

Christian Funeral Planning Guide

A Complete Guide To Planning A Christian Funeral In Singapore

Planning a Christian funeral is, at its heart, an act of love — a chance to give thanks for a life and to hold onto the hope of resurrection even in grief. This guide walks through every stage of that planning, from your first call to us through to the weeks after the funeral, so your family can focus on honouring your loved one rather than second-guessing the logistics.

1. Contact Your Funeral Director First

The very first call worth making, alongside registering the death, is to your funeral director — not the church. Once you engage us, we contact your loved one's pastor or church office on your family's behalf, so you are not the one relaying messages back and forth during an already overwhelming time. If your family does not currently attend a church, we can also connect you with a pastor or Christian celebrant experienced in leading funeral services.

All we need from you at this stage is a little information — your loved one's full name, age, and which church or pastor they were connected to, if any. We take it from there.

2. Choosing A Venue For The Wake

- **HDB void deck** — The most common choice for many Singapore families, and often the most affordable. Your funeral director applies for the tentage permit, sets up chairs, altar and signage, and tears down after the wake. Neighbours are usually informed as a courtesy.
- **Funeral parlour** — A private, air-conditioned hall, well suited to longer wakes, larger gatherings, or families who prefer not to hold the wake at the void deck of their home.
- **Church hall or sanctuary** — If your church has the space and availability, holding the wake and service in the same place can feel especially fitting, and saves your congregation an extra trip.
- **At home** — Possible for landed properties, though less common today given space and logistics.

3. What Your Funeral Director Coordinates With The Church

A funeral director experienced with Christian services will liaise directly with your church so your family isn't relaying messages back and forth. On your behalf, we will:

- Reach out to your loved one's pastor or church office, sharing their name, age, and faith journey
- Confirm the pastor's or celebrant's availability for a wake visit, the funeral service, or both
- Ask whether the pastor has a preferred structure for the service, or is happy to follow your family's wishes
- Check whether the church has its own hall or sanctuary available, in case your family would like to consider it as a venue
- Coordinate with the church's own audio-visual or worship team, if a hymn accompanist or sound system is needed at the venue
- Arrange a lectern, cross, or other worship elements requested by your pastor
- Time the service around any church commitments (such as a Sunday service) if the wake falls across a weekend

- Print and prepare physical copies of the order of service, if your family would like them

4. Planning The Wake, Day By Day

Christian wakes in Singapore typically run for one to five days, depending on your family's preference, the availability of family flying in from overseas, and the venue booked. A typical structure looks like this:

- **Setup day** — The wake venue is prepared: casket placed, altar and floral tributes arranged, photographs and memorial items displayed.
- **Visitation days** — Family receives visitors, often with a short prayer or hymn led each evening. Many families schedule one evening specifically for a prayer or memorial service attended by the wider church community.
- **Funeral day** — The main service is held, followed by the procession to the crematorium or cemetery.

There is no single correct length for a wake. Some families prefer a shorter wake of one to two days; others take the full week to allow relatives travelling from overseas to arrive. Your funeral director can advise on typical timelines once you've discussed this with your pastor and family.

5. Building The Order Of Service

Most Christian funeral services in Singapore follow a broadly similar structure, though your pastor will shape the specifics around your loved one's life and your family's wishes. A typical order of service includes:

#	Element
1	Opening words and prayer, led by the pastor or officiant
2	Opening hymn
3	Scripture reading(s), chosen for their comfort or relevance to your loved one's life
4	Eulogy, delivered by one or more family members or close friends
5	A short message or sermon from the pastor, reflecting on hope and faith
6	A second hymn, or a time of congregational singing
7	Closing prayer and words of committal
8	Recessional, as the casket is carried out for the procession

6. Choosing Hymns And Readings

Your pastor can guide you toward hymns and passages that suit your loved one's faith and your family's comfort. Some frequently chosen options include:

- **Hymns** — "Amazing Grace", "How Great Thou Art", "It Is Well With My Soul", "In The Sweet By And By", or a hymn that held personal meaning for your loved one
- **Scripture** — Psalm 23, John 14:1–6, 1 Corinthians 15:51–57, Revelation 21:1–4, or a passage your loved one often turned to

