FUNERAL POLICY & GRIEF SUPPORT GUIDE

REVISED JUNE 2025









ORCHARDKNOB MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

COMPASSIONATE GRIEF SUPPORT DESIGNED ESPECIALLY FOR MEMBERS



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INTRODUCTION

Christian memorial services and homegoing services are worship services. Their purpose is to worship God and comfort the living. Therefore, the body of the deceased is not required. When the decedent's body is present, the casket may remain open during the wake, but must be closed for the service.

Homegoing Services should be planned with corporate worship in mind. An appropriate Homegoing Service includes hymns, Scripture readings, gospel preached, and prayers. The Senior Pastor must approve all aspects of the service, including special tributes, music, dancing, and rituals.

The church must fulfill all its obligations, including ministering to bereaved families. The Senior Pastor, the church facility, or both may not always be available, but we will do our best to accommodate the bereaved family.

The Grief Support Ministry (GSM) is the direct link between the church and the bereaved family. GSM plans, schedules, and coordinates all funerals and memorial services held at OKMBC to ensure there are no scheduling conflicts.

Providing these guidelines will enhance transparency and public understanding of the church's funeral policy specifically in these three areas.

- 1. The obligations of the church, the Senior Pastor, and associated ministries.
- 2. The role of the Grief Support Ministry.
- 3. The application of the church's funeral policy.



When A Loved One Dies



Our thoughts and prayers are with you during this difficult time. You can count on us to minister and comfort you. Because death is such an important and sensitive time in our lives, we have set up guidelines to assist families through the funeral preparation process. We are available to provide guidance, counsel, and support during your grief season and for at least one year beyond.

To report a death, immediately call the **Church Office at (423) 629-6115** and provide the information listed here.

- 1. The deceased's full name.
- 2. The name of the funeral home servicing the family.
- 3. The name and telephone number of the person designated to make the service arrangements on behalf of the deceased's family.
- 4. The relationship of the designated person to the deceased.
- 5. Whether the deceased person was a church member.

Once your information has been received, the Grief Support Ministry (GSM) will contact the authorized planner and schedule a consultation meeting to plan the homegoing service.

ORCHARD KNOB MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

MEMBERSHIP



Church membership is a formal relationship between an individual and a local church congregation. Being a member of a church reveals: (1) your obedience to God; (2) your submission to the means God has provided; and (3) your service to other members through the use of your gifts. Membership at OKMBC is inclusive, regardless of racial, ethnic, or economic background.

Member In Good Standing

Whenever possible, the funeral or memorial service for all members in good standing will be held at the church. A member in good standing is one whose name is listed on the church membership roll and who regularly:

- 1. Attends Worship and Communion services,
- 2. Contributes financially to the church as recorded by the Church Office; and,
- 3. Participates in fellowship and program activities.

A member shall not be considered "in good standing" if any of the above conditions lapse for six (6) months or more. Individuals who do not meet the "in good standing" definition are considered non-members.

Pages 4-7 contain a copy of "**Article X-Membership**," an excerpt from the church's Constitution and Bylaws which further describes church membership.



Definition of Membership

OKMBC's membership consists of those who:

- 1. Have confessed Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and
- 2. Have been baptized by immersion according to the pattern of the New Testament, and
- 3. Whose names are duly inscribed on the church rolls as maintained by the Church Clerk.

Entering Membership

Individuals may enter into membership in one of the following four ways:

- **1. Baptism**–Being baptized by immersion is a testimony of salvation. It establishes public identification with Jesus and His followers and symbolizes unity with Christ through his death, burial, and resurrection.
- 2. Christian Experience-An individual in good standing holding the same faith may be accepted into membership by a letter of recommendation or dismissal from their former church.
- **3. Reinstatement**–An individual who has not been in active attendance for six (6) months or longer may be reinstated into membership.
- **4.** Watch Care–An individual who is a member of another church holding the same faith and is temporarily unable to attend their home church may be received into membership with non-voting rights and privileges.

Candidates for membership may present themselves at any regular service or activity (e.g., Bible Study, Sunday Worship Service, Sunday School Assembly, etc.). The Senior Pastor, Elders, and Associate Ministers shall confer with each candidate to confirm eligibility and the method of membership acceptance.

Section 1 - Active Membership Covenant

The Active Membership (members in good standing) of faithful men and women is essential to personal growth and an increasing awareness of God's grace and will. As members involve themselves in private and public prayer, worship, baptism, the Lord's Supper, the study of God's Word, voluntary service, consistent giving, free-will offerings, and holy discipline, they develop a deeper appreciation of the Body of Christ and mature spiritually under the following Active Membership Standards.

