

# My Funeral Plans



*After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" Revelation 7:9-10*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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# INTRODUCTION

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). The burial rites themselves are a kind of journey that begins at the deathbed, leads to the funeral home and the church, and finally to the cemetery. They follow the believer as he departs this world with Christ through death to life.

In the burial rites, two emphases are held in tension: penitence and the resurrection (2 Sam. 12:15-23). The Kyrie, Litany, penitential psalms, and the ancient Christian hymn "In the Very Midst of Life" (Hymn 755) are examples of how the rites take seriously both death and the deep effect death has on us. In Christ, the sting of death is conquered so that the Christian sees, in the midst of death, the hope of the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. The various Scripture readings, hymnody, and the prayers in the rites testify to the glorious victory over death that is ours in Christ Jesus our Lord.

For Old Testament believers, deathbeds were a time of confession both of the faith and of the resurrection of the body. For example, Joseph confessed this hope in the presence of his sons before his death (Gen. 50:24-26). Job also confessed, "I know that my Redeemer lives..." pointing to his confidence in the resurrection of all flesh (Job 19:25). Christ calls death a sleep (Mark 5:39), and so for the Christian, the hour of death is approached with the confidence of going to bed and falling asleep. In the rite of the **Commendation of the Dying**, the Christian hears the accounts of Christ's suffering and death and sees his dying in light of the Savior's death. The rite offers the opportunity for the confession of the faith, as well as the confession of sins before death. The Lord's Supper may also be integrated into this rite. The deathbed may last hours or days. The rite allows for repeated and extended use over a period of days or many hours. In the event that death appears imminent, the rite may be abbreviated.

On hearing the news of the death of Jairus' daughter, Jesus told the synagogue ruler, "Do not fear, only believe" (Mark 5:36). This is the message of the rite of **Comforting the Bereaved**. At this juncture, many people come to extend their consolation to the mourners and share in their grief. The ministry of the pastor is "to comfort those in any affliction" (2 Cor. 1:4) with the comfort of God's Word. Most often the rite of comforting the bereaved occurs in the funeral home. Local circumstance dictates whether the setting is formal or informal. When words of thanksgiving for the life of the deceased or expressions of condolence are given by family members and friends, the pastor will take care to focus the comfort on what God has done for His child whom He has taken to Himself.

When the funeral takes place at the church, the rite for the **Entrance of the Body into the Church** may be used. This rite may be used whether or not the family is present.

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). The service begins with the name of God spoken over the body of the baptized. The casket may be covered with a pall as a remembrance of being clothed with Christ in Holy Baptism (Gal. 3:27; Rom. 13:14). The baptismal creed (Apostle's Creed) is confessed, and the prayers confidently speak of the resurrection and new life given in Baptism. In the sermon the pastor has a unique opportunity to preach God's Word of Law and Gospel to many hearers who may not know the source of Christian comfort when a heart is troubled by the grief and sorrow of death. Here he can explain the connection between Christ's work of salvation in Baptism and the death of the Christian. The

focus of the funeral service is the public proclamation of Christ crucified to this specific situation, as well as the comfort Christians find in Christ's resurrection.

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 sanctifies 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. This is the purpose of the rite of **Committal**. Words of sorrow in the face of death and anticipation of the resurrection are prominent themes in this rite. When circumstances prevent the committal from occurring immediately after the funeral service, the committal takes place at a later date. In that situation, the pastor may speak words of comfort on the basis of the Scriptures, and the Creed may be confessed. Christ is the firstfruits of those who rise from the dead. The body that is buried is a seed that will arise to see Christ with a glorious body (1 Cor. 15:20, 35-44).

Two unique situations are addressed in the burial rites--the **Burial for a Stillborn Child or Unbaptized Child** and **Resources for Commemoration of the Faithful Departed**. In the time of testing and deep grief when a child is stillborn or dies before being baptized, parents can be comforted with the hope of the resurrection of the body. On the anniversary of a death or when a Christian congregation gives thanks for its faithful departed, God's saints are remembered in order to affirm that those who die in the Lord are indeed blessed (Rev. 14:13).

Finally, extensive suggestions are provided in the **Resources for Christian Burial**. In addition to numerous readings, hymns, and prayer resources, several model obituaries are also provided.

