

Planning A Service To Honor Your Baby's Life



*He heals the brokenhearted
and binds up their wounds.*

Psalm 147:3 NIV

Saying goodbye hurts and it heals. Your baby is unique and forever yours. As parents, you will honor your baby's memory through the service you plan.

Your family and your friends may be blessed to share this experience with you. Include them in planning if you can.

Is Embalming Required?

- No. Embalming is not required except in certain circumstances (consult your funeral director).
- Whether or not to authorize embalming is a choice.
- If your baby's body is not embalmed, cremation or burial should occur within twenty-four hours.
- When you are thinking about whether to authorize embalming, consider if other family members and friends may wish to see your baby.
- Some parents are comforted by allowing a time for public viewing and feel this is important, other parents may not.

How Do I Plan a Funeral?

No one is prepared for the death of their baby. AgapéCareSM Cradle can work closely with you and your family to help you plan a meaningful service.

Types of Services

If your baby's body is physically present at the service, it is called a **FUNERAL**.

If you wish to allow public viewing of your baby, embalming will be needed. Funerals can be held anywhere, but are usually held in a church or chapel.

You may want to schedule a special time together with your family and friends before the funeral. This time of reflection, remembrance and fellowship with others is called a **VISITATION**.

A **COMMITTAL SERVICE** at the graveside usually follows the funeral. Some parents may decide to have only the service at the graveside.

You can also choose to have a service after cremation or burial has taken place, instead of a funeral. This type of service is called a **MEMORIAL SERVICE**.

What if Nobody Knows my Baby?

You, your family and your friends can help others to know your baby, by bringing pictures of yourself, your baby's brothers and sisters, grandparents, etc.... Toys, stuffed animals, and items you may have purchased or made for your baby, such as a special quilt or blanket, can be placed in and around your baby's casket or urn, along with flowers, candles, etc. Health care staff who were with you and your baby at the hospital are very conscientious to collect as many items as they can for you, especially if your baby never left the hospital.

Hospital staff may take pictures, make hand and foot prints and moldings, save your baby's identification bracelet, a lock of hair, special gown, blanket, etc. for you. AgapéCareSM Cradle encourages the use of these remembrance items in your baby's service. You may take these keepsakes home after the service is over, in honor of your baby's memory.

We can help you let others know about your baby's life, death and pending services. We can partner with you to notify others through obituary information, by phone, e-mail, social media, private invitation, or other methods that you authorize.

Ideas for a Memorable Service

- Write a letter to your baby. Ask a family member or friend to read the letter at the service.
- Ask your pastor or spiritual leader to outline what he or she will say at the service. Agree together about how long the message should last.
- Choose a song or songs that express your baby's uniqueness and special place in your heart. Print the lyrics and hand them out at the service.
- If you have other children, encourage them to bring toys,

make a card, draw pictures or make a necklace or other handmade item for their baby brother or sister.

- Hold and rock your baby. Your funeral director can help you if you feel unsure about this.
- Have your baby's service audio taped or video taped.

At the Cemetery

You may close the casket for the final time if you wish.

A balloon release at the end of the committal service can be a special and inspiring tribute to your baby's life.

You may choose to shovel the first dirt into the grave. Others may wish to sprinkle a handful of dirt into the grave also.

You may stay at the cemetery until cemetery staff finish filling in the grave, or leave whenever you choose, following the committal service.

After the Committal Service

Mothers, fathers, other family members and friends may return to the cemetery later in the evening for a time of healing remembrance together. A graveside candle lighting ceremony can be especially comforting. A family member or friend may read a poem, Bible scripture or other special reading,

after which parents light a single candle. Each person at their side then lights their own candle in turn off the parent's candle, in honor of the child who died.



Our Mission

AgapéCareSM Cradle reflects Christ's unconditional love by meeting funeral needs and providing bereavement support to families who suffer the loss of a baby.

 **AgapéCareSM**
Cradle

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