

PROTESTANT CHRISTIAN FUNERAL TRADITIONS

Protestant Christian funerals can be as traditional or unique as the person being celebrated. While some choose a traditional service where a minister leads the service in a church setting, many are choosing a more personal celebration. Personal details, simple or extravagant, can allow friends and family to celebrate and honor the unique life of the individual, even in the midst of grief.

Protestant funeral customs

Protestant funerals center on celebrating life, rejoicing that a loved one is now in Heaven. Protestant Christian funerals are often held in a place of worship like a church or in the chapel of a funeral home. A viewing, also called a visitation, may be held the day before as well as immediately preceding the service. An open [casket](#) may be present, allowing friends and family closure and finality by saying goodbye and paying respects to their loved one. Sometimes, a viewing is held with a closed casket, an urn or simply pictures of the loved one.

Services can be conducted by a trusted minister, trained celebrant or by a family member. Friends and family sing songs of faith and hope, and speakers chosen by the family deliver a eulogy, scriptures, readings and prayers. Increasingly, open mic times are included to allow attendees to share a memory, story or reading to honor the person. Funerals can conclude at the indoor service or continue at the cemetery or other gathering space.

After the funeral, family and close friends frequently gather to eat and reminisce. [Food](#) may be provided by friends to help care for and ease the burden of family members. These gatherings are informal and unstructured. They can be held at a church, the funeral home or at the home of a family member.

While there are certainly commonalities, Christian funerals aren't all the same. Some are very sober and somber. Others are lively and celebratory in tone. Many have aspects of both.

Planning a Protestant funeral

If you are planning a Protestant funeral for a loved one, consider adding personal elements to the service. Let your imagination be your limit to planning a [celebration of life](#). Instead of a traditional location, consider hosting the funeral on the shore of a nearby lake where your husband loved to take the grandchildren fishing. For your mom who always served others, ask attendees to donate to a local charity that she volunteered with regularly. If daisies were your aunt's favorite flower, consider handing each guest a flower to take home with them as a memento.

Simple touches like reading a favorite poem, singing a favorite song, having an instrument play in lieu of recorded music or simply offering a time where family and friends can share a memory can be meaningful.