

The Messenger

N. Ft. Myers Church of the Nazarene

A loving, caring, serving community of believers in Jesus

May 2021 ~ Volume 11, Issue 12

The Value of a Funeral

The first funeral I ever attended was in memory of my paternal grandmother. I was a freshman in college in Nashville, Tennessee, and the service was in Texarkana, Texas. Of all the memories from that service, the most cherished moment for me was riding in the procession to the graveyard and seeing every car on both sides of the road from the funeral home to the cemetery pulled over to the side of the road. Every person from every car, all ages, were standing outside their cars, most with their hands over their hearts. If a man had a hat, it was also held over his heart. Every police officer taking part in the procession was standing at attention outside their patrol car as well.

To say I was moved to tears does not come close to describing the emotions that overwhelmed me as that time of remembrance drew to a close. However, as my father and I drove back to Tennessee, I was so thankful I had taken the time in the middle of classes and college life to accompany my father on that trip to say our final earthly farewell to that precious lady.

For so long, funerals have been part of the landscape of our lives. People were born, and it was celebrated. People died, and their lives were remembered and grief over the loss was seen as a necessary, if painful, process. Although the tradition may not look like it once did, the services held to memorialize people who have died were once seen as a vital part of life.

Statistics tell us that currently 2.7 million Americans – as many as the population of the city of Chicago – die every year. It only stands to reason that cemeteries are becoming overcrowded. In some large cities in the world, the means of coping with the dead physically have become creative, and a bit eerie. London is now trying out grave-sharing. Venice is now removing bodies from burial plots to make space for the more recently deceased. Israel is building multi-story underground tunnels to house the dearly departed.

At the same time, graveyards hosting centuries-old dead are looking for inventive ways to stay relevant and to fund necessary upkeep as streams of visitors dwindle with each

passing generation. Florida's state government estimated recently that each of its counties has hundreds of cemeteries that are abandoned or have fallen into disrepair.

It may not be surprising that the majority of people in America are choosing cremation. It is a shift that has also rejected the tradition of “old-time” funerals and is embracing a new mindset that looks to only accelerate in the coming years. While it is understandable why people would choose the less expensive option for dealing with their remains, the rejection of having a service of remembrance sets a possibly unhealthy precedent.

The value of a funeral:

- Acknowledges that a life has been lived.
- Allows mourners to remember and honor their loved one in a special way.
- Serves as a central gathering place for family and friends to offer physical and emotional support to one another.
- Helps make room for the grieving process.
- Provides closure for the bereaved.
- Confirms the reality and finality of death.
- Encourages mourners to face the pain of their loss and express their thoughts and feelings.
- Helps survivors to better cope with their grief and enables them to move forward with their lives.

We bury not only to bring closure, but to humanize the ground on which people built their worlds and found their histories. When we don't do it, we have a sense of unfinished business. Think of the lengths to which we go to recover the bodies of fallen soldiers. There is something essential in the remembering and honoring of a life when that life is no longer here with us. Make no mistake, we do not grieve as those who have no hope, but grief is an essential part of living. Let's remember to make space for grieving. B. Garner

May Calendar

- 5 – Return to Wednesday night fellowship and discipleship time
- 9 – Mother’s Day
- 18 – Church Board Meeting
- 31 – Memorial Day



board meeting

Tues., May 18

- | | |
|---|---------------------|
| Ben Bergman | Eloise Garner |
| Ronnie Kiser | Woodby Family |
| June Carsey | Drew Baker |
| Shelby Pickett | Elis Lodge |
| Rev. Greg Story, D.S. | Eileen Massett |
| Paul Jones | Tom Blakeman |
| Dorothy Chapman | Paul & Grace Boling |
| Mark & Kim Barr | Louis Perez |
| Kenny & Gail Goodman | Eileen Jennings |
| Roof Repairs and Sign | Unsaved Loved Ones |
| Those affected negatively by the Corona Virus | |

May Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 05 – Michael & Linda Romano
- 07 – Melanie Kelly
- 08 – Lee Monroe
- 10 – Judi Predko
- 16 – Libby Smith
- 17 – Carl & Lucille Logan
- 20 – Julia Moore
- 22 – Bud Barr
- 26 – Sue Vance-Jones
- 30 – John Haddad

Prayer Needs:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Patrick Lindsey | Phoebe Barr |
| Lisa Koch | Louise Asbury Family |
| Greg Atkins | Anna Marie Anderson |
| Rev. Dan Copp | Cindy Jones’ son |
| Dave Peck | Ernie Rybold |
| Joseph Groves | Regina Williams & Fam |
| Lorraine Jungles | Laurel Chapman |
| The Monroe Family | Our District Family |
| Doug Keuther | The Church Roof |
| Youth, Children’s and Worship Leaders | |



The return of our Wednesday night fellowship dinner and discipleship time is finally here. Starting May 5, at 6:00 P.M. Everyone is invited to bring a dish and join in this very special time of fellowship and the Word.

Check Out Our Church App!
Access sermons, prayer requests, events and more.

1. Download Church by MinistryOne in App Store
2. Search for Our Church
3. Select & Explore!

MinistryOne

