



FUNERAL MANUAL



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IN THE LUTHERAN CHURCH, the funeral service is a public service of the Church. It is a public confession of the faith concerning death, burial, resurrection, and the life hereafter. In the funeral service the baptismal theme of death and resurrection with Christ is most prominent (Rom. 6:1-11). Death is a consequence of the fall into sin (Gen. 3:19; Rom. 5:12). The coming of life incarnate into our world of death signals the death of death and the ultimate victory of life. Jesus meets death and grief head on (Luke 7:11-17; Mark 5:35-43; John 11:1-44) and transforms it by His own death, burial, and resurrection, thus giving us life.

In Holy baptism we are immersed in Christ's death, burial, and resurrection (Rom. 6:3-11). Luther says that one's burial and resurrection from the dead are the fulfillment of one's Baptism: "This journey (from this life to the life beyond) begins in Baptism. And as long as there is faith, man continues on this course until he completes it through death" (*Luther's Works* 24:42).

Acknowledging God as the creator of the body and trusting in the bodily resurrection, Old Testament believers such as Abraham (Gen. 22:1-18; Heb. 11:17-19), Jacob (Gen. 35:19-20, 29), and his sons (Gen. 50:4-14) reverently buried their dead. Christians, too, believe that the body is significant and, therefore, is to be treated with respect. It is God's creation. God Himself became flesh in Christ and redeemed the world in His body. The Holy Spirit sanctified the Christian's body in Baptism, in the hearing of God's Word, and in the communion of Christ's life-giving body and blood. For this reason, Christians bury their dead in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection of the body.

For Christians, death is not the last word. Love incarnate is stronger than death (John 11:25). Christ's death and resurrection proclaim that victory belongs to life. Jesus calls His disciples to follow Him through death to life. That journey begins in the death and resurrection that happens in Holy Baptism. The burial rites take the Christian on the last steps of this journey to the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting.

PROCEDURES AT TIME OF A DEATH

- ❑ Notify the pastor, even before death, if death appears imminent.
- ❑ Contact the funeral home.
- ❑ Contact family and friends.
- ❑ Decide on a date and time for the service with the pastor and the funeral director.
- ❑ Discuss details with the pastor and the funeral director.

NOTIFY THE PASTOR

When a member of the Church is near death, the pastor should be called as soon as possible. The death of a member of the Church should be reported immediately to the pastor. No arrangements should be made without consultation with him. There is no fee for pastoral services.

Whenever possible, the Funeral Service of baptized members is conducted at the church.

FUNERALS FOR NON-MEMBERS

Because of different situations, the pastor will make the decision regarding a funeral for a non-member on an individual basis. It is important to remember that a funeral is a service for the baptized members of the congregation.

FUNERAL PALL

Although many may not be familiar with a funeral pall, it is not new, nor is its use limited to one particular church body. The pall symbolizes the covering of Christ's righteousness we receive in Baptism. Also, it signifies the oneness we have in Christ. It allows the congregation to take their eyes off of the type of casket and to remember the promises and gifts God gave the deceased in Holy Baptism. A spray of flowers cannot be placed on a casket that has been draped with the pall. In the case of a funeral for an active duty serviceman/woman or a veteran, the Flag of the United States of America or service branch is not used during the service of the Church.

PARAMENTS (altar hangings)

The liturgical color for the Funeral Service is the color of the season or day.

FLOWERS

Floral arrangements express the Christian hope in the resurrection of the body. It is preferable that they not be placed on the casket or altar during the Funeral Service.

OBITUARIES

A eulogy is not in the best Christian tradition. An obituary may be read which focuses on the Gospel promise of salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ our Lord, and not on the good deeds of the deceased. If any family or friends of the deceased wish to say a few words, this takes place outside of the service of the Church (usually at the luncheon following the committal).

CIVIL CEREMONIES

The ceremonies or tributes of social or other societies have no place within the service of the Church. Civic and military ceremonies or tributes should be held after the service of the Church, normally following the committal.

MUSIC

Hymns and music in the Funeral Service should reflect Christian confidence, trust, and hope in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Only hymns from Lutheran Service Book and/or The Lutheran Hymnal may be used within the service of the Church. Recorded music is not in keeping with the worship of the Church. Arrangements to have recorded music are made by the pastor.

MISCARRIAGES

A miscarriage is the loss of a life and should be observed as such. It is appropriate to have a funeral service for the child. The grief is just as real for the parents in such a situation.

By law any miscarried fetus who has developed to the 20th week must be given a death certificate. Before the 20th week parents may request one. A name may be given. A funeral home will pro-

vide burial services. It is appropriate for the pastor to have a funeral service for the child.

The above applies to a stillborn child as well.

ESTATE PLANNING: WILLS AND TRUSTS

Estate planning is a process that assures a person that one's assets will be distributed according to one's wishes after death. Without these legal documents the state makes those decisions through the courts.