Faithful Participation–Faithful participation in the corporate life of this local Church membership is a commitment of the Christian to fellow members of the Body of Christ (Ephesians 4:16). A member of OKMBC is bound in a voluntary covenant relationship to shoulder the responsibilities and celebrate the joys of fellow members (1 Corinthians 12:6). A Christian is under a Biblical injunction not to pursue or take legal action against this Church or sue its members in connection with their Church or performance of their Church-related responsibilities (1 Cor. 6:1-8). A Christian is called to speak the truth in love, always ready to confront conflict in the spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation (Mt. 5:21-24; 2 Cor. 5:18, 19; Eph. 4:25-32; Col. 4:6).



Servanthood–A family member of the Body of Christ at OKMBC is to serve Christ. This servanthood is performed in family life, daily work, recreation, and social activities, as well as responsible citizenship, the godly stewardship of property and accumulated resources, the issues of corporate life, and godly attitudes toward all other persons. Each member is called upon to be a witness for Christ in the world (Acts 1:8), a light and leaven in society (Mt. 5:13 - 16), and a reconciler in a culture of conflict. Each member is to radiate and exemplify the Christ of hope. Therefore, this local Church has a moral and spiritual responsibility to nurture its members and to lead them into a full and active church relationship and service.

Maturity–Duly recognized active members forming the Body of believers of OKMBC sincerely and voluntarily believe in and submit to the following Scriptural truths as being essential to the communion and covenant maturity of this local Church family and will, by the grace of God, give all diligence to live in accord with this Assembly of Believers in Christ as follows:

- » Repentance. Repentance toward God and turning from sin. (Acts 11:18; 17:30; 20:21; 26:20; 2 Cor. 7:10; 12:20, 21; Heb. 6:1).
- » Faith. Faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. (Luke 8:12; Rom. 3:21-28; 5:1; 10:10; 16:25, 26; Gal. 3:6-9; Eph. 2:8; Heb. 6:1; 11:6).

Baptism—"And it shall come to pass, that whosever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved...Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost...And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:21,37,38,40,41). (Acts 8:12; 9:18; (22:16); 10:47, 48; 16:15, 33; 18:8; 19:5; Rom. 6:3, 4; Gal. 3:27; 1 Corinthians 10:1, 2; Col. 2:11, 12; 1 Pet. 3:20, 21).

Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls" (Acts 2:21,37,38,40,41). (Acts 8:12; 9:18; (22:16); 10:47, 48; 16:15, 33; 18:8; 19:5; Rom. 6:3, 4; Gal. 3:27; 1 Corinthians 10:1, 2; Col. 2:11, 12; 1 Pet. 3:20, 21).

Receive The Gift Of The Holy Spirit. Reception of the gift of the Holy Spirit, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39). (Acts 1:4, 5; 2:4, 38; 8:14-17; 9:17; 10:44-48; 19:1-17; Gal. 3:14; Eph. 1:13).

Devoted To Teaching-Continuing in the apostles' doctrine or teaching. (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 14:37; 2 Tim. 1:13; 2:2).

Submitting to Scriptural Relationships–Walking in divine love and submitting to the Word of God in all our relationships as commanded in the Scriptures. (1 Cor. 6:1-8; 1 Cor. 13; Eph. 4:1-3, 15, 30-32; 5:2; Heb. 13:7, 17; 1 Pet. 1:22).

Consistence In Monetary Giving–Offerings and Assembling Together. The willing support of the work and ministry of this Body expression by consistently bringing all contributions of freewill offerings, and a conscientious effort to faithfully attend the congregational meetings of this local Church Body. (Heb. 7:1-10; Rom. 12:8; 1 Corinthians 9:1-13, 16:1-2; Mt. 18:20; Heb. 10:25).

Willingly Submit to Church Discipline and or Reconciliation–When necessary, the exercise of discipline in this local Church according to the principles of the Scriptures. (2 Thes. 3:6-15; Titus 1:9-14; 3:10,11; Eph. 6:1).



Section 2 - Discipline

The Senior Pastor will consult with the Elders to determine the following discipline:

- » Prayerfully administer all discipline according to Scriptural precepts (e.g., Matthew 18:1517; Rom. 16:17, 18; 1 Cor. 5:9, 13; 2 Thes. 3:11-15; 1 Cor. 13).
- » Determine when a member is disqualified as an active member in good standing. (See Article X: Membership, Section 4-Inactive Membership).
- » Reinstate a former member to active membership standing. (See Article X: Membership, Section 5, Reinstatement of Former Members).
- » Revise membership records as required. (See Article X: Membership, Section 6, Church Membership Records Updated Annually).

*See Article XIV of the Constitution and Bylaws for more specific guidance concerning discipline.

