

Resources

Mortuaries

Mortuaries are listed in the phone book. If you need further information or assistance, please call our Cemetery Administrator.

Temple Support

Temple Sinai Caring Community
(510) 451-3263

after hours: press *267 to leave a message

Our Caring Community is prepared to help bereaved persons with food, transportation, and general emotional support.

Hospice

Hospices are prepared to care for terminally ill people in their homes.

Pathways Home Health & Hospice
333 Hegenberger Road, Suite 700
Oakland, California 94621
510.632.4390 (phone)
510.613.2092 (bereavement coordinator's direct line)
www.pathwayshealth.org

Suggested Books about Grief

Central Conference American Rabbis, *Gates of Mitzvah*

Anne Brener, *Mourning and Mitzvah: A Guided Journal for Walking the Mourner's Path*

Theodor H. Gaster, *The Holy and the Profane*

Dr. Earl A. Grollman, *Explaining Death to Children*

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, *On Death and Dying*

Harold S. Kushner, *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*

Rifat Sonsino and Daniel Syme, *What Happens After I Die?: Jewish Views of Life After Death*

Daniel Syme, *The Jewish Home: A Guide for Jewish Living*

When Bereavement Comes...

510.451.3263
Temple Sinai
Oakland, California
www.oaklandsinai.org

When a Death Occurs

When a death occurs, whether at home or in the hospital, it is customary to notify a mortuary. They will arrange to pick up and care for the deceased until funeral arrangements have been made. (If you wish to use Chevra Kadisha services, contact Sinai Memorial Chapel [925-962-3636 in the East Bay; 415-921-3636 in San Francisco].)

If plans are to use Temple Sinai's cemetery, the Cemetery Administrator should be contacted to arrange for a crypt, grave, or niche. If pre-need arrangements have already been made, the Cemetery Administrator should be notified.

A call should be made to the Rabbi, who will visit with the family to offer consolation and to arrange for the time and details of the service.

The obituary notice can be handled by the mortuary. Information for the obituary can include the names of the immediate family, organizations in which the deceased was active, the time and place of the service, and other brief information that the family may wish mentioned. Some families suggest contributions to a particular fund in memory of the deceased.

The Service

Funeral services are usually held in the Chapel on the grounds of the Home of Eternity Cemetery, located at 5000 Piedmont Avenue, in Oakland. The service consists of the reading of several Psalms, some appropriate words spoken by the Rabbi and/or family members about the deceased, and the chanting of the prayer El Moleh Rachamim by the Clergy.

Kaddish may be recited at the crypt- or grave-site.

The Temple Chapel or Sanctuary may be used for a memorial service when a family requests it. (A memorial service is similar to a funeral service except that a casket is not present.) In keeping with Jewish tradition, the casket is kept closed. However, if members of the family wish to view the deceased, this may be done privately.

Flowers are permitted, but should be limited. This is consistent with the Jewish understanding that all ceremonies, but especially funerals, should be kept simple.

The service may be held on any day except the Sabbath and the first and the last days of Holidays. (We are not able to have ground burials on Sundays.)

Fraternal or lodge services are permitted. When conducted, they must be concluded prior to the start of the Jewish service.

Following the Service

After the funeral service, the family returns home to receive condolence calls. Friends and relatives frequently provide food for the family during the mourning period. It is to be noted that this tradition is for the purpose of taking care of the needs of the mourners. It is not intended that the mourning family serve as hosts to visitors. Quite the contrary – it is the visitors whose concern it is to console the mourners by helping them talk about the deceased, keeping the visits reasonably brief, and taking their cues from the feelings of the mourners.

Sitting Shiva

Traditionally, for the initial intense period of mourning, the family stays at home for seven days. Reform Judaism suggests three days or whatever period of time is meaningful to the mourner.

Kaddish may be recited during Temple worship services on Friday evenings and/or Shabbat mornings. When requested, a minyan (service for mourners, usually with at least ten worshippers) will be held at the home of the mourners.

Mourning is a process. It is an adjustment to loss, the healing of a deep wound which takes time. Painful as it may be, it is important to be aware of one's feelings and to express them, not suppress them. The Rabbi can be of help in this process. Occasionally, professional therapy may be indicated.

Conclusion of Mourning

Our tradition teaches us that mourning should come to a conclusion, although the deceased is never forgotten.

Graves are usually marked by the setting of a simple stone marker, usually within a year of the burial. The family may request an unveiling ceremony. This is a simple ceremony of remembrance marking the conclusion of the mourning period.

Yahrzeit is the recitation of the Kaddish on the anniversary of the death of the departed. At Temple Sinai, the name of the deceased may be added to a leaf on the Tree of Life or the name may be inscribed on the Wall of Remembrance in the Sanctuary. Please contact the Temple Sinai Business Office for details.

Pre-need Arrangements

A good deal of emotional stress can be avoided by taking care of cemetery needs in advance. Members are urged to be in touch with the Cemetery Administrator regarding such arrangements.