

# Urbanski's Bedford Funeral Chapel, serving the area with personalized funeral services since 1969

By Jackie Giroux  
Reporter

After running the business since 2009, Eric Urbanski is a fourth generation owner of **Bedford Funeral Chapel**, located at 8300 Lewis Ave. in Temperance, taking over ownership from his father, Bill Urbanski in 2012. Bill is not completely stepping down from the business, but will still be involved part-time. "My dad will still work here as a licensed funeral director."

The **Bedford Funeral Chapel** serves people of all faiths as well as those who are not a member of a church, in a modern up-to-date building that's easily accessible to all. "We have two lounge rooms. If there's more than one family here for a funeral, each family has their own lounge room," Eric said. The room is equipped with a refrigerator, microwave, kitchen, tables, chairs, a TV and Wifi for kids to play video games etc.

Providing services for both traditional funerals and cremations, the **Bedford Funeral Chapel** features rooms for visitation and funerals that are tailored to accommodate families of all sizes. "We have small, middle size and huge rooms for large families," Eric said.

They have a casket selection room for families that chose burial and a separate cremation option room that provides a place to select products designed for cremation in a comfortable atmosphere.

"We still do more burials, however cremation is definitely more popular the last couple of years," Eric said. "We take care of a lot of cremation families. We're up to date on a lot of cremation services and offer a lot of different options."

Always sensitive to the needs of the family that comes to them to arrange the funeral of a loved one, Eric said, "We treat families like they are our family. They are not just another number."

"We take pride in a bad situation, making them feel

better. We try to celebrate their loved one's life the best we can. We're always updating and open to what families want. We personalize every funeral. We try here to celebrate the life they've lived and not focus so much on that they're gone," he said.

"A lot of people feel better after the visitation. They see friends and family that they haven't seen in a long time. They share stories and laugh and end up feeling better," Eric said.

"We have families say we do a good job personalizing a funeral – that it reflected the person, not just a 'cookie cutter' funeral."

**Bedford Funeral Chapel** has a variety of funeral packages designed to fit what people can afford without sacrificing quality. "We work very hard at being cost efficient and to have prices that are competitive," Eric said. We can offer a better price structure than some because we've been in business so long. We've definitely kept our costs down to help our families out as much as possible."

Although **Bedford Funeral Chapel** has been located in Temperance for the past 48 years, the business has a history that dates back to 1922 in Toledo.

Born in 1896, business founder Stanley Urbanski was the first of his generation to be born in the United States. He served in WWI and after his service was completed he returned to Toledo where he had grown up.

His experiences while serving in the war and the loss of friends who died during the war, led Stanley to realize the importance of a funeral. The first step toward establishing his own funeral business began with Stanley attending the Cincinnati College of Embalming.

In 1922 he founded the Urbanski Funeral Home, which was located on La-Grange St. in Toledo. Accurately predicting a trend of growth as people moved from Toledo out to the Bedford area, Stanley had purchased property where the Bedford Funeral Chapel was built. This property used to be a cornfield, part of the Brunner farm. The house on the property is one that was built in 1880 and was remodeled as a residence for the Urbanski family.

Ground was broken in 1968 for the then 8,000 sq. ft. **Bedford Funeral Chapel**. Three generations of funeral directors were involved in the establishment of the Bedford Funeral Chapel – Stanley, William A. and William G. (Bill) Urbanski.

After Bill's graduation from the Cincinnati College of Mortuary Service in March 1969, he was named resident manager of the **Bedford Funeral Chapel**, which opened in October of that year.

The **Bedford Funeral Chapel** has continued to grow and evolve over the years. The facility is 12,000 sq. ft. with ample parking. "We keep changing with the times with what the families tell us to change," Eric said. "We've remodeled multiple times with a large expansion project in 2004," he added. According to Bill and Eric, it is the largest funeral home in the area.

Both the Bill and Eric Urbanski families live in residences located on the property, so someone is always available.

New to the staff at **Bedford Funeral Chapel** is licensed funeral director Michael Precht. Michael grew up in Bedford. He is a member of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Erie where he is a member of the Parish Council for the church. Additionally, he is a member of the Knights of Columbus, helps chair the Young Adult group for the Monroe vicariate and helps set up St. Joseph's annual Labor Day Festival and helps throughout the weekend event.

The Urbanski's belong to the Michigan Funeral Directors Association and the Northwest Ohio Funeral Directors Association where Bill was past president and Eric currently serves as trustee.

They are also Bedford Business Association members. Bill was a founding member and helped to draw up the original by-laws. He was also the first vice president and has also served as president in the past. Eric currently serves as trustee on the BBA board.

They are state licensed in Michigan and Ohio and were required to take a state and national board exam. "A Bachelor's Degree of Mortuary Science is required. It's a lot of science, psychology and business," Eric said.



Fourth generation owner of Urbanski's Bedford Funeral Chapel, Eric Urbanski enjoys spending time with his family when he has some free time from business responsibilities. L to r: Connor, Melissa, Rylinn, Eric and Zennon.



A beautifully landscaped fountain area at Urbanski's Bedford Funeral Chapel provides a quiet place to sit and listen to the soothing sounds of the water.

After Bill became the director at **Bedford Funeral Chapel**, he discovered another need in the community and a way to aid others in a different way. He found more emergency medical services were needed in Bedford and he was encouraged by the fire department to move forward with that.

For a time the property was also the site of an ambulance company – one of the first advanced life support systems in Michigan in 1978.

Bill has served as Fire Commissioner for Bedford Township, Vice Chairman of EMS for Monroe County and Chairman of Operations Committee for Monroe County EMS.

Eric graduated from St. Mary's Catholic Central and attended UT and Owens Community College in order to gain the credits needed to

attend Cincinnati College of Mortuary Science.

Like Bill, Eric began working in the funeral business as a boy. "I've been working here since I was a kid cutting grass, washing cars, painting, washing walls and carpets," he said. He became a funeral director at **Bedford Funeral Chapel** in 2009. "I enjoy meeting families, meeting a lot of good people," he said.

Eric's wife Melissa serves as business manager for the business. They have three children, which keeps them busy attending activities they participate in. Connor is nine and plays 3B Baseball, which Eric has helped coach. Zennon is six and plays for the Bedford T-Birds. Their daughter Rylinn is two.

More information about **Urbanski's Bedford Funeral Chapel** can be found at [www.bedfordfuneralchapel.com](http://www.bedfordfuneralchapel.com).

For questions or to schedule a time to discuss funeral arrangements, call them at (734) 847-3841.

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