1.  What memorial services have inspired you? Take some time and write down the things that you might want to use in your service. This can include readings, music, prayers, use of technology (like slide shows), even dance. Some have kept a file of services they have attended and circled things in the bulletins that they enjoyed or meant something to them. Having a file, clearly marked and easy to find, is an opportunity for your loved ones to sort through these documents and spend some time together remembering you. We suggest that you provide a copy to the church as well.   
  
If you would like some guidance about format, readings and prayers, we suggest you explore the Book of Common Prayer pages 491-505 or go to this link: http://www.bcponline.org/PastoralOffices/BurialII.htm   
  
2.  List the following:

* Music you like
* Prayers you like (See Book of Common Prayer pages…)
* Readings you like (from Bible or elsewhere)
* Quotations that have meant a lot to you
* Would you like to make memorial gifts and, if so, where would you like it to be sent?
* If you are planning to be cremated where would you like your ashes placed? (You may wish to leave this decision to your loved ones.) Do you want your ashes present at the memorial?
* List one crazy idea for your service that will help communicate your unique spirit.

3.  Write one or two sentences that summarize what you hope your life has meant and how you think you have been an example for others. This will help guide the design of your service. Here are some examples:

* “Loving others is what has made me the person I longed to become.”
* “Laughter is an important ingredient to everything.”
* “Nature is where I always found God.”
* “Education is the key to living a full life.”
* “Hospitality is where I found my joy.”

4.  Here are some key questions you should answer:

1. Where do you want your service?
2. Do you want the service to include Eucharist?
3. Who do you want to play a role in your service?
   1. Officiant/Celebrant
   2. Readers
   3. Musicians
   4. Eulogists.  An important question here is whether, after a few key eulogists speak you would like to open it up for others to share memories or stories.
   5. Military participation?
4. Do you want to be cremated?
5. If you do not want to be cremated do you want the coffin present at the service?
6. Do you want a graveside service or service for the scattering of ashes?
7. Do you want a reception? If yes, where?
   1. Any special foods you want at the reception?  You might like there to be foods that you enjoy or things that you like to make)
   2. Any special music?
   3. If you chose not to have an open microphone in the service itself, is the reception a place where you would like others to share stories and anecdotes?
   4. Would you like a photo display or slide show?

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Finally, it is always helpful to include a biography or notes about your life noting important dates, transitions and accomplishments. This can be extremely helpful in writing a eulogy.