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**IN LIFE AND DEATH \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

“At a person’s death, the church shares the grief of those who mourn and remembers the brevity of life on earth. At the funeral or memorial service, we give voice to sorrow, thank God for our loved one, and entrust this companion of ours into the hands of God. Trusting in God’s promise in baptism that we are claimed by Christ forever, we rest in the sure hope of the resurrection. When the church gathers to mark the end of life, Christ crucified and risen is the witness of worship, the strength of mutual consolation and the hope of healing.”

Our theology shapes not only our beliefs about death, but also how we celebrate the life of the one who has died. Frequently, we witness occasions in which a family faces the death of loved one without any real knowledge of the deceased’s wishes for their service.

As with faith itself, the time to prepare is not at the time of death, but during the previous months and years. It is an act of both faith and love to make these preparations and decisions in advance. Such action not only provides guidance to those making the final arrangements, but also alleviates additional anxiety for families and friends during what is naturally a very difficult time of the ways our church family may be of assistance.

**-Evangelical Book of Worship.**

The purpose of this booklet is to assist members and friends of Holy Trinity in their preparation for the eventuality of death. All too often families have been forced to face this time with only the barest understanding of all that is involved in planning.

**WHEN DEATH OCCURS \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

One of the ministers of the church should be second only to family to learn of the death of a church member. Call the church office and arrange for an appointment with one of our ministers.

Our ministers, through early involvement with loved ones, can offer help in difficult transition decisions regarding arrangements for the funeral or memorial service.

**WHERE & WHEN SERVICES SHOULD BE HELD**

The church building itself is the appropriate place for a Christian funeral or memorial. In the Sanctuary we are surrounded by symbols of the faith, which remind us of the promise of resurrection and of the “great cloud of witnesses” who have “kept the faith and finished the race” and now have inherited the “crown of glory.”

The ministers wish to be sensitive to the needs and desires of family members. Services are typically held within three to four days after a death has occurred. It may be necessary to take into consideration travel schedules for family members, availability of the ministers and church musicians, and previously scheduled events on the church calendar.

If for some reason a funeral home is chosen as the place for the service, such arrangements must be made with the funeral home director.

**BURIAL, CREMATION OR DONATION \_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Burial is a dignified custom that many people may wish to observe. Advance consideration should be given to the location of the cemetery and the selection of the burial plot, including the need for future graves.

The practice of cremation is consistent with the Christian faith and is much less expensive than traditional burial. It is not new; it has been practiced by Christians throughout the centuries. The remains are usually placed in a container and kept in an appropriate place such as a columbarium. Another option is the scattering of the ashes by family and friends at a location that holds special significance**.**

A third choice is to donate one’s body to a medical institution for study or a donation of parts of the body, e.g. eyes, kidneys, tissue, etc., for medical use and/or research. The donation of one’s body is considered an act of love and is an option which may be considered by all Christians.

The worship elements for a funeral service are used when a body or ashes are present. The worship elements for a memorial service are used when there is no body or ashes present. There is not a significant difference between the two services.

**INTERMENT SERVICES \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

The final disposition of the remains is another matter requiring forethought. Depending on the choice made (ground burial or cremation), time may be of the essence. When speaking with the pastor, you may decide to have an interment service before or after the funeral or memorial service. If ground burial or placement of an urn in a columbarium is the choice, additional arrangements must be made with the appropriate entities.

**ADVANCED PLANNING \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

We encourage families to engage in advance planning for arrangements at the time of death. In addition to planning the funeral or memorial service, there are several other actions and decisions which can be made in advance. These include making lists of important documents, providing a written personal history, executing a will, and completing advance medical directives. To assist in this planning process, the pastors of the church may provide you with several forms and resources which you may find helpful.

If you choose to complete a document indicating your wishes for the funeral or memorial service, we urge you to share a copy (as appropriate) with family members, your attorney, your physician, and with the church. All documents delivered to the church will be considered strictly confidential.

The church does not accept any legal liability for their custody nor may the church require others to follow directions and requests set down in them. However, they will be made available only to appropriate individuals to whom they may offer guidance. Of course, you may change any of the documents or have them returned to you at any time.

**GUIDELINES FOR THE SERVICE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**- Order of Worship**

**The funeral or memorial service is a liturgical service of worship to glorify God and to console the living.**

Although thankfulness is to be expressed to God for the life and witness of the deceased, the focus of worship is upon God; and as such, prolonged and undue attention upon the deceased is discouraged. We ask that only one eulogy be planned (if desired) and that it be limited to 5 minutes. This is desirable as the emphasis of the service is placed on the worship of God, not on praise of the deceased.