7. Writing And Delivering A Eulogy

A eulogy does not need to be lengthy or formal — three to five minutes is usually enough, and a few honest, specific memories will move people far more than a broad summary of a life. A simple structure that works well:

- Open with how you knew your loved one, and one memory that captures who they were
- Share a few specific stories or qualities, rather than a list of achievements
- Acknowledge the loss honestly — it's alright to express grief, not just gratitude
- Close with what you hope people will remember, or a final message to your loved one

If speaking feels too difficult, it's completely acceptable to have someone else read words you've written, or to share a shorter written tribute instead. If more than one person would like to speak, agree beforehand who covers which part of your loved one's life, so the eulogies complement rather than repeat each other.

8. Preparing A Printed Order Of Service Booklet

Many families choose to print a simple booklet or single sheet for guests to follow along with and keep as a keepsake. A typical booklet includes:

- A photo of your loved one, with their full name and the years of birth and passing
- The order of service, including hymn titles or lyrics if you'd like guests to sing along
- A short life summary, or the eulogy text itself
- A note of thanks to those attending, and any acknowledgements your family wishes to include

9. Displaying Memories: Photos And Video Tributes

A simple photo display or slideshow at the wake gives guests something warm to gather around, and often becomes a natural way for people to share their own memories with your family. Most funeral parlours and void deck setups can accommodate a television or projector for a looping photo or video tribute — ask your funeral director whether this is included in your package, and how far in advance they'll need the photos or footage to prepare it.

10. Flowers And Tributes

Wreaths and standing floral sprays are a common way for relatives, friends, and colleagues to send their condolences, often displayed along the wake venue with a card bearing the sender's name. Your funeral director can arrange these directly, or friends and colleagues may order their own through a florist — either way, it helps to share the wake address and visiting hours so deliveries arrive in good time.

11. Burial Or Cremation

Christian teaching does not require either burial or cremation — both are accepted, and the choice usually comes down to family preference, tradition, and practicality. In Singapore, burial plots are leased for a fixed term (currently 15 years) at Choa Chu Kang Cemetery, after which exhumation and re-interment or cremation follows. Many families now choose cremation directly, with ashes placed in a columbarium niche at a church, at Mandai, or kept at home.

12. The Funeral Day Itself

- The service is held at the wake venue or church, following the order of service agreed with your pastor
- After the service, the casket is carried to the hearse in a short procession, often with family walking behind
- The procession travels to the crematorium or Choa Chu Kang Cemetery, where a brief committal service is held
- If cremated, ashes are typically ready for collection within a few hours to a couple of days, depending on the crematorium's schedule

13. After The Funeral

Grief does not end when the funeral does, and many churches offer ongoing support in the weeks and months that follow — grief support groups, pastoral visits, or simply a community that checks in. Some families also choose to mark a memorial service on a significant date, such as the first anniversary. There is no timeline you need to follow; take the support that is offered, at whatever pace feels right for your family.

14. Common Questions Christian Families Ask

Does cremation conflict with the Christian belief in resurrection?

Most Christian denominations teach that resurrection does not depend on the state of the physical body, and cremation is widely accepted today. If your family has denomination-specific questions, your pastor is the best person to ask.

What if some family members aren't churchgoers?

This is common, and pastors are generally very welcoming of family members who don't regularly attend church. The service can also include non-religious elements, such as secular music or a personal tribute, alongside the Christian elements — simply discuss this with your pastor when planning.

Can relatives overseas join the service?

Yes — many funeral parlours and churches can arrange a livestream of the funeral service for family who are unable to travel in time. Ask your funeral director whether this can be arranged alongside your venue booking.

15. A Simple Checklist To Guide You

- Contact your funeral director — they will notify your church and pastor on your behalf
- Choose a wake venue and confirm dates with your funeral director
- Decide on wake length and visitation schedule
- Agree on the order of service with your pastor
- Choose hymns and scripture readings
- Decide who will deliver the eulogy, and begin writing it
- Confirm burial or cremation, and the venue for committal
- Arrange transport for the funeral day procession
- Consider how your family will mark the weeks and months that follow

One director will walk alongside your family from the very first call through to the final farewell, and coordinate directly with your church so nothing is left for you to chase.

Call us any time: [+65 9169 1859](tel:+6591691859)