Each individual should have a will or trust in order to relay his or her desires after death.

It is especially important for those who have minor children, so they can name a guardian.

Trusts, unlike wills, dispose of one's assets after death without probate, a lengthy and costly legal process that oversees the transfer of assets.

You will want to consider who will serve as the executor of your will or the successor trustee for your living trust. The person in either of these positions is responsible for ensuring that your wishes are carried out.

In the planning process, God's people are encouraged to pray and ask the Holy Spirit to lead them as they create a plan that provides for their family and also supports the ministries that they are passionate about, i.e., their church, Christian education, missions and various other ministries.

A gift planning counselor of the LCMS Foundation can assist in the creation of both a pictorial plan and also with the verbiage that will be provided to the attorney as he/she creates the will/trust document.

OBITUARY

Several options are available from *Lutheran Service Book, Agenda*. They must be adapted according to circumstance and may be expanded to include additional information, such as the church and location of the deceased's Baptism, Confirmation, and Marriage. When published, the place of burial may also be included.

EXAMPLE

Our Savior Jesus Christ has destroyed death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. Let us remember with thanksgiving what God has done through His servant name.

Full name was given life by his creator and was born on his/her, the child of name of father and name of mother. On date, he/she received the gift of Holy Baptism and became a child of God. On date he/she publicly confessed his/her faith and was confirmed. He/She received the precious gift of the Lord's life-giving body and blood. On date, he/she received the gift of a beloved companion in his/her spouse, _____ . He/She was blessed with the gift of children (a child), name(s) of child(ren). God blessed name's life with many special people as he/she served God in his/her vocations at home, church, work, and in the community. Finally, on date God blessed name with a holy death and took him/her home to rest in the arms of Jesus to await the resurrection of the dead.

The Lord gives and the Lord takes away; blessed be the name of the Lord. We give thanks to God our Father through Jesus Christ, our Lord, for our brother/sister name.

The readings and hymns in **boldface** should be given special consideration due to long standing usage in the Funeral Service

OLD TESTAMENT READING

2 Samuel 12:15b-23

King David looks to the resurrection of his son

1 Kings 17:17-24

Elijah raises the widow's son

2 Kings 4:18-37

Elisha raises the Shunammite's son

Job 5:6-7, 17-26

Job's friend speaks of God's wounding and healing

Job 14:1-17

Job speaks of his mortality

Job 19:21-27

Job confessed his faith in the resurrection

Ecclesiastes 12:1-7

Remember your creator

Isaiah 25:6-9

The Lord will swallow up death forever

Isaiah 26:1-4, 19

Your dead will live

Isaiah 35:3-10

Sorrow and sighing will flee away

Isaiah 40:6-11

He will tend his flock like a shepherd

Isaiah 40:27-31

He gives strength to the weary

Isaiah 43:1-3a, 25

Fear not...you are mine

Isaiah 46:3-4

Even to your old age I am he

Isaiah 49:13-16

I will not forget you

Isaiah 53:1-12

The man of sorrows

Isaiah 57:1-2

The righteous find rest

Isaiah 61:1-3, 10

To comfort all who mourn

Isaiah 65:17-25

New heavens and a new earth

Jeremiah 31:15-17

Rachel mourns for her children

Lamentations 3:22-33

His compassions never fail

Daniel 12:1-3

Those who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake

EPISTLE

Romans 5:1-11

Christ died for us

Romans 5:17-21

Justification brings life for all

Romans 6:3-10

Baptized into Christ's death and resurrection

Romans 8:14-23

We share in Christ's suffering and glory

Romans 8:31-39

Nothing can separate us from God's love

Romans 14:7-9

1 Corinthians 15:20-26

1 Corinthians 15:51-57

2 Corinthians 4:13-18

2 Corinthians 5:1-10

Philippians 3:8-11

Philippians 3:20-21

Colossians 3:1-4

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

2 Timothy 2:8-13

2 Timothy 4:6-8

Hebrews 2:14-18

Hebrews 4:6-11

Hebrews 11:1-2, 13-16

Hebrews 12:1-3

Hebrews 13:12-14, 20-21

James 4:13-17

1 Peter 1:3-9

1 John 3:1-2

Revelation 7:9-17

Revelation 14:13

Revelation 19:4-9

Revelation 21:1-7

Revelation 22:1-5

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 2:13-20

Matthew 5:1-12

Matthew 11:25-30

Whether we live or die, we belong
to the Lord

In Christ all will be made alive

Death is swallowed up in victory

The one who raised Jesus from the
dead will raise us

Away from the body and at home
with the Lord

Knowing Christ and the power of
his resurrection

Our citizenship is in heaven

You have been raised with Christ

The dead in Christ will rise first

If we died with him, we will also
live with him

I have fought the good fight

By his death he destroyed death

The Sabbath rest of God

Aliens and strangers on earth

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus

The God of peace who raised the
Lord Jesus

What is your life?