The order of service may be found in the Lutheran Book of Worship, beginning at page 279. Please reference the format, found at the end of this booklet as you plan your service.

Emphasis should be placed upon the readings of Scripture for the declaration of the Christian hope and any further readings or music should be carefully scrutinized to assure that they are consistent with the biblical affirmations of God’s power over death.

A short homily may be preached, which likewise bears testimony to the hope and promises set forth in Scripture. Thanks, may be offered for the God-given life of the one who has died, and intercessions for family members and other loved ones who grieve may also be offered.

The congregation participates in the service through responsive prayers, affirmations, and by singing hymns. This enables all to respond in a positive, active way in giving thanks to God for the life of the deceased.

In the event that rites of some military or fraternal order are desired, this ceremony should be conducted at a prior time and arrangements may be made for them to occur in another location. The Christian service is complete in itself and should be kept apart from other rituals.

**- Music**

The church organist will play for all services held in the church sanctuary and will consult with the family concerning the desires for music during the service.

Pre-recorded music is not used in the service. Guest musicians must be cleared with the organist prior to scheduling. Instrumentalists and soloists may be employed but the organist should be consulted, and specifics times set for rehearsals prior to the date of the service. Organist fees apply for all rehearsals.

**- Photographs, Videos and Memorabilia**

Photographs and memorabilia of the decease may be displayed in in the fellowship hall. No such items are placed in the sanctuary during the service. This is in keeping with the belief that the service should first and foremost focus on God.

Videos are not shown during a funeral or memorial service in the sanctuary. They may be included in the fellowship hall if proper equipment is provided. The church does not provide such equipment or operators.

**- Flowers**

Flowers are a traditional way of expressing sympathy. However, in keeping with the general worship practices of this congregation, only one arrangement will be permitted in the sanctuary. This arrangement is placed at the rear of the altar area. Other floral expressions may be displayed in the narthex or fellowship hall.

Typically, the family of the deceased will make arrangements with a florist of their choosing to ensure that the provider is aware of the size and style appropriate to Holy Trinity’s sanctuary.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be given to the Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church or to a recognized charitable organization. In this way, the memorial becomes a “living gift” and the deceased, in very tangible ways, continues to support the work and ministry of the Church or other benevolent causes in which s/he had an interest.

**- Pall**

The church furnishes a white brocade pall (a cloth covering) for every funeral held in the church sanctuary. The symbolism of the church pall is multilayered. Baptism is often spoken of in the New Testament as death in Christ and resurrection to new life.

The pall is white, representing the color of baptism robes worn by early Christians. The pall also symbolizes the fact that in Christ we are “clothed” with grace. In Christ we put off the old self and put on a new creation. In covering the casket or container, the pall symbolically expresses the Christian conviction that all persons are equal in the eyes of God and attention is drawn away from consideration of the cost or appearance of the casket or container.

Because the casket or container is covered by a pall, the purchase of a floral casket cover, blanket or container arrangement is unnecessary. If the family chooses to use a flower casket cover, blanket, or container arrangement, it will be removed before the casket or container enters the church.

Following the Benediction, as the casket is taken from the church, the flowers may again be placed on the casket before it is transported for burial.

**- Paschal Candle**

The Paschal Candle stands at the head of the casket or the urn stand during the service. The Paschal candle stands by the baptism font during a memorial service. The candle, symbolic of God’s gift of grace bestowed upon us in baptism, has been used since ancient times to remind God’s people that we are, through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, delivered from darkness and into the light of God’s eternal love, Death and resurrection are the basic meaning of baptism. Physical death marks the final and complete baptism in which, by the power of God, we are delivered into God’s eternal Kingdom.

**- Printed Programs**

Holy Trinity provides printed programs containing the complete service of worship for every funeral or memorial held at the church. A standard format for the service and other contents is followed. A brief biography and photograph supplied by the family may be included if given with advanced notice. Please speak with the church administrator about including one.

**SERVICE LOGISTICS**

**- Before the service**

The family and close friends of the deceased are asked to gather no later than fifteen minutes prior to the start of the service in the library, room A1, or the chapel located just off the narthex. The officiating minister or usher will meet you there, provide you bulletins and then escort you to a reserved seating section in the sanctuary. You are asked to remain standing, as you are able, as you enter, and the service begins.

