

My Christian Funeral

A Planning Resource for members of St. Matthew's Evangelical Lutheran Church—Winona, MN

A Lutheran funeral is worship. It is a proclamation of Jesus Christ for sinners, and so it is a proclamation of life in the face of death. Unlike some funeral services, a Lutheran funeral is about Christ and what He has done for our departed and for us who are living. The Lutheran funeral is not primarily a remembrance of a person; the sermon is not a long eulogy. The service instead celebrates the Christian faith of the departed and our joy in knowing they have fallen asleep in Jesus and now live with Jesus.

Because many others do not share such strong convictions about the power of the Gospel and the comfort of God's Word, and because people may be responsible for funeral arrangements when we die who do not share our understanding of a Christian funeral, it is good and wise for us to make arrangements for our funerals. It provides us with one last opportunity to tell our dear ones what is dear to us: Jesus Christ—crucified for sinners. And in that, an opportunity to tell them that He is their Savior as well.

The following pages, then, are intended to help you think through your desires for your own funeral. Please pray about it, think about it, flip through your hymnals and Bibles, and feel free to consult with your pastor about it. When you return this document, it will be filed at church. You may make changes anytime you wish.

You may choose to fill the form in completely or partially.

Once completed, please file a copy in the church office.

FULL LEGAL NAME: _____

Address: _____

Persons to be notified at time of death: _____

Funeral Home: _____

Date and place of birth: _____

Date and place of baptism (also pastor's name who administered the baptism): _____

Date and place of confirmation (also pastor's name who confirmed you): _____

Marriage date/information/place: _____

Ways you've used the gifts God gave you to serve your brothers and sisters in the congregation:

Preceded in death by: _____

Please note any Scripture lessons you'd prefer to be read (usually two to three, in addition, it is customary for your confirmation verse to be used for the sermon text). Please give it thought, as this is beneficial both for you as you contemplate and study the passages and for those you leave behind as the passages instruct and comfort them. If you'd like your pastor to pick any of the lessons, please note such. He would also be willing to provide a list of suggestions if you so desire.

Hymns you'd prefer to be sung (usually three or four; unless a choir or soloist is utilized). Please give it thought. These hymns will be God's Word in song to those gathered as they celebrate your life in Christ. If you'd like pastor to pick any of the hymns, please note such. Hymns must be from *Christian Worship*; *Christian Worship Supplement*, *The Lutheran Hymnal* or approved by the pastor in consultation beforehand. Hymn suggestions may be found on the back of this packet. (Also, please note if you desire special music by the school choir, choir, or soloist. We will seek to accommodate these wishes where possible.)

Some thoughts I think would be important to express in my funeral sermon or some words of comfort and consolation I would like to say to those who mourn my death. These thoughts should involve the role of Christ and the church in your life.

Please supply any other information that might be useful:

Wishes concerning flowers: (colors, kinds, none, etc)

Concerning Pallbearers:

At present, I would like the following Pallbearers (traditionally six):

I would like my family to choose pallbearers

Other (please specify): _____

If memorials are given in my name:

I would like them to be directed toward the church, with my family selecting appropriate items from the church's wish list

I would like them to be directed toward the church, and would like my family to consider the following things from the wish list: _____

Other (please specify): _____

I understand, expect, and insist that I not be eulogized in the service, but that Christ be preached, to His glory and for the comfort of those left to mourn my passing:

Yes

No

After careful consideration of the Word and prayer, and in love for those who gather to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord at my funeral service, I firmly desire that my funeral service confess Christ, crucified and risen, faithfully and clearly, and it is my sincere hope that these notes will help it do so. I want a Lutheran service, focused not on my death, but on Christ's life, made mine in Holy Baptism, promised me in the Word, and given me throughout life in Holy Communion. May your memories of me be fond, and may you enjoy sharing them before and after the service, but in your time in God's house, which was so dear to me in my life among you, I want you to find what I found there: peace in Christ. God grant it. Amen.

DATE: _____ SIGNATURE: _____

A Few Suggested Funeral Hymns

(Any hymns in *The Lutheran Hymnal*, *Christian Worship*, and *Christian Worship Supplement* are also available)

- 9 Jesus, Your Church with Longing Eyes
- 11 Comfort, Comfort All My People
- 152 I Know that My Redeemer Lives
- 153 Alleluia! Jesus Lives
- 158 I Am Content! My Jesus Lives Again
- 167 Jesus Christ, My Sure Defense
- 200 A Mighty Fortress Is Our God
- 203 Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word
- 210 Who Knows When Death
- 211 I Know of a Sleep in Jesus' Name
- 213 Forever with the Lord
- 214 Jerusalem the Golden
- 218 Then the Glory
- 219 Lord, When Your Glory I Shall See
- 256 How Great Thou Art
- 293 God's Word Is Our Great Heritage
- 304 Jesus Sinners Does Receive
- 321 Savior, Again to Thy Dear Name
- 332 Go, My Children, with My Blessing
- 345 In the Cross of Christ I Glory
- 360 The Lord's My Shepherd; I'll Not Want
- 369 Beautiful Savior
- 372 I Lay My Sins on Jesus
- 375 The King of Love My Shepherd Is
- 376 Jesus Thy Blood and Righteousness
- 379 Amazing Grace - How Sweet the Sound
- 384 By Grace I'm Saved
- 385 Chief of Sinners Though I Be
- 389 Rock of Ages
- 392 Not unto Us
- 394 Blessed Are the Saints of God
- 402 My Faith Looks Up to Thee
- 411 What a Friend We Have in Jesus
- 413 When in the Hour of Utmost Need
- 417 I'm But a Stranger Here, Heaven is My Home
- 428 Why Should Cross and Trial Grieve Me
- 431 I Walk in Danger All the Way
- 432 I Am Jesus' Little Lamb
- 434 Lord, You I Love with All My Heart
- 588 Abide with Me
- 551 For All the Saints
- 592 All Praise to Thee, My God, This Night
- 605 Asleep in Jesus! Blessed Sleep
- 606 For Me to Live is Jesus
- 608 I Fall Asleep in Jesus' Wounds