

GUIDELINES FOR THE BEREAVEMENT COMMITTEE
Bethel United Methodist Church
July 2012

PURPOSE – To provide an organized and shared procedure for the provision of meals to families of Church Members at the death of one of their own. To provide the opportunity for all Members of Bethel to participate in this service.

The Bereavement Committee shall be comprised of a Chairperson, Co-Chairperson, and the leaders of the four to six hospitality Groups (explained below). The Committee will report to the Church Council.

When a death occurs, the Chairperson of the Bereavement Committee shall be notified by the church office or Minister immediately. If the Chairperson is not available, the Co-Chairperson should be contacted or, alternatively, another Committee Member. This person will then check to see if the deceased was in a Sunday School Class or Circle. If so, the respective Class President or Circle Chair will be called. The Bereavement Committee has the responsibility for contacting the family to find out if they would like to receive a meal, or if there are other ways the committee might assist the family.

If a Church Member's death occurs, and a Sunday School Class or Circle wishes to contribute the meal, that group should inform the Bereavement Committee Chairperson that they will be responsible for the meal and arrangements.

Meals will be provided (up to 15 people) in the event of a Church Member's death, or any death in which the deceased's family will be gathering at a Church Member's home or our Church.

The Bereavement Committee shall coordinate the activities of the four to six Church-wide Hospitality Groups that will share responsibility for providing the meals discussed herein.

A list will be compiled of volunteers willing to serve on one of the Hospitality Groups. Good organization and cooperation is a must. A master list of Members will be maintained, Group Leaders appointed, responsibilities listed, needs addressed and flexibility observed. There will be four to six groups comprised of four to six people. Each group will serve for one death on a rotating basis. If more people volunteer to serve on a hospitality group than are needed, back-up groups will be formed for emergencies and to provide replacements.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1) The Bereavement Committee can offer three types of food service: sit-down, buffet, or finger food. (The type of meal will be determined by the number of people to be fed.

2) For ten people or less, the meal will consist of, in appropriate quantities, one meat*, two vegetables, one bread and one desert. For each additional ten people, each category of food will be increased accordingly.

*Meat – hopefully will be paid for with monies contributed by people unable to serve on the Hospitality Groups, but wanting to help. Donations also will be accepted through gifts in honor and in memory of, or to the Bereavement Committee Fund. It is hoped that funds to operate the B.C. can be included as a Church budget item in the future.

3) Methods of serving the food to be offered:

Food delivered to the home – small group, set menu.

Larger meal – buffet, perhaps in the PAB. _____ meals can be provided and _____ people accommodated.

Reception – light finger food, vegetable tray, fruit, beverage.

4) The Hospitality Groups will also be available to help serve the meal and to tend to the home during the visitation or funeral.

The Outgoing Chairperson will “Shepherd” incoming chair for at least the last quarter of their term as Chairperson. If possible, the Committee on Lay Leadership team will seek to identify a current member of the committee who is willing to serve as chair on following years and have them train under current chairperson for up to a year before becoming chairperson.