

***HOME-GOING CELEBRATION  
PLANNING GUIDE***

**ALLEN TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH  
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OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA 94621**



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Pastor Emeritus**

**Effective July 29, 2010**

## *We Are Praying For You*

The death of a loved one most assuredly brings grief and sorrow to us all. When we love others, we experience pain when they suffer, and grief when they enter into the ultimate passage that we call death. However, as Christians, our grief is not an experience of defeat or futility, for we know that “to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Phil. 1:21.) We know that the human body is but an earthly tent of temporary residence, and that “If the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. (2nd Cor. 5:1). This means that our grief (as painful as it may be) is yet tempered with hope and we do not grieve in the same manner as others who are without hope. (1st Thes. 4:13). Therefore, let us remember the assuring words of our Lord, “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted” (Matt: 5:4).

Now, as you make the final earthly arrangements for your loved one, we provide you with this brochure which lays out the planning steps for a Home-Going Celebration at Allen Temple Baptist Church. We are committed to helping you plan and experience a Home -Going Service that will honor your deceased loved one, as well as Jesus Christ, Our Lord.

Please know that your Family Deacon, the Congregational Care Ministry and the Pastoral Team are available and at your service. You and your family are in our prayers.

### **This guide lays out the planning steps for the Home-Going Celebration, Repast and other Bereavement Ministry Services at Allen Temple Baptist Church.**

We are committed to assisting the families of this congregation in their time of grief. If you have any questions not addressed in this guide, or find yourself confronted with extenuating circumstances as you plan the Home-Going Celebration, please be assured that the Bereavement Ministry Team will prayerfully work with you to provide answers to your questions and solutions to your challenges in accordance with the dictates of our faith and the policies of the Church.

Please note that Allen Temple does not provide funeral services for non-members. It is the policy of Allen Temple Baptist Church to bury her own members and to refrain from the unethical practice of interfering in the ministry responsibilities of other pastors and congregations. Exceptions may be allowed under extenuating circumstances at the request of an outside pastor who contacts us on behalf of a bereaved family in his/her congregations.

### **MAKING FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE ALLEN TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH**

#### **Step 1: Contact the Church.**

When loved ones are called home to Glory, please call your assigned Deacon, or you may contact the church at one of the following numbers.

Church Office	510-544-8910
Congregational Care	510-544-8915
Bereavement Ministry	510) 544-8919 or
Email:	bereavementministry@allen-temple.org

#### **Step 2: The Bereaved Family will be contacted by the Bereavement Ministry Team**

- (A) Bereavement Ministry Team members will offer the first response on behalf of the Church by extending condolences and praying with the person(s) who called.
- (B) The Bereavement Ministry Team members will then refer the family to the Allen Temple Pastoral Team, the Family Deacon, and/or the Grief Minister as needed.

#### **Step 3: Family Meeting with the Bereavement Ministry**

- The Bereavement Ministry Team Member will schedule a meeting with the family to plan the Home-Going Service and to coordinate other ministry services.
- The bereaved family will inform the Bereavement Ministry as to how many family members will be present at this meeting.
- The family will designate one spokesperson who will have the authority for making arrangements with the Bereavement Ministry Team. The Bereavement Ministry Team will carry out all arrangements through the designated person in order to avoid conflicting instructions and information. In the event that the family cannot come to agreement in selecting a spokesperson, the Bereavement Ministry will recognize the legal “next of kin”, as the decision maker.

- The family will be informed as to what they need to bring to the meeting in order to have a timely and fruitful outcome. The Bereavement Ministry Team Is prepared to guide the family in this endeavor.

- Draft of the obituary** (The “Remembering” section); names of those who will participate in the Home-Going Service, as well as the names of the pallbearers and the location for the interment, if there should be any.
- If possible, the family is asked to provide the name and telephone number for the company that will be used for printing the program, as the Church does not provide this service. If the family does not know of a printing company, the Bereavement Ministry can provide a list of several reliable companies.
- Policies and Procedures** for the Home-Going Services will be discussed at this meeting. These policies and procedures include the following:

#### **SCHEDULE FOR HOME-GOING SERVICES**

Because of challenging schedule and custodial demands placed upon Allen Temple facilities, Home-Going celebrations are scheduled on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays of a given week, and generally begin at 11:00 a. m. Given our scheduling constraints, it is rare that exceptions can be accommodated.

