

Planning a Funeral at Blackhawk

Blackhawk is honored to host funerals for those who attend Blackhawk, including visitations and funeral receptions. These guidelines outline the process and available options for honoring your loved one at Blackhawk.

Preplanning

As an option, [this form](#) allows individuals and/or families to preplan funeral services. The information you provide is maintained by the Care Team and, when the time comes, is used by pastoral staff to guide planning. Submitting a form does not guarantee these details, but it does help us understand your preferences.

Notification

At the time of death, loved ones should contact Blackhawk Church at 608-828-4200 to arrange a meeting that includes a pastor, the family, and (if applicable) the funeral home. If calling after office hours or on a weekend, follow the prompts to leave a message for the pastor on call. This meeting can take place at the hospital, at home, or at the funeral home (wherever is most convenient for the family).

Through the planning process, a Blackhawk pastor will be the family's main point of contact with Blackhawk, and will coordinate with applicable individuals (facility scheduling, tech, funeral home, etc.). Blackhawk highly recommends including a funeral home as part of the process.

Determining the Funeral Service Date & Location

The pastor, family, and (if applicable) funeral home will collaborate to determine the date and location of the service. Here are general reservation guidelines (subject to building availability):

Day/Time

For **Monday-Friday** services, the building can be used for five hours between 7 am and 8 pm.

For **Saturday** services, the building can be used for five hours between 7 am and 5 pm.

Funeral services cannot occur at Blackhawk on Sundays, holidays, or holiday weekends.

Spaces

At **Blackhawk Brader Way*** (9620 Brader Way, Middleton), the following spaces are available: Eastside auditorium, Westside auditorium, and Fireside room.

At **Blackhawk Fitchburg*** (5935 Astor Drive, Fitchburg), the following spaces are available: Auditorium, Gathering

Additionally, Blackhawk pastors can lead funeral services held at funeral homes in the Madison area.

* Note: Blackhawk has facility use guidelines for any reservation, including funerals. See the Facility Use Guidelines section for more information (pages 4-5).

Determining a Funeral Reception (optional)

We value the importance of friends and family gathering to laugh, cry, and share memories after the loss of a loved one. As part of the grieving process, you could consider a reception following the service.

Based on building availability, we offer two reception options, both held in the atrium with existing seating. Refreshments are purchased by the Blackhawk Reception Coordinator from Hy-Vee or Costco, paid for by the family, and served by our Hospitality Team.

A dessert and beverage reception includes cake or cookies, as well as coffee and water.

A luncheon reception includes pre-made sandwich platters with condiments, chips, veggies and dip, fruit, cookies, coffee, and water.

Additional food or beverage items may be requested, subject to availability. We can also provide light snacks for immediate family (e.g., granola bars, cheese sticks, or fruit). These items are also paid for by the family and coordinated through the Funeral Reception Coordinator.

Please note: due to health regulations, our onsite kitchen may only be used for prepping or plating food, not for cooking or full food preparation.

Planning the Funeral Service

This sample schedule serves as a suggestion and can be modified based on the family's request and Blackhawk's building/staff availability.

- 9:15 am | Family arrives
- 10 am | Visitation
- 11 am | Funeral service
- 12 pm | Funeral reception (options outlined above)
- 1:30 pm | Wrap up

Additionally, this sample service order serves as a starting point for the funeral service. The officiating pastor will collaborate with you to finalize the service order.

- Welcome and Prayer (Pastor)
- Scripture Reading (Pastor or family member/friend)
- Special Music or Hymn (Recorded or live musician)
- Reading of Obituary **or** Sharing of Memories
 - The family can invite 2-3 people to share memories, each lasting 2-3 minutes. It typically works best if the memories are written down ahead of time and read during the service.
 - If family members/friends do not share memories, the Pastor (or another appointed person) may read the obituary aloud.
- Prayer of thanksgiving in response to memories/obituary shared (Pastor)
- Bible message (Pastor)
- Explanation of Other Elements (Pastor provides other necessary instructions, such as reception details or where to direct donations in memory of the deceased)
- Closing Prayer (Pastor)

Supporting Staff

In addition to the officiating pastor, these Blackhawk staff roles are present to support a smooth service.

Funeral Coordinator and Funeral Reception Coordinator

For the day of the funeral, a Blackhawk-provided Funeral Coordinator and (if applicable) Funeral Reception Coordinator will be present to support logistics.

Facilities

In preparation for and on the day of the service, Blackhawk Facility staff ensure setup and cleanup of Blackhawk assets. Depending upon facility entry time, Blackhawk Facilities staff may not be here upon arrival; however, Facilities will be present with ample time prior to the service, through the service, and after to clean and reset used spaces for the next ministry event.

Tech

Blackhawk's standard funeral Tech services include managing microphones, lighting, playing music, displaying requested media (e.g., slideshow, images). Tech staff will complete some preparation in the days leading to the funeral (noted below) and then will arrive 60-90 minutes before the service to ensure tech needs are managed.

