

Funeral Handbook

**Resurrection Lutheran Church
St. Joseph, Minnesota**

320-363-4232



Earth to Earth, Ashes to Ashes, Dust to Dust

The resurrection is a central doctrine of the Christian faith and shapes Christians' attitudes and responses to the event of death. Death brings loss, sorrow, and grief to all. In the face of death, Christians do not bear bereavement in isolation but are sustained by the power of the Holy Spirit and the community of faith. The Church offers a ministry of love and hope to all who grieve. This Funeral Handbook provides guidelines to assist in designing a service for the Burial of the Dead at Resurrection Lutheran Church as we express both our grief and our hope in Christ.

The focus of the Christian Funeral is God. In the funeral liturgy, the Church turns to God in faith for the reward of eternal life for those who believe in God and lived for God in this life. The Church prays to God for the healing and consolation of those who mourn while remembering and giving thanks for the life of one of God's children.

The Christian Funeral is an aid for both the living and the dead. As we gather to pray for our beloved dead, we are strengthened and renewed in our faith so that we can recommit ourselves to loving God and living our lives in Jesus Christ. The funeral liturgy lifts up for us all the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ and the promise of resurrection.

The service of the Burial of the Dead is closely tied with Holy Baptism. In the waters of baptism, Christians make the passage with Jesus Christ through death to the new life of the resurrection. The ritual symbols of water, the Christ candle, the pall, the Word of God, and the journey to the altar all recall the journey that begins for the Christian in baptism.

Contacting the Pastor

When death is anticipated or has already occurred, please call the Resurrection Lutheran Church (RLC) pastor(s), no matter the hour of the day. The pastor can bring the prayers and presence of the community of faith to the hospital, nursing home, or home and can initiate the process of planning and arranging for the funeral.

Location of service

The funeral should be held in the church whenever possible. The church is where we begin our life as baptized people and it is also where we celebrate the completion of our baptism in the Burial of the Dead. In this sacred space, life in Christ began in Baptism. In the church we are nourished with the proclaimed Word and the bread and wine of the Sacrament. The church is the space where the symbols and signs of the Christian faith are placed and where believers are shaped week after week as they gather to worship the living God.

Type(s) of service

Three different service options are available for a Christian Funeral.

- 1) The first is a Visitation (also known as a Wake). At this service, the body can be viewed outside of the church sanctuary, surrounded by photos, a slideshow, flowers, etc. This service provides a more casual setting in which the deceased can be remembered and spoken about. It is at this service when a small prayer service and moments of remembrance (eulogies) can take place. It is also common for this service to be held at a funeral home. The family may request the pastor to lead a prayer service during the visitation at the funeral home.
- 2) The second option is a Service for the Burial of the Dead. This is the traditional funeral service, in which the *casket* is present and there is a structured liturgy. The **Order of Worship** for this liturgy can be found in the ELW (pg. 279) as well as further on in this handbook. This order will not be interrupted by the rites of secular organizations. Military honors are not considered part of Christian worship and are more appropriately carried out at the cemetery. If a veteran's funeral is held, the American flag will be removed prior to the casket's entrance into the sanctuary. The celebration of Holy Communion is an option for this service.
- 3) The final option is a Memorial Service. This is the traditional funeral service, in which the *urn* is present and there is a structured liturgy. The **Order of Worship** for this liturgy can be found in the ELW (pg. 279) as well as further on in this handbook. This order will not be interrupted by the rites of secular organizations. Military honors are not considered part of Christian worship and are more appropriately carried out at the cemetery. The celebration of Holy Communion is an option for this service.

Once the family and pastor have discussed the items above, it is extremely important that the Church Administrator for RLC be contacted for the purpose of scheduling. In most cases, events scheduled in the church building will be re-scheduled or re-arranged in order to provide for a funeral. Find information on fees and honorariums further in this handbook.

Typically one pastor will officiate the service, as they have been working with the family throughout the planning and grieving processes. Requests for participation of a guest pastor to assist in the service must be made through the officiating pastor of RLC. If it is appropriate, the pastor will extend an invitation.

Order of Worship

The Service for the Burial of the Dead provides the faith community words of hope, comfort, and thanksgiving in the midst of sorrow and grief. Within the service there are many opportunities to personalize the service to reflect the deceased, the family, and the faith community. The pastor and/or Worship and Music Coordinator of RLC will work with the family to develop a service. Often times, the deceased will have already thought about elements of the service, such as the music or readings. Family and friends are invited to help in the selection of these elements and are encouraged to participate in the service however they feel comfortable. These roles may include pallbearers, lectors, or musicians (either vocal or instrumental).

Prior to the Service

The pastor will lead the family in prayer in the RLC library 10 minutes before the service begins.

When a casket is present: The casket will be closed prior to the beginning of the service and the casket will precede the family into the sanctuary during the processional hymn for the service.

The family follows the pastor and casket to reserved seating as the service begins.

When an urn is present: The urn will be placed the front of the church for the funeral service.

The family follows the pastor to reserved seating as the service begins.

A funeral pall is available for use at RLC to cover the casket or urn throughout the service. The pall is a reminder that we are clothed in Christ in Holy Baptism and Christ's promise covers us even in death. The pall is also a reminder that before God, all persons are equal.

