

Pitt Meadows United Church
Celebrations of Life
(Memorial Services)

Pitt Meadows United Church
12109 Harris Road, Pitt Meadows, BC
604.465.6233

PMUC Minister:

Rev. Bethan Theunissen 604.910.1481

PMUC Host / Community Church Society Booking Agent:

Norma Murray 604.465.9437

Introduction

Pitt Meadows United Church (PMUC) is a tenant in the little white church on the corner of Harris and Ford. The church building and adjacent hall belong to the *Pitt Meadows Community Church Society* and you can rent the church/hall by contacting the *Community Church Society Booking Agent* without any involvement of Pitt Meadows United Church. You would be responsible to choose your own minister or officiant to preside over the ceremony.

If a Pitt Meadows United Church of Canada service is desired, the Pitt Meadows United Church minister is available to officiate at church-related services after adequate planning time with the family. Such services must be officiated by the Pitt Meadows United Church minister, or someone designated by them.

- **Simple Building Rental:** For more information about booking the church building and hall only, please contact the Community Church Society Booking Agent. There is then no need to read this brochure.
- **Pitt Meadows United Church Celebration of Life (Memorial Service):** For more information about a Pitt Meadows United Church service specifically, please read this brochure, and to formalize arrangements, please contact the PMUC minister.

The Context of Faith at Pitt Meadows United Church

At a time of bereavement in families, it is our goal at Pitt Meadows United Church to support people in their process of grieving, to help create meaningful ritual, and to point to God who mysteriously brings life out of death.

The death of a loved one is a time to recall the miracle of life, to give thanks for their life, and to mourn the loss. Informed by the story of the life lived, the gathering becomes a powerful and inspiring Celebration of Life, giving voice to memories of their legacy and unique contribution.

Initial Steps

United Church oriented Celebration of Life) Services in Pitt Meadows are arranged through Rev. Bethan of Pitt Meadows United Church (PMUC). The booking and service logistics are handled through Norma Murray who serves both as the PMUC Host, and the Community Church Society Booking Agent. Please make an appointment to meet first with Rev. Bethan to plan the service, and then with Norma to book the space, and handle logistical issues.

You may want to bring along suggestions for scripture readings, hymns, or any other request for the service, as well as the name(s) of those who will offer words of remembrance or do readings. You will be asked to fill out a form that provides us with critical information for creating the liturgy, and for our records.

Rev. Bethan will spend some time with you to hear about the life of your loved one and any special memories that you have and will build these into the liturgy.

Venue

You have the option to have your Service take place in our heritage church building, or another venue of your choice.

The United Church service will be performed in such a fashion that it is clear that people have participated in an open-minded Christian ritual. Non-religious services will not be performed. Rev. Bethan will be sensitive to the broad spectrum of beliefs from which families come.

The Community Church Society Sanctuary can comfortably seat 80-90 people. There is a wheelchair ramp from the parking lot. For those who cannot attend in person, the service can also be Livestreamed. Another option is to do the whole service on Zoom, and this can be an excellent possibility for those who have health vulnerabilities or live far away. Those without computers can join by landline and at least hear the service.

Presider

You have the option to have Rev. Bethan of Pitt Meadows United Church preside over a United Church based Celebration of Life, or someone designated by her. If you prefer your own officiant, please contact the Community Church Society Booking Agent for a simple building rental.

Length and Format

For planning the service, a guideline will be provided to help prepare tasteful, appropriate rituals, music, and words of remembrance that honour the whole life of the loved one. Some families may wish to have an “open mic” segment during the service or reception which can sometimes be hard to manage; please discuss with Rev. Bethan how an open mic might be incorporated to ensure it's a blessing to all.

We wish to be mindful of the length of the service, as an overly long service can tax the patience and stamina of people already under stress.

Viewing

Some families wish to have an “open casket” funeral service or a viewing of the deceased the day before the service. We believe that the most pastoral setting for this form of farewell is in the more private setting of the funeral home chapel the day before the service. We are unfortunately *unable* to offer an open casket option at the Church. Rev. Bethan may be available the day before by special request to lead in prayers for the person who died and for the family and friends gathered. Please signify if you would like Rev. Bethan to be present for this private time of remembering.

Organizations

As a general rule, an organization's rites are not part of the service that happens in the sanctuary. If desired, following the service, the organization can form an “honour guard” that escorts the casket (or ashes) and the family from the church. Organizations are welcome to offer their unique rites at the cemetery following the committal service. Please discuss this with Rev. Bethan prior to the day of the service.

Appropriate Music

Music can be an important part of the service. If you choose to have music and or hymns, Rev. Bethan will help you choose appropriate options. An organ and piano are located in the sanctuary. If the family does not know a musician, there are local musicians who can be called upon to play at memorials at an extra charge to be negotiated with them. Some families prefer to use pre-recorded music and we are able to accommodate this request if the appropriate licensing is obtained for both in person and podcast use. If recorded music is played, the family is responsible for providing the necessary equipment and operator. A Tech Services person related to our congregation can sometimes be available for a \$75 fee.

Pictorial Tributes

Projection of pictorial tributes is possible. Please discuss this with Rev. Bethan.

Release of Balloons

Please note that Transport Canada does not allow release of balloons on our property.

Memorabilia

We request that memorabilia displayed in the sanctuary be in good taste and approved by Rev. Bethan.

Flowers

Please discuss with PMUC Host when flowers may be delivered and picked up.

Programs

The church does not produce programs. You are certainly welcome to produce your own, or the funeral home is often able to create these.

Reception

The hall may be used for receptions. The congregation and the Community Church Society appreciate any donations but this is not required. Please contact the PMUC Host.

Catering in the Hall

You have the option to choose your caterer. We can also provide a short list of catering options available in Pitt Meadows on request.

Financial Matters

The cost below goes directly to staff and cleaners. Neither the Pitt Meadows United Church congregation (tenant), nor the Community Church Society (landlord) charges a fee, but donations to either are gratefully accepted. In case of hardship with regard to fees, please speak to Rev. Bethan who will take any request to the Church Board.

The fee of \$675 is payable directly to Pitt Meadows United Church, and is disbursed as follows:

- Minister \$300
- Host \$125
- Tech Services \$75
- Admin \$25
- Community Church Society Facility Maintenance \$150
- **Total \$675**

Please ensure that you have booked the Sanctuary well in advance. If you are planning to use the hall for a tea following the service, please ensure you have booked the hall as well with the PMUC Host.

We will abide by policies of the United Church of Canada