



Funerals at Calvary

**A Guide to Help you
Plan a Loved One's Service**

Notify the Pastors:

Please let the pastors know as soon as possible when a loved one has died. In fact, if you let them know before death occurs, they will make an effort to visit with you during the time of saying good-bye. Once the death has taken place, the pastors will want to visit with you, both to comfort you and pray with you, and to plan for the funeral service.

Date and Time of Service:

Funerals can be held at on any day of the week and at any time, provided the pastors and the church are available. Please contact the church office to check on the availability of both church and clergy.

Type of Service:

Three types of services are available:

- **Funeral Service:** At a funeral service, the casket or urn of the deceased will be present. Often the service is followed by the interment at the cemetery.
- **Memorial Service:** At a memorial service, the remains of the deceased are not present. A picture can be used in their place.
- **Graveside Service:** This brief service is held at the open grave. The casket or urn are present and will be interred as part of the service.

Location of Service:

The funeral service and the memorial service can take place either at the church or at the funeral home. A graveside service is held at the cemetery.

Elements of the Service:

You as the family have several choices in planning the service, in order to make it as meaningful and personal as possible:

Communion: Holy Communion is the meal of God's presence that unites us with the saints of all ages. It is very appropriate to celebrate this sacrament at a funeral.

Eulogies: You can decide if you would like to invite people to share a eulogy during the service. Please ask the speakers ahead of time so they can prepare for this honor. If you want to extend an open invitation to share eulogies at the time of service, please have at least one person prepared to speak, so the invitation is not followed by an uncomfortable silence.

Hymns: If the service takes place at the church, you can select hymns. If you or your loved one have favorite hymns, they can be sung during the service. The pastors will be glad to assist you with this, or to select hymns for you. The service can include between 1 and 4 hymns.

Biblical Readings: If you know Biblical texts that are particularly meaningful to you or your loved one, we will be glad to use them for the service. The pastors can assist with the selection, or they can choose lessons for the service by themselves. Anywhere from 2 to 4 readings can be chosen.

Lectors: If you would like family or friends to participate in the service, you are welcome to ask them to be lectors and read the Biblical lessons.

Music: If there are musically gifted people among your family or friends, they are welcome to share their gift during the service by performing a piece.

Organist/Pianist: If the service is held at the church, we will ask our organist to play music both before and during the service. The fee for his playing is \$100. If our regular organist is unavailable, we will find a substitute.

Bulletins: When the service takes place at the church, a worship bulletin is helpful. The church office will gladly print the bulletins for you. Please send information you might want to include, such as names of pall bearers and lectors, invitation to the interment or the reception, etc., to the office in time for the printing. Also, please let the office know how many bulletins you think you will need.

Open or Closed Casket: If the service is held at the funeral home, the casket can be either open or closed. If the service is held at the church, the casket will be closed prior to the service and draped with the funeral pall, a big cloth with the symbol of the cross on it; it is a reminder that in life and in death Christ's love surrounds and covers us. However, if there is a viewing at the church prior to the service, the casket can be open for that; it will be closed when the service is about to begin.

Interment:

The interment takes place following the funeral service. The congregation is invited to join the line of car heading for the cemetery for the grave site service.

If the cemetery is at a distance, there are a few options to manage the time for people not participating in the interment but wanting to attend the reception:

- Invite the people to wait at the location of the reception.
- Hold the reception at a location closer to the cemetery.
- Hold the interment following the reception.
- Hold the interment before the service and make it a memorial service.

Reception:

Many people value a time of reception following the service, to connect with family members and friends, to comfort one another, and to share memories.

The fellowship hall of the church is available to you for a reception. You have a few options for planning your reception:

- Ask the congregation's kitchen team to prepare the food for you. Usually they are glad to do that for you. They might ask you to contribute to the cost, depending on what kind of meal you envision.
- Have the reception catered.
- Ask family members and friends to bring food pot-luck style.

You can also opt to hold a reception at a local restaurant and other establishment, or in your home.

Viewing:

Many people value a time of visitation prior to the funeral service. Viewings are often held at the funeral home on the afternoon and/or evening prior to the day of the funeral. They are also sometimes offered immediately prior to the service, either at the funeral home or at the church.