If individuals/families have specific music or media for the service, these items should be provided to the Funeral Coordinator at least two business days prior to the service, who will provide it to Tech staff. Most Tech staff work Sunday-Thursday, so any media prep occurs within that timeframe.

- *Music (recorded/files/tracks):* provide via Dropbox (link provided by Blackhawk) or Spotify playlist.
 - *Note:* Blackhawk can project worship music lyrics on request, but cannot project secular music lyrics due to copyright laws.
- *Video/picture slideshow:* provide video file in .mp4 format via Dropbox (link provided by Blackhawk). Please no PowerPoint, Google slides, individual photos, or other presentation formats. Video files should have high-quality compression and be in 16' x 9' aspect ratio. The same video file will be used in the service space and Atrium (if desired). Blackhawk accepts one video file to play in all spaces.
- *Static images (limit 3):* provide high-quality jpeg image files via Dropbox (link provided by Blackhawk).

Beyond these standard services, we also offer the following options. Additional fees apply for these optional tech services, and they are only available for funerals that occur in the Eastside auditorium (Brader Way), Westside auditorium (Brader Way), or auditorium (Fitchburg).

- A basic 1-camera wide shot recording of the service. (Approximately 2-4 days after the service, the recording is shared via a temporary link that will be available for 2 weeks from distribution. The file must be downloaded and privately saved by the family within the 2-week timeframe, as Blackhawk does not save these files long-term.)
- On rare occasions due to extenuating circumstances, a livestream. The officiating pastor will collaborate with the family and Tech staff to determine if this is an appropriate option.

Musician

Individuals/families may arrange for a musician. Blackhawk will do our best to coordinate a musician from our staff to lead music, though we cannot guarantee availability.

Cost

The total cost varies based on service details (e.g., location, number of musicians, whether there is a reception). Itemized fees are as follows:

- **\$400** | Officiating Pastor
- **\$200** | Funeral Coordinator
- **\$125** | Funeral Reception Coordinator
- **\$150** | per Musician
- **Varies by selection** | Tech
 - \$150 | No recording or livestream
 - \$300 | Single camera wide shot recording and/or livestream | Available in Brader Way's Eastside and Westside auditoriums, and in Fitchburg's auditorium
 - \$125 | Multiple camera livestream (in addition to \$300 single camera livestream) | Available in Brader Way's Eastside auditorium only | Includes recording
- **Varies by selection** | Reception and/or family refreshments
 - On the day of the funeral reception, Blackhawk will provide receipts for reimbursement of refreshment costs to the Funeral Home or a family representative. When writing your check, please make it payable to Blackhawk Church, and include the last name of the deceased in the memo line (e.g., "Smith Funeral Reception").

Facility Use Guidelines

Space Setup

In **auditoriums**:

- *Seating* | We provide typical Sunday seating, without modification.
- *Lighting* | We provide typical Sunday lighting. We do not accommodate special lighting arrangements.
- *Stage* | We clear the stage, with instruments removed upon request. Tables can optionally be onstage.
- *Décor* | We keep standard stage décor/backdrop and holiday décor in place, without modification.

In **non-auditorium spaces** (Fireside, Gathering):

- *Seating* | We provide standard chair seating from a selection of standard layout options.
- *Décor* | We keep standard décor and holiday décor in place, without modification.

Decorations

If a funeral home is engaged, funeral home staff often help set up memorabilia, floral arrangements, funeral folders, and other materials. If funeral home support is not engaged by the family, Blackhawk is unable to assume these responsibilities, so loved ones are welcome to bring and arrange their own décor as part of their plans. When doing so:

- Tape cannot be used on walls, doors, glass, or fixtures.
- Staples, tacks, and nails cannot be used on wood surfaces.
- Candles must be contained in glass hurricanes.
- No rice, confetti, glitter, or similar items can be used indoors or outdoors. Bubbles can be used outdoors.
- Fire protection practices must be followed, including thoughtful selection and use of extension cords, decorations, and other materials.

Blackhawk does not provide storage space for décor or supplies, so we ask that all personal items be taken with you at the conclusion of the service (including flowers and plants). If a funeral home is engaged, funeral home staff often help with the donation of floral arrangements and leftover reception food.

Vendor Coordination

Individuals/families are responsible for arranging and managing any vendors (e.g., flowers, funeral home). While engaging the support of a funeral home is the family's responsibility, the officiating pastor will communicate with the staff of the chosen funeral home for planning and coordination.

Other

- Consumption of alcohol is prohibited. If partaking in communion, please use grape juice.
- Smoking is prohibited on church property.
- Activity must remain in public or reserved spaces.
- Exterior doors may not be propped open.
- Hallways, exits, stairways, and walkways must be free of obstruction.
- Blackhawk Brader Way's parking ramp (upper and lower) is off limits to buses. The lower level west service entrance (door #11) is available for bus loading and unloading.