

# FUNERAL PLANNING

## **Planning A Funeral or Memorial Service**

The loss of a loved one often brings an emotional trauma to a time when significant decisions must be made. The purpose of this guide is to assist you in the making of those decisions.

A Christian funeral or memorial service is an expression of our trust in the steadfast love of God for his people. The focus of the service is on the grace of God in baptism, in faith and in the assurance of salvation for all who put their faith in God. It both provides an opportunity to grieve, and celebrates Christ's victory over death. The form that the funeral or memorial service takes, therefore, is a reflection of core Christian values.

The nomenclature in this guide uses the word "funeral" to describe a service where the body or ashes are present, and "memorial service" where they are not. The word "internment" describes the disposition of the body in the ground, or the ashes in their final resting place.

## **Before the Service**

A funeral home should be contacted at the time of death. They will help you with arranging for burial or cremation, placing an obituary in the newspapers, and with some legal issues involving death certificates and so on.

Faith Lutheran Church will help you plan the funeral or memorial service and the internment service. All who would like to come are encouraged to meet with the pastor as soon as possible.

The pastor will gather information to help in planning a funeral service that is comforting and inspiring, that is a celebration of a person's life in the context of the hope that is given to the whole people of God in death. He will ask you what you particularly would like to have emphasized about your loved one in the pastor's sermon.

He will ask for the full name of your loved one. The first and middle names, the "Christian" names given at baptism, are used throughout the service.

Will it be a funeral or memorial service? He will ask who will be the primary contact in planning the funeral or memorial service.

Will the funeral or memorial service be held at the church or someplace else? On what date? At what time?

The church will print out the services so that everyone can participate in them. They will not be printed until the last minute possible to allow for any last minute changes. Please let the church know a rough idea of how many people are expected at the funeral or memorial service and internment. Faith Lutheran Church provides a traditional service template from which to begin.

The service will include appropriate readings from the Bible, or favorite verses may be included. Special music should be religious in nature and approved by the pastor.

The family should begin sharing ideas for a eulogy with the pastor. A eulogy is like a biography of your loved one with special remembrances as a tribute. One person should be designated to put all the ideas and information together. A summary may be written out to be printed in the bulletin (sending it electronically is requested) if you like. The full version is read by a friend or family member or the pastor at the service. It may include such things as special family stories, biographical data, dates of birth and death, survivors (names of family members), professional history, church membership, activities and hobbies and so on.

Special music may be included in the service. It may be favorite secular music as long as it is in good taste for a Christian service. It may be recorded or live. If it is played from a boom box, someone should be designated to operate the equipment.

Speak with the pastor if you would like him to arrange for a church organist. Favorite hymns may be included to be sung by the congregation.

### **At the Service**

Any relative or friend of the family who is an active member of a Christian church may read portions of the service, including some of the Bible readings and prayers. If people are asked to make personal statements during the funeral the statements should be made from a Christian perspective, including salvation by faith in Jesus Christ.

The ceremonies or tributes of social or fraternal societies have no place within the service of the Church.

You may employ the services of one of our church organists or other musicians, include special instrumental or vocal music, have your guests sing a hymn, and/or have family members and/or friends take part as readers in the service.

Military ceremonies will precede the services of the Church.

You may have Holy Communion celebrated or not. If Communion is celebrated it must be for everybody.

Two hundred people make the church look full. We can seat additional persons in the choir area, and we will soon have the capacity to use the parish hall for overflow with video and audio broadcast from the worship building.

The church does not permit the use of its facilities for funerals in which its pastor does not participate.

### **Who's Going to do What?**

You should decide who you want to participate in your funeral or memorial service and have them arrange their schedules to find out what to do as soon as possible.

Ushers should be identified to arrange for the flow of people in and out of the services and to distribute the printed programs. Acolytes should be identified to light and extinguish the altar candles; ushers can do this as well.

A guest book holder is available; you may want to have someone there as host/hostess.

### **Before the Ceremony**

Flower delivery and set-up should be arranged in advance for a time when the church will be open and completed well before the service begins.

The church does not provide a funeral pall to cover the casket.

Would you like rows of seating reserved for the family? How many pews and on what side/s?

Please notify the pastor in advance if you plan to invite the pastor and his family to a reception after the service so that he can make the necessary plans. No invitation is expected and other duties occasionally make it impossible for the pastor to attend.