For the Christian, 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.

## FUNERAL SERVICE GUIDELINES

### Members of the Congregation

1. The Funeral Service is intended for the burial of those who departed this life in the Christian faith.
2. The death of a member of the church should be reported immediately to the pastor. No arrangements should be made without consultation with him.
3. The Funeral Service of baptized members is conducted at the church.
4. 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 our hymnal are to be used. Any solos or other music must be approved by the pastor.
5. A eulogy is not in the best Christian tradition and will not be part of the service. Remembrances may be spoken in the reception which follows the service. An obituary may be read which focuses on the Gospel promise of salvation by grace through faith alone in Christ our Lord, and not on the good deeds of the deceased.
6. Ceremonies or tributes of social societies or lodges 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.
7. Organist honorarium is \$125.
8. Suggested funeral hymns from Lutheran Service Book are listed in this booklet.
9. Two flower arrangements for altar are provided by the family. All other flowers will be placed in the narthex and/or parish hall.
10. A white pall will be placed upon the casket/urn to symbolize holy baptism. No other objects, items, or photos will be placed upon or next to the remains to keep the emphasis upon Christ and his redemption that covers your loved one.
11. Funeral reception committee may provide food and drink in the parish hall. Displays with photos, keepsakes, etc. may be set up in the parish hall. Contact Carol Varley, Funeral Reception, Coordinator, 342-2903.

## SUGGESTED FUNERAL HYMNS

*The following hymns may be used at the ENTRANCE HYMN, HYMN OF THE DAY, or the Procession when leaving the church. The hymns in boldface should be given special consideration due to long standing usage in the Funeral Service.*

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| <p>438 A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth</p> <p>878 Abide with Me</p> <p>596 All Christians Who Have Been Baptized</p> <p>753 All for Christ I Have Forsaken</p> <p>601 All Who Believe and Are Baptized</p> <p>477 Alleluia, Alleluia! Hearts to Heaven</p> <p>633 At the lamb's High Feast We Sing</p> <p>467 Awake, My Heart, with Gladness</p> <p>697 Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death</p> <p><b>676 Behold a Host, Arrayed in White</b></p> <p>725 Children of the Heavenly Father</p> <p>509 Christ Is Surely Coming</p> <p>458 Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands</p> <p>420 Christ, the Life of All the Living</p> <p>605 Father Welcomes</p> <p><b>677 For All the Saints</b></p> <p>742 For Me to Live Is Jesus</p> <p><b>607 From Depths of Woe I cry to Thee</b></p> <p>594 God's Own Child, I Gladly Say It</p> <p>740 I Am Jesus' Little Lamb</p> <p><b>461 I Know That My Redeemer Lives</b></p> <p>486 If Christ Had Not Been Raised from Death</p> <p>724 If God Himself Be for Me</p> <p>748 I'm But a Stranger Here</p> <p>745 In God, My Faithful God</p> <p><b>938 In Peace and Joy I Now Depart</b></p> <p><b>755 In the Very Midst of Life</b></p> <p>672 Jerusalem the Golden</p> <p>741 Jesus Christ, My Sure Defense</p> <p><b>490 Jesus Lives! The Victory's Won</b></p> <p>743 Jesus, Priceless Treasure</p> <p><b>708 Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart</b></p> <p>484 Make Songs of Joy</p> <p>747 No Saint on Earth Lives Life to Self Alone</p> <p>880 Now Rest beneath Night's Shadow</p> <p>552 O Christ, Who Shared Our Mortal Life</p> <p>395 O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright</p> | <p>449 O Sacred Head, Now Wounded</p> <p>450 O Sacred Head, Now Wounded</p> <p>679 Oh, How Blest Are They</p> <p>675 Oh, What Their Joy</p> <p>598 Once in the Blest Baptismal Waters</p> <p>671 Sing with All the Saints in Glory</p> <p>508 The Day Is Surely Drawing near</p> <p>709 The King of Love My Shepherd Is</p> <p><b>710 The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want</b></p> <p>758 The Will of God Is Always Best</p> <p>762 There Is a Time for Everything</p> <p>482 This Joyful Eastertide</p> <p>516 Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying</p> <p>760 What God Ordains Is Always Good</p> <p>730 What Is the World to Me</p> <p>764 When Aimless Violence Takes Those We Love</p> <p>763 When Peace, like a River</p> <p>483 With High Delight Let Us Unite</p> <p><i>Settings of the NUNC DIMITTIS from the Divine Service (LSB page 165, 199, or 211) may be used. During Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany, seasonal hymns such as the following may also be appropriate:</i></p> <p>397 As with Gladness Men of Old</p> <p>364 Away in a Manger</p> <p>347 Comfort, Comfort Ye My People</p> <p>349 Hark the Glad Sound</p> <p>380 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing</p> <p>386 Now Sing We, Now Rejoice</p> <p>334 O Lord, How Shall I Meet You</p> <p>355 O Savior, Rend the Heavens Wide</p> <p>376 Once in Royal David's City</p> <p>348 The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns</p> <p>402 The Only Son from Heaven</p> |
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## FUNERAL PROPERS

