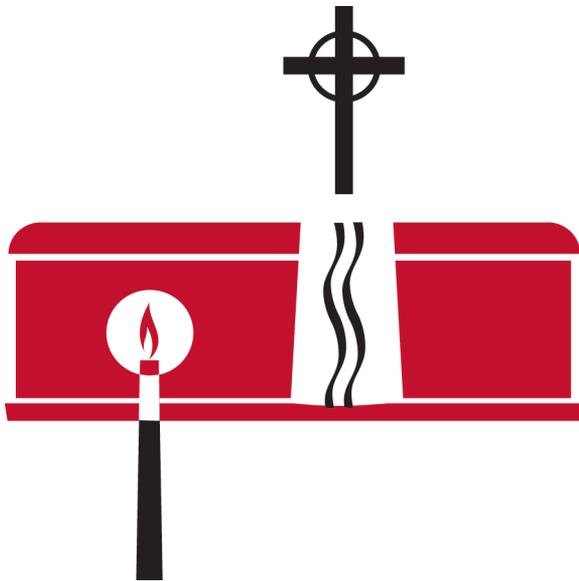


# Death and the Christian

## A Booklet To Guide You Through Funeral Planning



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THIS BOOKLET SUPERSEDES ALL PREVIOUS DOCUMENTS GIVING DIRECTIVE ON FUNERALS  
APPROVED BY THE WORSHIP COMMITTEE EFFECTIVE 10 AUGUST 2017, APPROVED AS POLICY BY PARISH COUNCIL 14 NOVEMBER 2018

The heart of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and His Church is life! He has promised that those who believe in Him have life, now and forever.

Death does indeed come to all—believers and non-believers. However, for the believer there is hope now and beyond the grave. We believe that as we have been baptized into Christ's death, so also, having passed through the gate of death, at the resurrection we shall be raised to new life in Christ (Romans 6.1-8).

Because a Christian believes in God's powerful victory over death, the funeral service can be a thankful and hopeful service. The service is not intended to be a surrender to hopeless grief, nor to mere sentiment. It is above all a witness to faith in our crucified and risen Savior, Jesus Christ.

As you plan for the funeral:

1. Please discuss the death, the funeral, and your wishes or questions with your pastor and the funeral director as soon as possible following the death. It is important for these persons to coordinate any plans that are made.
2. Remember that a Christian funeral is a worship service and its purpose is to glorify God and to proclaim the life-giving Gospel of Jesus Christ. Preparations are therefore made from the perspective of the Christian faith. The purpose of the service is not to glorify a body or the memory of a person, nor is it a time for a showy display of sentimentality.
3. The funeral service of an active member is normally held in the church where that person was nourished by God's word and sacraments. If the deceased was not a member of this congregation, the funeral could be held at the church or elsewhere, depending upon a family's preference.
4. The order for worship will follow the rite, "Funeral," in the Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW) hymnal or the most current supplemental Funeral Rite resources approved and endorsed by the ELCA and Augsburg Fortress Publishers.
5. The singing of hymns by the congregation is strongly recommended, both as a statement of faith and as a means of participation by the congregation. Other music, whether sung or played by soloists or instrumentalists should receive prior approval by the pastor of this congregation. A list of hymns—from the ELW—can be found in this booklet.

6. It is recommended that the family consider and suggest appropriate Bible lessons or verses for reading at the service. Normally two lessons are read, one of which is a Gospel text. A list of possible texts can be found in the brochure.

7. Anyone from the family wanting to speak publically at the funeral worship service is invited to do so prior to the reading of scripture. Please provide the pastor with a transcript of the family's remarks prior to the worhsip service, and keep in mind that a short period of remembrance during worhsip should total no more than 10-15 cumulative minutes. A microphone can be provided in the fellowship hall during the luncheon for other memories to be shared if so requested.

8. Cut flowers, arranged and displayed tastefully, can bring dignity and beauty to the service. At the same time, or perhaps in lieu of flowers, the family might suggest memorials for charitable purposes, including this or another congregation, service organizations, research groups, etc.

9. A Christian funeral is a worship service; therefore, rituals of non-church related organizations are not permitted in the service, nor is the funeral to be a time for display or recognition of any organization. A time for brief recognition of the deceased's service in such a group (in the armed forces, for example) can be provided as a part of the committal service at the cemetery.

