

Crying in the Chapel: A Funeral Fit for the King

For some, a funeral is a somber occasion, a time for dignified mourning and gravity, a silk-lined coffin and black roses. But for others, a funeral is a time of celebration, a time to remember the deceased's life and to enjoy what they enjoyed. Many people describe their own ideal funeral as one where people remember them with cheer.

So in a country where you can be married by Elvis, is it any wonder that you could also have him sing at your funeral? For anyone who is a fan of the oldies and who loves one of America's greatest singers, having an Elvis-themed funeral might be the perfect idea for a memorable memorial service.

Music

Of course, the biggest part of an Elvis funeral will be the music. For a fan, you will want to choose the deceased's favorite songs or songs that had meaning for their life. But if you're looking for some more general suggestions, Presley's "Amazing Grace" would make a very moving song, as would "Always On My Mind." And for a humorous touch, "Return to Sender" would work very well. Even for a service that's not themed around Elvis, one of his slower and more moving songs wouldn't be out of place.

Another possibility is live music. It would certainly be possible to find Elvis impersonators in most areas, which would add to the less serious atmosphere. But if you can, see if there are any friends or relatives who are good enough singers to perform a few songs. And having everyone attending be led in a song or two would be a great way to bring people together in celebration of what the deceased loved.

Casket

Custom caskets mean a whole new way to personalize a funeral. One option would be to have the coffin decorated with Elvis himself, of course – his portrait, perhaps along with the deceased, could appear on the lid of the coffin.

For a subtler approach, consider having the coffin decorated with the words to one of Elvis' songs. Whether it's a song that was a favorite of the deceased or one that's meaningful to those left behind, this more understated option would allow for following the Elvis theme at a more sober funeral.

Given Elvis' famous outfit, a white coffin with silver or gold hardware would be a nice touch. Red lining inside the coffin would be a clever match to the lining of his stage clothes. And if the idea of burying the deceased in an Elvis costume is too much, think about a normal suit – paired with blue suede shoes.