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

### PSALMODY

*The following psalms may be used in the Funeral Service at the INTROIT, PSALM, or GRADUAL, or the Procession when leaving the church. Suggested antiphons are given in parentheses.*

Psalm 16 (v.11a)	You make known to me the path of life
Psalm 17:6-15 (v.15b)	When I awake I will be satisfied
<b>Psalm 23 (v.4)</b>	<b>I walk through the valley of the shadow of death</b>
<b>Psalm 25:1-5, 15-20 (v.20a)</b>	<b>Guard my soul and deliver me</b>
Psalm 27 (v.13)	I shall look upon the goodness of the Lord
Psalm 31:7-24 (v.5a)	Into your hand I commit my spirit
Psalm 34:1-9 (v.9)	Fear the Lord, you his saints
Psalm 39:4-13 (v.7)	My hope is in you
<b>Psalm 42 (Ps.43:3b)</b>	<b>Let them bring me to your holy hill</b>
Psalm 46 (v.7)	The Lord of hosts is with us
Psalm 63:1-8 (v.1b)	My soul thirsts for you
<b>Psalm 65:1-8 (v.4a)</b>	<b>Blessed is the one you choose and bring near</b>
Psalm 71:14-24 (v.20b)	From the depths of the earth you bring me up
Psalm 73:23-28 (v.24)	Afterward you will receive me to glory
Psalm 84 (v.4)	Blessed are those who dwell in your house
Psalm 90 (v.14a)	Satisfy us with your steadfast love
Psalm 102 (v.28a)	The children of your servants will dwell secure
Psalm 103:1-18 (v.4)	He redeems your life from the pit
Psalm 116:1-9, 15 (v.15)	Precious in the sight of the Lord
<b>Psalm 118:1-21 (v.20)</b>	<b>This is the gate of the Lord</b>
<b>Psalm 121 (v.2)</b>	<b>My help comes from the Lord</b>
Psalm 122 (v.1b)	Let us go to the house of the Lord
Psalm 126 (v.5)	Those who sow in tears will reap with joy
<b>Psalm 130 (v.1)</b>	<b>Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord</b>
Psalm 139 (v.18b)	When I awake I am still with you
Psalm 143 (v.11a)	For your name's sake, O Lord, preserve my life
Psalm 146 (v.2a)	I will praise the Lord as long as I live

## FUNERAL PROPERS

### 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
<b>Job 19:21-27</b>	<b>Job confesses his faith in the resurrection</b>
Ecclesiastes 12:1-7	Remember your creator
<b>Isaiah 25:6-9</b>	<b>The Lord God will swallow up death forever</b>
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
<b>Isaiah 61:1-3, 10</b>	<b>To comfort all who mourn</b>
Isaiah 65:17-25	New heavens and a new earth
Jeremiah 31:15-17	Rachel mourns for her children
<b>Lamentations 3:22-33</b>	<b>His compassions never fail</b>
Daniel 12:1-3	Those who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake

*These readings may be used during the Easter season when the Three-Year Lectionary is followed.*