However, some people do not like the idea of a viewing. Please make the decision according to your family's traditions and desires.

Pictures:

Many families enjoy sharing pictures of the deceased and mementos of his/her life with the congregation. The fellowship hall gives ample space to arrange such items. At the funeral home, the funeral director will have easels and the like available for you.

Video:

Videos or video-collages of pictures are becoming more popular. Funeral homes usually have the equipment to play such videos during viewings and visitations. The church has video equipment in the sanctuary; if you would like to use it, please let the office know, so we can arrange for a person to run the equipment.

Flowers:

People enjoy showing their sympathy and love for you through the gift of flowers. Both at the funeral home and at the church, flower baskets are arranged surrounding the casket or urn. Some flowers are usually taken to the cemetery.

Some people designate a flower basket or two for the church, to be used at the following Sunday's worship service, when the congregation will be praying for the deceased and his/her family and friends.

Donations:

Some families ask their friends to make a donation to charitable organizations in lieu of flowers. You can choose the organizations you or your loved one are passionate about. Such information should be placed in the obituary. The funeral director can help you with this.

Masonic Services:

If the deceased was a member of a masonic organization, a masonic service might be wanted. The appropriate place for this service is at the funeral home during the visitation or viewing.

Military Honors:

If the deceased was a veteran, you can request military honors. The funeral director will assist you with placing the request. Military honors are part of the interment service at the grave site.

Cemeteries:

The funeral director can provide you with a list of local cemeteries.

Green Burial:

Increasingly, people are concerned about the burden of traditional funerals on the environment, as well as the cost of caskets, vaults, and cemetery plots. Additionally, some people would like to take the Biblical notion of “ashes to ashes and dust to dust” seriously. A faithful, environmentally conscious, and economically friendly solution is a green burial. In a green burial, the deceased is cremated and the ashes are strewn in a green place in nature. A funeral director can inform you about green burial options in the area. At Calvary, we offer green burials at our outdoor chapel at the edge of the woods.

Stephen Minister:

The death of a loved one is an event with great emotional impact. It will take a long time to work through your loss and grief. In order to extend the love of Christ and of Calvary's faith family to you, we will assign a Stephen Minister to care for you.

Stephen Ministers are laypeople from our congregation who have been through 50 hours of training. They will accompany you on your journey of healing through regular visits, phone calls, texts, or e-mail, whatever is most convenient for you. Your Stephen Minister will maintain absolute confidentiality; nobody will even know you have a Stephen Minister but you, your Stephen Minister, and the Stephen Leader who makes the assignment. Your Stephen Minister will be there to listen to you, your story, and your feelings. It takes a long time to recover from a loss of a person close to you; your Stephen Minister will patiently stand by you during this time. If at any time you believe you are able to go on without the Stephen Minister's support, you are welcome to end this caring relationship.

Funeral Arrangements

Name:

The Service:

Location: Calvary Lutheran Church Funeral Home

Other: _____

Communion: Yes No

Bible Texts to be read:

Favorite Hymns to be sung:

Special Music/Soloist:

Eulogies: No Yes, by

Viewing: No Yes: at the church at the Funeral Home

Donations in lieu of flowers to:

Reception: at Calvary Lutheran Church Other:

Possible Scripture Choices: These are lessons commonly chosen for funeral services. However, they are just suggestions. If you have favorite Bible passages or find verses particularly meaningful to you, you are very welcome to choose them for the service.

Job 19:23-27a

Romans 5:1-11

Isaiah 25:6-9

Romans 5:17-21

Isaiah 61:1-3

Romans 8:31-35, 37-39

Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33

Romans 14:7-8

1 Corinthians 15:12-26

Psalms 23

1 Corinthians 15:51-57

Psalms 42:1-7

Philippians 3:20-21

Psalms 46:1-7

1 Peter 1:3-9

Psalms 90

1 John 3:1-2

Psalms 118

Revelation 7:9-17

Psalms 121

Revelation 21:2-7

Psalms 130

Psalms 143

Matthew 11:25-30

Matthew 25:1-13

Luke 12:35-40

John 5:24-29

John 6:37-40

John 11:21-27

John 14:1-6