**- After the service**

At the conclusion of the service, the presiding minister will escort you out of the sanctuary. You may form a receiving line in the narthex or in the fellowship hall. If a casket present, you may follow the casket to the hearse and then be escorted directly to your vehicles for transport to the burial site.

**RECEPTIONS \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

Receptions for funerals are not required but may be held to provide additional time to greet your family and friends. The Church Hospitality Team will help oversee all food events and assist with planning and equipment needs. Responsibility for providing food and drink and for setting up and cleaning up after the event lies with the group hosting the event. Please contact the church administrator to get church hospitality team information.

**- Scheduling**

If you wish to host an event (lunch, reception, dinner, etc.) you will need to contact:

1. The church administrator in advance to reserve your date and time. (a facility usage request form must be submitted)

2. Contact the church hospitality team leader to coordinate kitchen and equipment use and to help coordinate any special set up requests for facilities manager to facilitate.

**- Refreshments**

Providing refreshments for receptions may be handled in one of two ways:

1. If the deceased is actively involved with a group that is willing to provide food and drink and provide the labor for set up and clean up for the reception, please contact a representative of that group (W-ELCA, ministry group, neighborhood, etc.). That group representative is to work with the church hospitality team leader to make all arrangements.

2. A professional caterer may be hired to provide food and drink. Please consult the church office for guidelines on use of the fellowship hall or upper room. The caterer is bound by all guidelines set forth for use of these gathering spaces.

Due to liability and insurance, only a licensed, professional caterer is suggested to provide food for receptions. Proof of insurance must be provided to the church administrator prior to the reception.

Caterers must provide their own linens, cooking, serving and clean-up equipment. The caterer is responsible for removing trash to the dumpsters located on the church property. The caterer is responsible for ensuring floors are left clean.

Recommended Caterers:

Avante Catering 770-427-0145  
Carriage House 770-926-9852   
Silver Platter 770-977-4388   
Superior Catering 770-941-9263

**- FEES**

All Fees are to be made payable on or before the service date and made to Holy Trinity Lutheran Church.

**Active Church Members:**

Use of Sanctuary . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Covered by Church

Use of Fellowship Hall or Upper Room . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . Covered by Church

Organist Fee - (includes 1-hour service) . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . $200.00  
(Additional may be required for any extra rehearsals needed)

Guest Musician Fee . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . As Arranged

Pastor Fee / Honorarium. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . No Designated Honorarium   
A fee is not set; the given amount is at the discretion of bereaved. (If travel is required, mileage rates & other fees may apply)

Guest Pastor / Clergy Fees . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . As Arranged  
  
Facilities Manager . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .Covered by Church  
(includes 1hr for service & 2hrs for setup/cleanup)

Administrator/Coordinator (if required) . . . . .. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .Covered by Church

AV Video Streaming Service Fee . . . . . . . . . .. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .As Arranged

**Guests / Non-Church Members:**

Use of Sanctuary . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . $150.00

Use of Fellowship Hall . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . $250.00

Use of Upper Room . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .$350.00

Organist Fee - (includes 1-hour service) . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .$200.00  
(Additional may be required for any extra rehearsals needed)

Guest Musician Fee . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . As Arranged

Pastor Fee / Honorarium. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
A fee is not set; the given amount is at the discretion of bereaved. (If travel is required, mileage rates & other fees may apply)

Guest Pastor / Clergy Fees . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . As Arranged

Facilities Manager . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . $75.00  
(includes 1hr for service & 2hrs for setup/cleanup) Additional fees may apply depending on duties required.

Administrator/Coordinator (if required) . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . $75.00hr  
(Fees may vary depending on duties requested)

AV Video Streaming Service Fee . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .$100.00  
(Fees vary as this is not a regular service that is frequently provided however, it can be an option at a cost)

**SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR A FUNERAL OR MEMORIAL SERVICE:**

The following readings are particularly appropriate for use in the funeral or memorial service, and in ministry with the dying and bereaved. An Old Testament, Psalm, Epistle and Gospel selection are usually included in the service.