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

## FUNERAL PROPERS

### 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 sufferings and glory
<b>Romans 8:31-39</b>	<b>Nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ</b>
Romans 14:7-9	Whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord
<b>1 Corinthians 15:20-26</b>	<b>In Christ all will be made alive</b>
<b>1 Corinthians 15:51-57</b>	<b>Death is swallowed up in victory</b>
2 Corinthians 4:13-18	The one who raised Jesus from the dead will raise us
2 Corinthians 5:1-10	Away from the body and at home with the Lord
Philippians 3:8-11	Knowing Christ and the power of his resurrection
Philippians 3:20-21	Our citizenship is in heaven
Colossians 3:1-4	You have been raised with Christ
<b>1 Thessalonians 4:13-18</b>	<b>The dead in Christ will rise first</b>
2 Timothy 2:8-13	If we died with him, we will also live with him
2 Timothy 4:6-8	I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race
Hebrews 2:14-18	By his death he destroyed death
Hebrews 4:6-11	The Sabbath rest of God
Hebrews 11:1-2, 13-16	Aliens and strangers on earth
Hebrews 12:1-3	Let us fix our eyes on Jesus
Hebrews 13:12-14, 20-21	The God of peace who raised the Lord Jesus
James 4:13-17	What is your life?
<b>1 Peter 1:3-9</b>	<b>A living hope through the resurrection of Christ</b>
<b>1 John 3:1-2</b>	<b>We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is</b>
<b>Revelation 7:9-17</b>	<b>Standing before the throne in front of the Lamb</b>
<b>Revelation 14:13</b>	<b>Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord</b>
Revelation 19:4-9	Blessed are those invited to the wedding of the Lamb
<b>Revelation 21:1-7</b>	<b>A new heaven and a new earth</b>
Revelation 22:1-5	The Lord God will be their light

## FUNERAL PROPERS

### HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 2:13-20	Herod murders the Holy Innocents of Bethlehem
<b>Matthew 5:1-12</b>	<b>Blessed are you...</b>
Matthew 11:25-30	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
<b>Mark 10:13-16</b>	<b>Little children are brought to Jesus</b>
Mark 15:33-39; 16:1-6	Jesus' death and resurrection
<b>Luke 2:25-32</b>	<b>Lord, let your servant go in peace</b>
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 23:44-49; 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
<b>John 5:24-30</b>	<b>He has passed over from death to life</b>
<b>John 6:27-40</b>	<b>I will raise him up at the last day</b>
John 6:51-58	Whoever feeds on my flesh has eternal life
<b>John 10:11-16</b>	<b>I am the Good Shepherd</b>
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
<b>John 14:1-6</b>	<b>I am the way, and the truth, and the life</b>
John 19:16b-18, 25-30	Jesus' death

# MY REQUEST FOR A CHURCH FUNERAL SERVICE

My Copy

To the Pastor of Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church, My Loved Ones, and the Mortuary,

I have carefully considered my own death and funeral plans. As a Christian, I die in the hope and assurance that Christ is my Savior. Therefore, I wish to leave these plans and requests as my last testimony to the faith in which I have died. Please carry out these wishes of mine in accordance with the doctrine and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as dictated by God's Word and confessed in the Book of Concord.

I request that my funeral take place at Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church.

I request the following hymn(s) from Lutheran Service Book. If I leave this blank, I leave the choice of hymns to the Pastor.

I request the following scriptures to be read. If I leave this blank, I leave the choice of the scripture to the Pastor as he will use the traditional texts.

My confirmation Bible verse:

Viewing of my body: Yes No Left to the discretion of my loved ones?

I desire that my remains be buried in a cemetery located at:

I would like the following inscription on my gravestone:

Name of Mortuary:

I desire that memorial gifts, in lieu of flowers, be given to the church for promoting the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Other wishes or preferences:

Name:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Copies: Church/Pastor, Children/loved ones, Executor, Mortuary



To the Pastor of Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church, My Loved Ones, and the Mortuary,

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Copies: Church/Pastor, Children/loved ones, Executor, Mortuary



## OBITUARY FORM

My Copy

*An Obituary may be printed and/or read. If it is read in the funeral service, it may occur before the INVOCATION or in connection with the SERMON. Several options are provided below. 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 and Confirmation. When published, the place of burial may also be included.*

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/her* creator and was born on \_\_\_\_\_ *date* \_\_\_\_\_, 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, \_\_\_\_\_ *name of 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* \_\_\_\_\_.



## OBITUARY FORM

Pastor's Copy

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