10. During the funeral worship service, the casket or urn will be draped in a pall, a sign of being clothed with Christ in Baptism. The pall is a visual linking our lives, baptism, and the promise of Christ pointing toward life eternal in the forgiveness of our sins.

11. If a luncheon is desired after the funeral and burial, the parish's Women of the ELCA (WELCA) will help to coordinate the meal. Two options are available. First, the family can choose to have WELCA take care of the entire meal (the only cost being that of the main course). Or, the family can choose to cater the meal through a private caterer at their own cost. If a private caterer is used, WELCA will still be glad to help serve. Arrangements can be made through the parish secretary.

**Suggested Honorariums:**

Custodian	\$75
Organist	\$100
WELCA (for serving luncheon)	\$100
Pastor	\$125

For scripture and hymn sugestions, please see the back cover of this booklet.

## SUGGESTED BIBLICAL TEXTS

### HEBREW BIBLE:

Genesis 1.25b-2.3  
Job 1.21  
Isaiah 25.6-9  
Isaiah 43  
Isaiah 61.1-3  
Lamentations 3.22-26, 31-33

### PSALMS:

23  
39.4-8a, 12  
42.1-7  
46.1-7  
73.23-26, 28  
91  
103  
121  
139\*  
143

### GOSPEL:

Matthew 5.1-12  
Matthew 11.25-30\*  
Matthew 25.1-13  
Luke 8.40-42, 49-55  
Luke 12.35-40  
Luke 14.15-24  
John 1.1-14  
John 5.24-29  
John 6.37-40\*  
John 6.35, 44, 47-51  
John 11.21-27  
John 12.23-26  
John 14.1-6  
John 15.1-5  
John 20.1-3, 10-18

### NEW TESTAMENT EPISTLES:

Romans 5.1-11  
Romans 5.17-21  
Romans 8.31-35, 37-39  
1 Corinthians 15.12, 16-26  
2 Corinthians 4.5-12  
1 Thessalonians 4.13-18  
1 Peter 1.3-9  
1 John 3.1-2\*  
Revelation 7.9-17  
Revelation 21.2-7

\*May be appropriate at the burial of a child.

## Suggested Hymns (ELW)

#376 Thine Is the Glory  
#377 Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen!  
#391 This Joyful Eastertide  
#422 All Who Believe and Are Baptized  
#422 For All The Saints  
#438 My Lord, What a Morning  
#439 Soon and Very Soon  
#452 Awake, O Sleeper  
#485 I Am The Bread Of Life  
#488 Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness  
#503-505 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God  
#531 The Trumpets Sound, The Angels Sing  
#539 Abide with Us, Our Savior  
#574 Here I Am, Lord  
#581 You Are Mine  
#583, 685 Take My Life, That I May Be  
#589 All Depends On Our Possessing  
#596-597 My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less  
#612 Healer Of Our Every Ill  
#613 Thy Holy Wings  
#619 I Know That My Redeemer Lives  
#624 Jesus, Still Lead On  
#625 Come, We That Love The Lord  
#629 Abide with Me  
#631 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling  
#632 O God Our Help in Ages Past  
#638 Blessed Assurance  
#652 Built On A Rock  
#654 The Church's One Foundation  
#656 Blest Be The Tie That Binds  
#660 Lift High The Cross  
#661 I Love To Tell The Story  
#711 O Day of Peace  
#742 What A Friend We Have In Jesus  
#755 Jesus, Priceless Treasure  
#756 Eternal Father, Strong To Save  
#759 My Faith Looks Up To Thee  
#760 O Christ The Same  
#767 Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me  
#769 If You But Trust In God To Guide You  
#773 Precious Lord, Take My Hand  
#778 The Lord's My Shepherd  
#779 Amazing Grace  
#781 Children of the Heavenly Father  
#785 When Peace, Like a River  
#787 You Who Dwell In The Shelter  
#805 Lead On, O King Eternal  
#812-813 Faith Of Our Fathers  
#818 O Master, Let Me Walk With You  
#838 Beautiful Savior  
#855 Crown Him with Many Crowns  
#856 How Great Thou Art