congregation* worships in an iconic English Gothic stone structure at the corner of Willits and Bates Streets, just one block north of Maple, east of Southfield Road, and west of Woodward Avenue. An inspiring place for worship, the sanctuary offers warmth and interpersonal engagement as well as space to encounter God.

*Sanctuary prides itself as a welcoming and open church for all people.* We are not a church that tells people what to believe, but rather one that creates a safe place for people to explore faith and the important questions of life. We would be delighted if you would like to be our guest and worship with us at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday mornings.

## **SCHEDULING THE SERVICE**

We understand that planning a funeral service often occurs within a short period of time, and those involved may feel stress, anxiety, grief and a range of emotions about the loss of a loved one. A funeral often takes place within the first several weeks after the death, while a memorial service is often scheduled later, at a time that is more convenient for the extended family and friends.

You may request a specific date and time for your service, but your requested date is not confirmed until it has been cleared with the church calendar and we have received your building use fee (if applicable) and signed building use agreement. If you would like Sanctuary to provide a pastor to officiate at your service, please let us know. Our pastor usually schedules a time to meet with one or more members of the deceased's family to plan the service, to understand any needs for musicians or other support for the service, and to review any information about the deceased which you would like to be mentioned by the pastor.

Funerals may occur on any day of the week, generally between 11:00 a.m. and 4 p.m. and take approximately an hour. Funerals on Sunday are only available after 1:00 p.m. and are reserved for members.

No funerals are scheduled on specific holidays (federal holidays, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas, New Year's Eve, or New Year's Day), or during the week prior to Christmas or during the week before Easter. Once the date has been accepted by the church, a building use agreement will be provided to you for your review, and a signed copy of the agreement should be submitted with the building use fee.

The church will be open and available to you two hours before the funeral and for an hour after the funeral, unless otherwise agreed.

## **SERVICE PREPARATION AND OFFICIANTS**

If you will not be using a pastor provided by Sanctuary, or if you wish to include an additional minister, priest, Deacon or rabbi at the service, that can be permitted. Those conducting the ceremony or assisting with the ceremony must be fully ordained clergy. Where an additional minister will be involved, the Sanctuary provided pastor will direct the service. You are expected to ask any assisting clergy to contact our minister for necessary orientation.

If your service will be conducted by your own minister, a meeting with the church Creative Arts Director is required to review the plans, including required technology support, for the funeral. The Creative Arts Director may include a Sanctuary pastor in the review to ensure the ceremony plans reflect the sacred nature of a funeral or memorial service in our facility.

## **USE OF THE BUILDING AND ORDER OF SERVICE**

Each funeral or memorial service has use of the facility for a total of 4 hours. We are happy to provide you a tour of the building and to answer any questions you may have about your use of the building during your allotted time period. Along with reserving the sanctuary, the Parlor will also be available for a time before and after the service.

Usually, in the case of a funeral, the casket will come to the building at least an hour before the service. If the body will lie in state at the church, this takes place in the Parlor, with the casket in front of the fireplace. The family may greet friends there. Following that time, the family may wish to have a prayer with the pastor or officiant and the casket will be closed.

At the time for the service, the family will be escorted into the sanctuary by the funeral director (in the case of a funeral). They are to be seated in the second pew from the front on the pulpit side. The service will be conducted on the basis of the planning with the pastor and the family, including any music which has been arranged with the Creative Arts Director.

If you would like the church to prepare and print the order of the service, the materials should be provided to the church several days in advance of the service to facilitate production.

If you would like to offer hospitality to your guests, Fellowship Hall is available. Please work with the Creative Arts Director for any planning.

No alcoholic beverages may be served or used on the church property. Smoking is not permitted on the property.

## **SERVICE DECORATIONS**

Our sanctuary is a special setting for funerals and memorial services. Any decorations used in the worship setting must be temporary and be removed by the family or service providers after the service. Please discuss the moving of any furniture or other items in the worship space or church building with the Creative Arts Director.

The family is responsible for arranging any flowers received for use in the funeral or memorial service. Flowers are often placed on the baptistry ledge, on the communion table, or other small stands. Please do not place flowers or decorations on the organ or piano. The church will be able to accept floral deliveries only during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, and two hours before the time of the service, if the service is on a Saturday.

If you wish to use candelabras in your decoration plan, your florist may be able to furnish them. Dripless or spring-loaded candles are required according to the fire regulations of the City of Birmingham. Any other candles must be contained in a glass container.

Picture boards or similar items celebrating the memory of the deceased may be placed in the Parlor or the Welcome Center. If desired, the Church has easels which may be used for this purpose. If a continuous feed video or digital slide presentation is desired, please work with the Creative Arts Director on those requirements.

## **SERVICE MUSIC**

You may use your own recorded music for the service. Any recorded music should be provided to the Creative Arts Director prior to the service and should be in the agreed format. You may contact our Creative Arts Director to discuss options for musicians, solos, or ensembles. Music should reflect the sacred nature of the service.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

The sanctuary seats approximately 280 people, subject to any then current health regulations related to large gatherings. There are 17 pews on either side of the 75-foot center aisle. There is no air conditioning in the sanctuary. The sanctuary is handicapped accessible through an elevator located at the north lower entrance of the church or through the Welcome Center door on the main level. However, there are several steps leading from the main floor of the sanctuary to the nave; if the nave needs to be accessible by wheelchair, the church does have a ramp which may be used.

A Birmingham city lot and parking structure (the North Old Woodward lot) is adjacent to the church, and another city parking lot (the Chester Street parking lot) is located two blocks south of the church. (On street parking in Birmingham is very limited.) While the first two hours of parking in a city lot are free, a credit card is required to enter and exit the parking lot. When sending invitations, it is helpful to include directions and information about parking in the city lots. Service providers are encouraged to call the church for information about parking in the alley behind the church, or prior to making deliveries.

Arrangements should be made with the City regarding the plan for the processional to the cemetery, if that is occurring.

## **SERVICE FEES**

The fee for use of the sanctuary for a funeral or memorial service for non-members is \$200; there is no facilities charge for members, although they may wish to make a contribution to the church for use of the facilities. Payment of the fee for use of the facility is due at the time the date for the service is confirmed. All other fees are due prior to the service date or may be delivered prior to the service to the Creative Arts Director and/or Pastor.

Please make out separate checks to the individual performing each role listed below (names of such individuals will be provided at the time the checks are due). Specific fees for the organist/pianist, musicians and sound technicians will be determined after discussion with the Creative Arts Director.

- Sanctuary Pastor \$300 (preparation and conduct of service)
- Organist/Pianist \$200-\$400 (if requested)
- Additional Musicians contracted for by the Creative Arts Director after agreement with you on musician fees and extent of live musical components
- Sound Technician \$50-\$200 (if necessary)
- Secretarial Services \$50 (if required for production of a service program)

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A safe place to explore faith.

*updated January 2023*