



בית אמת

Beth Emet

THE FREE SYNAGOGUE

When a Loved One Dies

The Beth Emet Funeral Plan

For questions and more information, contact Bekki Kaplan at kaplan@bethemet.org or call 847-869-4230.

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Why a Funeral Plan?

At Beth Emet, we are committed to caring for each other throughout our lives. We help each other in times of both great joy and deep sadness.

The Beth Emet Funeral Plan is designed to simplify the process of arranging an appropriate Jewish funeral and eases the burden of decision-making during a period of great emotional stress. The Funeral Plan incorporates traditional Jewish values and funeral practices and offers congregants a plan of appropriate services at one predetermined moderate cost.

Whether you have just lost a loved one or are discussing end-of-life planning with your family, the Beth Emet Funeral Plan offers the help of our community at a time when you need it most.

What Is Included in the Beth Emet Funeral Plan

The Beth Emet Funeral Plan is based on the principle of *K'vod HaMet*, "honor to the dead." Our plan incorporates traditional Jewish funeral and burial observances in cooperation with area funeral homes who have agreed to participate. The plan includes:

- The professional and administrative services of the director at the participating funeral home you choose. The funeral home takes care of the deceased prior to burial.
- The *Taharah*, the ritual washing and preparing of the body for burial according to ancient Jewish tradition. Following ritual purification, the deceased is dressed in simple muslin *tachrichim*, a traditional burial shroud that reflects the equality of all people in death. The *taharah* is performed by the The Progressive Chevra Kadisha who are members from Beth Emet and other participating congregations.
- The *Aron*, a preselected traditional wooden casket that emphasizes the concepts of modesty and equality. A concrete vault is also preselected, thereby eliminating some of the most stressful tasks when making funeral arrangements.
- The hearse and graveside transfer vehicle.
- The staff and equipment for the graveside, chapel, or synagogue service.
- The arrangements for *shiva*, the ritual period of mourning immediately following burial. The Beth Emet *Ozerim* Committee will provide prayer service leaders and materials and can coordinate food and other services during the days following the funeral.

The Beth Emet Funeral Plan is available for a flat rate of with Chicago Jewish Funerals & Weinstein & Piser Funeral Home. This rate does not include or cover any cemetery costs. Other services can be arranged for an additional cost.

What To Do When Someone Dies

When a death occurs, call Beth Emet at 847-869-4230 and ask for a member of the clergy to assist you with selecting a day and time for the funeral and offer guidance for appropriate practices during the mourning period. If it is after hours or on a holiday, call our emergency line at 847-869-4230, and press 4.

If you use the Beth Emet Funeral Plan, contact one of the participating funeral homes and identify yourself as a Beth Emet member. All arrangements can be made by telephone.

The only decisions you will need to make are:

- ***The location of the funeral service.*** We strongly encourage you to have the service in the Beth Emet sanctuary. However, the Beth Emet Funeral Plan also covers services in the funeral chapel or at graveside.
- ***The cemetery.*** The Beth Emet Funeral Plan does not cover any cemetery costs. If you do not already own burial plots, the funeral director will help you make the necessary arrangements.
- ***Optional arrangements.*** At your request, the funeral home can arrange for services not included in the Beth Emet Funeral Plan, such as limousine transportation, flowers, death certificates, and newspaper notices. The costs of these services are determined by each funeral home.

For families who wish to have a person stay with the deceased from death until burial, the funeral home also can arrange for *shomerim*, or guardians. *Shomerim* usually usually read from the Book of Job, Psalms, or other writings on the subject of death while sitting with the deceased. Family and friends can also provide this around-the-clock service.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. *Who is eligible for the Beth Emet Funeral Plan?*

A. Beth Emet members and their immediate family members are eligible for the funeral plan in any situation where a member of the clergy officiates at the service.

Q. *How much does the Beth Emet Funeral Plan cost?*

A. The cost of the Beth Emet Funeral Plan is negotiated each year with participating funeral homes. All cemetery-related costs—including plot and interment—are additional. There may be other costs if the death occurs out-of-town. The clergy do not charge to officiate at a funeral for members or family members eligible for the plan.

Q. *Does Beth Emet have a cemetery?*

A. No. Beth Emet does not have its own cemetery. The Beth Emet Office has information available about different local cemeteries for members who wish to purchase burial plots. If a plot is not purchased in advance, the funeral director can help make the necessary arrangements at the time of the funeral.

Q. *What if I wish to use the services of a funeral home that does not participate in the Beth Emet Funeral Plan?*

A. We are fortunate to have a number of fine funeral directors in our community. If you prefer not to use the Beth Emet Funeral Plan, you may select the funeral home of your choice. However, the quoted fees apply *only* to the Beth Emet Funeral Plan.

Q. *Whom do I call for more information about the Beth Emet Funeral Plan?*

A. Please contact Bekki Kaplan, Director of Congregational Engagement, with specific questions concerning the Beth Emet Funeral Plan. Please contact the clergy (via the main office) with questions about funeral practices and observances.