**- Old Testament**

Job 19:23-27 I know that my redeemer lives   
Isaiah 25:6-9 God will swallow up death forever   
Isaiah 26:1-4, 19 God will keep them in peace   
Isaiah 40:1-11, 28-31 Comfort my people   
Isaiah 40:28-31 Those who wait for the Lord shall renew strength   
Isaiah 43:1-3a, 18-19, 25 When you pass through the waters I will be with you   
Isaiah 44:6-8 I am the first and the last   
Isaiah 55:1-3, 6-13 Ho, everyone who thirsts   
Isaiah 61:1-4, 10-11 The spirit of the Lord is upon   
Isaiah 65:17-25 I create new heavens and a new earth   
Lamentations 3:19-26, 31b-32 The Lord’s steadfast love   
Daniel 12:1-3 Many of those who sleep in the dust shall awake   
Joel 2:12-13, 23-24, 26-29 Return to the Lord with all your heart

**- At the loss of a child**

Zechariah 8:1-8 Children playing in the streets of the city of God   
Isaiah 65:17-25 I create new heavens and a new earth

**- Psalms**

Psalm 16:5-11 The Lord is my chosen portion   
Psalm 23 The Lord is my shepherd   
Psalm 27:1, 4-9a, 13-14 The Lord is my light and my salvation   
Psalm 30:4-5, 12 Lord, let me know my end   
Psalm 42:1-6a As a deer longs for flowing streams   
Psalm 43 Give judgment for me, O God   
Psalm 46:1-5, 10-11 A very present help in trouble   
Psalm 90:1-10, 12 Teach us to number our days   
Psalm 91 The one who dwells in the shelter of the Most High   
Psalm 103 Bless the Lord, O my soul   
Psalm 106:1-5 O give thanks to the Lord   
Psalm 116:1-9, 15 The Lord has heard my voice   
Psalm 118 Open the gates of righteousness   
Psalm 121 I lift up my eyes to the hills   
Psalm 130 Out of the depths I cry to the Lord   
Psalm 139:1-12 Where shall I go from your spirit   
Psalm 145 I will extol you, O God my King   
Psalm 146 Hallelujah! Praise the Lord, O my soul

**SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR A FUNERAL OR MEMORIAL SERVICE:**

**- Epistles/New Testament**

Romans 5:1-11 Hope does not disappoint

Romans 6:3-9 Baptized in Christ’s death, raised to live with him

Romans 8:14-23, 31-39 Nothing can separate us from the love of God

Romans 14:7-9 10b-12 Whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s

1 Corinthians 15:3-8, 12-20a Christ raised from the dead

1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, Death is swallowed in victory

1 Corinthians 15:35-44 The natural body and the spiritual body

1 Corinthians 15:50-57 We shall all be changed

2 Corinthians 4:16-5:1 Visible things are temporary

2 Corinthians 5:1-10 From God we have a house not made with hands

Ephesians 1:11-2:1, 4-10 Saved by grace through faith

Philippians 3:7-11 Knowing him and the power of his resurrection

Philippians 3:20-21 Our citizenship is in heaven

Colossians 3:1-17 Set your minds on the things that are above

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 The comforts of Christ’s coming