Section 3 - Dissolution of Membership

A member in good standing shall be considered dismissed from active membership when:

- » **Transfer of Membership Is Imminent.** A transfer of membership and or location is imminent, and a member may request a letter of dissolution addressed to the Senior Pastor acknowledging their membership at OKMBC is in good standing, or
- » Death Occurs. The demise of a beloved member occurs, or
- » **Termination of Membership Occurs.** A member may initiate resignation from their Active Membership Covenant at any time by delivery of a letter requesting their name be removed from the Active Membership Records, addressed to the Senior Pastor, which is effective upon receipt, or
- » Inactive Membership Is Demonstrated. A member asserts any "Inactive Membership" actions under Article X Membership, Section 4.

Section 4 - Inactive Membership

In the event that an OKMBC member discontinues their active commitment by demonstrating an inactive membership status (members not in good standing), or is considered inactive at the discretion of the Overseers and Deacons, they will cease to be a member ipso facto (by that very fact) under the guidance of the Senior Pastor. Any member who violates these membership standards will be disqualified as an active OKMBC member and their name will be removed from the membership roll. Members who are inactive and not in good standing are those who:

- » **Neglect Assembling Together for Congregational Meetings.** Without good cause, willfully absent themselves from the congregational meetings for a prolonged period of six consecutive months or longer (Heb. 10:25), or
- » **Discontinue Financial Support.** Unless otherwise unemployed, discontinued or prolonged inconsistent financial church support (Mal. 3:8-12), or
- » **Refuse Reconciliation of Scriptural Misconduct or Causing Division.** Refuse Scriptural reconciliation of sinful practices (Mt. 18:15-17; Rom. 16:17; Jam. 4:17; 2 Tim. 3:1-5), or
- » **Refuse Spiritual Oversight.** Refuse and or oppose the spiritual authority of the Senior Pastor, Overseer Body, and Deacons Ministry (Heb. 13:17; Mt. 18:15-17; Rom. 16:17,18), or



- » **Doctrinally Depart from the Church Teachings.** Doctrinally departs from the Scriptural teachings held by this local Church expression (Rom. 16:17, 18; Matthew 18:15-17; 2 Thes. 2:1-4; 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; 2 Tim. 4:1-4; 2 Pet. 2), or
- » Violate Civil Laws. Repeated civil law offenses (Eccl. 8:2-4; Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Pet. 2:13-17), or
- » **Discontinue Adherence to Bylaws.** A member who no longer chooses to affirm and agree to the Bylaws of OKMBC.

Section 5 - Reinstatement of Former Members

Former Member In Good Standing–A former member, previously in good standing, desiring reinstatement of Active Membership approbation must make their request known by private consultation with the Senior Pastor and public declaration to the Church Body at any regularly scheduled service.

Former Member Not In Good Standing–A former member, previously not in good standing, desiring reinstatement of Active Membership approbation must make their request known by private consultation with the Senior Pastor and public declaration and reconciliation (Mat 18:15-20) with the Church Body at any regularly scheduled service. Following the Public Declaration and Reconciliation, the Senior Pastor will seek counsel and assistance from the Elders & Deacons' Ministry to determine if appropriate reconciliation steps based on Biblical principles and instructions will be readily accepted for membership reinstatement, and whether or not that individual continues to reaffirm their restored faith and commitment to the OKMBC family (Heb. 12:9-11; 2 Tim. 3:16).

Section 6 - Updating Church Membership Records

Subject to the final approval of the Senior Pastor, membership records are updated and purged in one of two ways.

- 1. Upon request, active members complete and submit the "Record Information Form," or
- 2. A member who has: (1) been previously dismissed, (2) qualified for dismissal, or (3) disqualified themselves due to an action listed under Sections 2 through 4 of this Article.



The Special Member Clause provides that:

- 1. An active member who passes away, or a person who was once active but has moved, is ill, or is shut-in, will receive the Full Funeral Benefit Package described below.
- 2. An active member who loses an immediate family member, who was not a member of OKMBC, can receive the Partial Funeral Benefit Package described below.
- 3. Former members, including those who reside in the city, will be considered non-members. They must obtain services where they have membership, from the funeral home, or the OKMBC rental policy will apply.

Full Benefit Package

- 1. Use of Sanctuary fully staffed.
- 2. Use of Fellowship Hall fully staffed.
- 3. Service Programs.
- 4. Repast for family and close friends (restrictions apply).
- 5. Grief support and counseling upon request.

Partial Benefit Package

- 1. Use of Sanctuary fully staffed.
- 2. Use of Fellowship Hall fully staffed.

Repasts, service programs, and grief support are not included.

(Catered meals or meals prepared and served by the OKMBC Culinary Ministry are available. The cost is determined based on the number of people served plus \$50 per culinary staff member).