#### **PLACE OF GATHERING**

The Bereavement Ministry will advise the family where they may assemble prior to the beginning of the service.

#### **MUSIC AND MEDIA SERVICES**

- The organist is provided by the Church.
- The family is free to bring in their own soloist(s) or utilize soloist(s) provided by the Church.
- The Media Ministry will provide basic audio (sound) services for the Home-Going Service. However, fees may apply for any additional media services which require equipment rental or additional staff (i.e. video presentations during the Home-Going Service or during the Repast held in the Family Life Center.) These fees are set forth in the media request form found in the Church office. Also, the Media Ministry requires at least 72 hours (3 days) advance notice in order to accommodate special requests beyond basic sound. Any special recordings or video presentations should be submitted to the media ministry within this 72 hour time frame.

## **SPEAKERS**

All programmed speakers are to report to the Church office, in the sanctuary, 15 minutes prior to the beginning of service.

- Speakers who are identified on the program to bring expressions are to limit their remarks to two minutes.
- In situations where families elect not to designate individuals to bring expressions, they may desire to open the floor for people in the audience who are desirous of sharing. Each speaker is limited to a maximum of two minutes. The presiding Minister may stipulate the number of speakers that will be permitted. This control of time is essential to comply with interment schedules.
- If desired, families may elect not to have anyone make expressions.

## **CLERGY SERVICES**

1. The officiate or person who presides over the service will be a member of the Pastoral Team.
2. The eulogist will be the Pastor of Allen Temple or a member of the Pastoral Team who has been approved by the Pastor. The Pastor has shepherding responsibility for the entire Allen Temple Baptist Church flock, and is responsible for overseeing this sacred duty. Requests for other eulogists must be pre-approved by the Pastor.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

Resolutions that are to be read or acknowledged during the service must be received in the Church office by 10:30 a. m. on the day of the service. Resolutions that are not hand-delivered to the Church, may be faxed to the Church in care of the Bereavement Ministry at 510.544-8918 or Emailed to [bereavementministry@allen-temple.org](mailto:bereavementministry@allen-temple.org).

## **REPAST GUIDELINES FOR FUNERALS AT ALLEN TEMPLE BAPTIST CHURCH**

The Deaconess Ministry is responsible for making arrangements, preparing, and serving the Repast. If the bereaved family requests a repast, the Deaconess Chairperson, or her representative will contact the designated family representative immediately after the family has met with the Bereavement Ministry. Families are requested to provide at least a 72 hour notification to allow for proper food preparation and service. All questions regarding Repasts are to be directed to the Chairperson or 1st Vice Chairperson of the Deaconess Ministry.

## **1. ELIGIBILITY**

Repasts will be provided for bereaved families who meet one of the following eligibility criteria:

- a. The deceased is a member of Allen Temple Baptist Church in good standing.
- b. The deceased is the husband, wife, child, father, mother, foster child, legal guardian of a foster child, or family member residing in the same household (same home address) who is a member of the Allen Temple Baptist Church in good standing.

## **2. SERVICES PROVIDED:**

- a. Food will be prepared to serve a maximum of 50 family members at no cost to the family.

A cost of \$250 will be charged when the number exceeds 50 persons being served, with a maximum limit of 100 persons being served. Information regarding these fees can be provided by the Deaconess Chairperson.

- b. Repasts requested for 35 persons or less will not be served in the Family Life Center, but will be delivered to the home or place of choice within the East Bay Area.
- c. Repasts will not be served for sororities, fraternities, lodges, social clubs, etc..
- d. For families who elect to use catering services instead of the services of the Allen Temple Baptist Church Deaconess Ministry, the family representative should contact the Allen Temple staff at 510-544-3318 for detailed information on procedures, eligibility of caterers, and costs. Catered repasts are not served by the Deaconess Ministry, but are the responsibility of the catering agency.

## **3. LOCATION:**

- a. If space is available, all Repasts will be served in the Family Life Center (with the exception of those involving 35 persons or less). If the Family Life Center is not available, families who desire a repast are responsible for securing an alternative location.
- b. For Repasts held away from the Church campus (including homes), the Deaconess Ministry will provide and deliver all cooked food, desserts, and beverages in containers, as well as all serving materials such as; plates, forks, knives, spoons, napkins. However, the Deaconesses will not be available to set up or serve meals away from the Church campus.