2 Timothy 2:8-13 If we died with him, we shall also live with him

2 Timothy 4:6-8 I have run the good race

Hebrews 2:14-18 Christ was tested in every way

Hebrews 11:1-3, 14-16, 12:1-2 Faith, the pilgrimage, the cloud of witnesses

1 Peter 1:3-9 Without seeing Christ, you love him

1 Peter 3:18-22, 4:6 Christ’s ministry to the spirits in prison

1 John 3:1-3 We are children of God

Revelation 7:2-3, 9-17 They who have come out of the great tribulation

Revelation 14:1-3, 6-7, 12-13 Rest for the saints

Revelation 21:1-4, 22-25, 22:3-5 A new heaven and a new earth

Revelation 22:1-5 The Lord God will be their light

**- Gospels**

Matthew 5:1-12a The Beatitudes

Matthew 11:25-30 Hidden from the wise, revealed to infants

Matthew 25:1-13 Wise and foolish bridesmaids

Matthew 25:31-46 The last judgment

Luke 7:11-17 Jesus raises the son of the widow of Nain

Luke 18:15-17 We enter the kingdom on as children

Luke 23:33, 30-43 Today you will be with me in Paradise

John 3:16-21 God so loved the world

John 5:24-29 Whoever hears and believes has eternal life

John 6:37-40 I will never drive you away

John 6:47-58 Whoever believes in me has eternal life

John 11:17-27 I am the resurrection and the life

John 11:3-44 Lazarus raised from the dead

John14:1-6, 25-27 Let not your hearts be troubled

**- At the loss of a child**

Matthew 18:1-5, 10 The greatest in the kingdom of heaven

Mark 10:13-16 Let the children come to me

**HYMN SELECTIONS FOR A FUNERAL OR MEMORIAL SERVICE:**

The following hymns are particularly appropriate for use in a funeral or memorial service and are found in the Evangelical Lutheran Worship Book. Normally 2 or 3 hymns are selected, as indicated in the order of worship, and may be found in the Evangelical Lutheran Worship book. Please bear in mind that some songs may be better suited to a soloist rather than as congregational hymn. Music not suitable for inclusion in the service may be better used later in a reception or private family gathering.

Please speak with the church musician regarding your final selections. Other hymns or songs, not found in our hymnal may be considered, keeping in mind the themes of resurrection, hope, assurance, and eternal life. Copyright laws will be followed in regard to reproducing material from sources not covered by our reproduction licenses. The music department reserves all rights to final selection and inclusion of music in the service.

313 O Lord, now, let your servant 328 Restore in us, O God

361 The Day of Resurrection 377 Alleluia! Jesus is risen

379 Now the green blade rises 381 Peace, to soothe our bitter woes

391 This joyful Eastertide 422 For all the saints

426 Sing with all the Saints in glory 427 For all your saints, O Lord

428 Give thanks for saints 441 Oh, happy day when we shall stand

485 I am the bread of life 502 The King of love my shepherd is

504 A Mighty Fortress is Our God 595 Jesus loves me

596 My hope is built on nothing less 597 My hope is built on nothing less

613 Thy Holy wings 618 Guide me ever, great Redeemer

619 I know that my Redeemer lives! 620 How sweet the name of Jesus sounds

623 Rock of ages 624 Jesus, still lead on

628 Jerusalem, my happy home 629 Abide with me

632 O God our help in ages past 635 We walk by faith

639 When we are living 645 Christ is made the sure foundation

656 Bless be the tie that binds 660 Lift High the Cross

697 Just a closer walk with Thee 742 What a friend we have in Jesus

759 My faith looks up to Thee 767 Lord, take my hand and lead me

769 If you but trust in God to guide you 773 Precious Lord, take my hand

776 What God ordains is good indeed 778 The Lord’s my shepherd

779 Amazing grace 781 Children of the heavenly Father

782 My shepherd, you supply my need 785 When peace like a river

787 On eagle’s wings 790 Day by day

815 I want to walk as a child of the light 835 All creatures, worship God most high

838 Beautiful Savior 840 Now thank we all our God

**A CONVENIENT CHECK LIST:**

Use this list to review those items that may require attention as you plan for a funeral or memorial service. This list is not intended to be wholly inclusive, but as a way to begin plans once family and friends have been notified.

\_\_\_\_\_ Call the church office to notify the church administrator & pastor of the death. 770-971-4600

\_\_\_\_\_ Make an appointment to speak with the pastor regarding service plans & pickup service plan form.

\_\_\_\_\_ Make an appointment to speak with the church musician(s) regarding service liturgy and music.

\_\_\_\_\_ Reserve sanctuary and any additional required space once plans are complete with church administrator.

\_\_\_\_\_ Contact church Hospitality Chair regarding funeral reception plans and setup.

\_\_\_\_\_ Ensure all Biographies, memorabilia, pictures & guest book are given to church administrator promptly.

\_\_\_\_\_ Cover all fees. (Payable at least one day prior to the service)

Items not connected to or handled by Holy Trinity but should be considered.

\_\_\_\_\_ Call a funeral home and make arrangements regarding burial, cremation or donation.  
(The funeral home will be able to assist you with the preparation of the body, obituary, floral needs and transportation).

\_\_\_\_\_ Call florist of your choosing to make arrangements for desired floral tributes from the family if not handled by the funeral home. Be sure they are aware of our customs and policies concerning casket covers and floral tributes in the sanctuary. (Floral arrangements should arrive at least 1 hour prior to service and should be delivered to the church Narthex and not the sanctuary).

\_\_\_\_\_ Call the newspaper and place an obituary notice if not handled by the funeral home.

\_\_\_\_\_ Notify any professional organizations the deceased may have belonged to.

\_\_\_\_\_ Notify your legal representatives and any insurance carriers to report the death.

\_\_\_\_\_ Notify banks and credit card companies in order to cancel or to freeze accounts.

Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

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