HOMEGOING SERVICE GUIDELINES

Planning the Homegoing Service begins immediately once the church receives notification of death involving one of its members. The decedent's nextof-kin or other authorized planner notifies the Church Office and provides (1) the full name of the deceased and (2) the name and contact phone number of the next-of-kin or authorized planner who will act on behalf of the decedent's family.

- 1. The Church Office notifies the Pastor, assigned deacon, and the Grief Support Ministry (GSM) of the information received.
- 2. Within 24 hours, GSM contacts the family's authorized planner to schedule a consultation meeting with the family to assist with planning the homegoing service.
- 3. GSM coordinates scheduling to secure a date and time for the homegoing service, ensuring there are no scheduling conflicts.



Day and Time of Services–We will do our best to accommodate the family based on availability and family preferences within these guidelines. Homegoing services may be scheduled only on weekdays and Saturdays. Homegoing services will not be scheduled on Sundays. Services may not start earlier than 10:00 a.m. or later than 1:00 p.m. and may not exceed one hour.

Family Hour–GSM and the pastoral staff must approve the family hour structure when it is held in the sanctuary before the homegoing service. Family hours may not start earlier than 10 am or later than 12:00 p.m., and may not exceed one hour. The time will be used to seat the bereaved family and greet guests. Remarks and reflections not listed on the official service program may occur during the family hour. The Pastor does not conduct the family hour. Family hours which include open-floor remarks and reflections, organizational ceremonies, and other special tributes will be conducted by an OKMBC staff minister. The family hour must begin and end on time so as not to hinder the start of a timely homegoing service.

Music-The OKMBC Music Ministry shall perform for 10 minutes before the start of the homegoing service, if requested.

Eulogy—The Pastor or his designee shall eulogize all OKMBC members. In the event of the Pastor's absence, the name of the Pastor-approved designee must be provided to GSM.

Pulpit-The Pastor or his designee shall officiate at all OKMBC funerals.

The **Grief Support Ministry (GSM)** plans, coordinates, and schedules all funerals held at OKMBC. If you are experiencing the loss of a loved one, please call the Church Office at: (423) 629-6115



uneral services are designed to meet the needs of the family and every attempt is made to accommodate the family's requests. These are approved Order of Service

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guidelines used for funerals held at OKMBC.

Reflections–Open-floor reflections are not permitted. The family will decide who speaks. A total of three (3) people (including family members and friends) will be allowed to speak for 2-3 minutes each. These names should be provided to GSM during the consultation meeting.



Obituary–The obituary is read silently. Guests are encouraged to read the printed program obituary at the time they receive it.

Poems and Special Readings—The family may designate one person to read. It is appropriate to have one reader. However, a poem or other special composition may be read by another individual. If a second reader is assigned, this person will be counted as one of the three persons allowed to present reflections in number 1 above.

Resolutions and Telegrams–Resolutions and telegrams must be approved by the Pastor. A total of three may be read. One of the three will be from OKMBC. The GSM will consult with the family concerning the other two resolutions to be read. We will acknowledge all resolutions and telegrams received and give them to the family after the service.

Flower and Sympathy Cards–The flower-enclosure cards and sympathy cards will not be read or acknowledged. They will be given to the family.

Music-The homegoing service may only include 2-3 musical selections, either performed by a choral group or by a soloist.

Committal Ceremony–In case of inclement weather, the body will be committed at the church by the pastor or his designee before the benediction and dismissal. Other special services may follow the committal, such as songs, talks, or dove releases at the grave site.

Repast–The repast is typically reserved for the bereaved family, out-of-town guests, and close friends. The meal usually includes a meat, 2-3 vegetables, salad, dessert, roll, and beverage.

Homegoing Programs—The church will provide standard programs at no cost. Programs can be upgraded at the family's expense. The church can also assist with outsourcing and obtaining a quote for the family.

Family Hour–Family Hour & Visitation is usually held at the funeral home. If the family hour is to be held at the church, it may only be scheduled one hour before the service. The family hour should be used for any special presentations not listed in the official order of service. The Grief Support Ministry must approve special presentations in consultation with the Senior Pastor/Elders.

*The Pastor and Elders will determine any instances not covered in this guide.



EXAMPLE-HOMEGOING ORDER OF SERVICE

MUSICAL PRELUDE	
PROCESSIONAL	Clergy and Family
SELECTION	OKMBC Choir
SCRIPTURE RE	ADINGS
Old Testament Ne	w Testament
PRAYER OF COMFORT	
SELECTION	Choir or Solo
RESOLUTIONS/ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	
OBITUARY (Read silently to soft music)	
VIDEO PRESENTATION (provided by family)	
REFLECTIONS: A maximum of three pre-approved nam	es (must be listed on the program; 2 minutes each)
SELECTION	Choir or Solo
EULOG	
(Name of Preacher Position Tit	le Church/Organization)
RECESSIONAL	

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