The church will print copies of the worship service for the guests, and make some extra copies for you to send to people who could not be at the funeral or memorial service. Please let the pastor know the spellings of the names of every person in the funeral or memorial service that should appear in the bulletin, and how many guests you expect as early as possible. We can scan a photo, or you may send it electronically, if you would like a photo in the program.

The congregation also has multi-media capabilities. Slides or movies can be shown. Please designate someone to operate the system (training will be provided) for movies.

A PowerPoint presentation can also be shown.

The congregation can provide some easels for photo displays. Additional easels may be available through your florist or funeral home if needed.

### **During the Ceremony**

A Christian funeral or memorial service is a celebration of the resurrection to eternal life. The casket is closed, therefore, before the service begins. If a viewing could not be arranged the night before the funeral it may be possible to arrange for one before the start of the funeral or memorial service.

You may wish to include special music such as vocalists or instrumentalists. We can also recommend musicians who play in various styles.

### **After the Ceremony**

The church may provide a light potluck meal after the funeral or memorial service where the deceased was an active member of Faith Lutheran Church at the time of death. The Women of Faith group generally coordinates this service. Where larger or more substantial meals are desired, and food must be purchased, the group should be reimbursed for its costs.

Where the deceased was not an active member of Faith Lutheran Church at the time of death, facilities are available for receptions in our Multi-purpose Ministry Center. Check with the pastor for availability. Food service providers should be told that no alcoholic beverages are permitted and there is no smoking in any church facility.

### **Fees and Honorariums**

All fees and honoraria should be paid by the day of the funeral or memorial service. Checks to the organist and pastor should be made out to them by name (check with the pastor if you do not know the organist's name). All other checks for fees should be made out to "Faith Lutheran Church".

#### **Funeral or Memorial Service in the Church:**

An appropriate honorarium for the services of a church organist is \$75.

There is no charge for the use of the church if the deceased was an active member of Faith Lutheran Church at the time of death. Otherwise the fee is \$150. This includes use of the church, cleaning before and after the service, printed bulletins, utilities, and altar supplies.

#### **Honorarium for Pastor**

There is no honorarium expected for the funeral or memorial service of active Faith Lutheran Church members for the pastor's services.

An appropriate honorarium for others is \$125 - \$200, though special circumstances may suggest otherwise. This includes funeral or memorial service planning, counseling, service preparation, pre- and post-funeral or memorial service activities, as well as the

funeral or memorial service itself. An additional honorarium should be considered if there is an additional private and or interment service, taking into consideration any travel costs and time involved.

All of these fees are negotiable given individual circumstances.

**Use of Multi-purpose Ministry Center for the Reception:**

The fee for using the Multi-purpose Ministry Center for a reception is \$350.00. There will be a waiver of this fee where the deceased was an active member of the church at the time of death.

The church will provide a reception hostess who will help you find things and make sure church policies are understood and followed.

If a caterer is to be used, they must be approved by the church. Most caterers provide everything needed for the reception; they are expected to provide clean-up of the kitchen and kitchen equipment, and replacement of kitchen supplies, if any. If no caterer is to be used, or if the caterer prefers, the church's custodian will do the major cleaning of the kitchen; the charge for this service is \$40.00. Set-up and restoration of tables, chairs, partitions, and place settings are your, or your caterers, responsibility, though church staff may be able to do this for you at a cost varying with the size of the funeral or memorial service.

If church dishes and utensils, or anything other than appliances, are to be used there will be an additional fee which will vary according to the number of persons to be served, i.e. \$1.00 per place setting and \$.50 per tablecloth and \$.10 per napkin plus professional cleaning and ironing costs (cleaning and ironing done professionally runs about \$8.00 per tablecloth).

No colored crepe paper may be used to decorate the Multi-purpose ministry center building; only non-running white may be used. No red-dye punch may be used.

The kitchen and anything used in the kitchen must be cleaned and replaced the day of the funeral or memorial service. A breakage and major-cleaning deposit of \$300.00 is required and will be assessed at the sole discretion of the church's funeral or memorial service hostess.

**Additional Information**

If you have any questions about your funeral or memorial service please do not hesitate to call Pastor David Berkedal at the church office at 909-599-3978, e-mail: [dberkedal@faithsd.net](mailto:dberkedal@faithsd.net) or fax to 909-599-3324.