**A living hope through the
resurrection of Christ**

**We shall be like him, for we shall
see him as he is**

**Standing before the throne in
front of the Lamb**

**Blessed are the dead who die in
the Lord**

Blessed are those invited to the
wedding of the Lamb

A new heaven and a new earth

The Lord God will be their light

Herod murders the Holy Innocents
of Bethlehem

Blessed are you...

Rest for the weary

Matthew 18:1-5, 10	Unless you turn and become as children
Matthew 25:1-13	Jesus, the heavenly bridegroom, comes
Matthew 25:31-40	Come, take your inheritance prepared for you
Matthew 27:45-54; 28:1-6	Jesus' death and resurrection
Mark 5:35-43	Jesus raises the daughter of Jairus
Mark 10:13-16	Little children are brought to Jesus
Mark 15:33-39; 16:1-6	Jesus' death and resurrection
Luke 2:25-32	Lord, let your servant go in peace
Luke 2:36-38	Anna spoke to all looking forward to the redemption
Luke 7:11-17	Jesus raises the young man of Nain
Luke 12:16-21	This night your soul is required of you
Luke 16:19-31	The angels carried him to Abraham's side
Luke 23:33, 39-43	Today you will be with me in paradise
Luke 24:44-49; 24:1-6a	Jesus death and resurrection
John 3:16-18	God so loved the world
John 4:46-53	Come down before my child dies
John 5:24-30	He has passed over from death to life
John 6:27-40	I will raise him up at the last day
John 6:51-58	Whoever feeds on my flesh has eternal life
John 10:11-16	I am the Good Shepherd
John 10:27-30	I give them eternal life
John 11:17-27	I am the resurrection and the life
John 11:32-45	Lazarus, come out!
John 12:23-28	Whoever hates his life in this world will keep it
John 14:1-6	I am the way, and the truth, and the life
John 19:16b-18, 25-30	Jesus death

These readings may be used during the Easter season.

Acts 2:14a, 22-32	God raised Jesus from the dead
Acts 9:36-42	Peter raises Dorcas from the dead
Acts 10:34-43	God raised Jesus from the dead
Acts 13:26-33a	God raised Jesus from the dead

HYMNS

The following hymns may be used at the *Entrance Hymn*, *Hymn of the Day*, or the *Closing hymn* in the Funeral Service. Hymns for the season of the Church Year are also appropriate.

438	A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth
878	Abide with Me
596	All Christians Who Have Been Baptized
753	All for Christ I Have Forsaken
601	All Who Believe and Are Baptized
477	Alleluia, Alleluia! Hearts to Heaven
633	At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing
467	Awake, My Heart, with Gladness
697	Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death
676	Behold a Host, Arrayed in White
725	Children of the Heavenly Father
509	Christ Is Surely Coming
458	Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands
420	Christ, the Life of All the Living
677	For All the Saints
742	For Me to Live Is Jesus
607	From Depths of Woe I Cry to Thee
740	I Am Jesus' Little Lamb
461	I Know That My Redeemer Lives
486	If Christ Had Not Been Raised from Death
724	If God Himself Be for Me
748	I'm But a Stranger Here
745	In God, My Faithful God
938	In Peace and Joy I Now Depart
755	In the Very Midst of Life
672	Jerusalem the Golden
741	Jesus Christ, My Sure Defense
490	Jesus Lives! The Victory's Won
743	Jesus, Priceless Treasure

- 708 Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart**
 484 Make Songs of Joy
 747 No Saint on Earth Lives Life to Self Alone
 880 No Rest Beneath Night's Shadow
 552 O Christ, Who Shared Our Mortal Life
 395 O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright
 449 O Sacred Head, Now Wounded
 450 O Sacred Head, Now Wounded
 679 Oh, How Blest Are They
 675 Oh, What Their Joy
 598 Once in the Blest Baptismal Waters
 671 Sing with All the Saints in Glory
 508 The Day Is Surely Drawing Near
 709 The King of Love My Shepherd Is
710 The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want
 758 The Will of God Is Always Best
 762 There is a Time for Everything
 482 This Joyful Eastertide
 516 Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying
 760 What God Ordains Is Always Good
 730 What Is the World to Me
 764 When Aimless Violence Takes Those We Love
 763 When Peace, like a Rive
 483 With High Delight Let Us Unite

Note on Music

Secular music is not appropriate for use in the service of the Church. All hymns come from *Lutheran Service Book* (LSB) or *The Lutheran Hymnal* (TLH). The music at a funeral should reflect the hope that is ours in Christ through Baptism and the rest we have in Jesus along with all the saints who have gone before us in the faith.

Special care should be taken when choosing hymns during the season of Lent so as not to sing or say the "Alleluia" as the Church fasts from this word of praise until Easter.

For civic and military funerals, music such as *Taps* or the *National Anthem* is most appropriate after the committal.