Funeral Liturgy Outline

Gathering

Processional Hymn
Thanksgiving for Baptism
Greeting
Prayer of the Day

Word

Scripture Readings
*After each reading, all respond: **Thanks be to God.***
Sermon
Hymn of the Day
Creed
Prayers of Intercession
*After each petition, all respond: God of mercy, **hear our prayer.***

A service with communion continues with the peace, and then follows the pattern for worship for a service with Holy Communion. Following the prayer after communion, the service continues with the commendation.

The Lord's Prayer

Sending

Commendation
Benediction
Recessional Hymn

The service concludes with the pastor leading the recessional, followed by the casket (guided by pallbearers), and then the family. If an urn is present, the pastor leads the processional, followed by a pallbearer with the urn, and then the family.

If the Committal is to occur at this time, the pastor precedes the casket or urn to the place of internment. The Committal portion of the service will continue with a greeting, additional prayers and/or scripture readings and conclude with a blessing.

If the Committal is to take place at another time, the family is to communicate with the Funeral Home Director for the next steps.

Scripture Readings

While the gospel is always read by the pastor, the earlier readings can be read by others from the congregation. Often loved ones choose family members or close friends to proclaim the first and second readings. Select readers with care; not everyone feels comfortable reading aloud before others, nor is everyone able to proclaim loudly and clearly. Because Christians believe that God is present in the proclamation of this Word, it is necessary for the reader to be easily heard and understood. Consider how well the readers will be able to proclaim the Word, taking into account the emotions present at a funeral service. It is the task of the family and/or reader to prepare the passage in advance. If requested, other RLC ministers present at the service could read the Scripture selections.

Scripture Reading suggestions (choose 2-3 readings)			
Old Testament	Job 19:23-27 <i>I know that my redeemer lives.</i>	Isaiah 25:6-9 <i>He will swallow up death forever.</i>	
	Isaiah 43: 1-3 <i>Do not fear, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name.</i>	Isaiah 61: 1-3 <i>The spirit of the Lord is upon me to bring good news to the oppressed.</i>	
	Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 <i>For everything there is a season and a time for every matter.</i>	Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33 <i>The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases.</i>	
Psalms	1 -- <i>For the Lord watches over the way of the righteous.</i>	23 -- <i>The Lord is my shepherd.</i>	46 -- <i>God is my refuge and strength.</i>
	90 -- <i>Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations.</i>	91 -- <i>My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust.</i>	103 -- <i>Bless the Lord, O my soul, and that is within me.</i>
	119 -- <i>Happy are those who seek him with their whole heart.</i>	121 -- <i>I lift up my eyes to the hills, from where will my help come?</i>	130 -- <i>Out of the depths I cry to you.</i>
New Testament	Romans 5:1-11 <i>We are reconciled to God through Christ.</i>	Romans 5:17-21 <i>We are justified and have eternal life through Christ.</i>	
	Romans 8:1-2, 28, 31-39 <i>Nothing will separate us from the love of God in Christ.</i>	Romans 14:7-9 <i>So whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.</i>	
	1 Corinthians 15:12-26 <i>The resurrection of the dead.</i>	1 Corinthians 15:51-57 <i>Death has been swallowed up by victory.</i>	
	2 Corinthians 4:14, 17 – 5:1 <i>Because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also.</i>	2 Timothy 2:8-13 <i>If we have died with him, we will also live with him.</i>	
	Revelation 20:11 – 21:1 <i>Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth.</i>	Revelation 21:2-7 <i>He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples.</i>	
Gospel	Matthew 5:4 <i>Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.</i>	Matthew 6:9-13 <i>Pray then in this way: Our Father in heaven, hallowed by your name.</i>	
	Matthew 11:25-30 <i>Come to me, all you that are weary, and I will give you rest.</i>	Luke 7:11-17 <i>When the Lord saw her, he had compassion for her and said to her, 'Do not weep.'</i>	
	John 3:14-21 <i>For God so loved the world.</i>	John 5:19-29 <i>Anyone who hears and believes has eternal life.</i>	
	John 11:21-27 <i>I am the resurrection and the life, and all who believe in me will never die.</i>	John 14:1-6 <i>In my father's house, there are many dwelling places.</i>	

Music Selections

Music for the funeral service should be chosen with the understanding that this is first and foremost a worship service. Therefore all music selected should reflect that fact and be Christian in nature. When considering a vocal piece, the question to ask is "*Who or what is the focus?*" God and God's faithfulness is the central focus of Christian worship. Because of this, secular music is not appropriate. If you have questions about what is appropriate please consult the Pastor and/or Worship and Music Coordinator.

A cantor and pianist from RLC will be provided. If any guest musicians are requested, that musician will be required to contact the Worship and Music Coordinator about selecting appropriate music, scheduling rehearsal time with the accompanist, and testing out sound equipment. Solos are appropriate at certain points in the service. Speak to the Worship and Music Coordinator for more details.

Suggested music options from the ELW hymnal		
Liturgical Placement	Song Title	Hymn Number
Processional Hymn	Comfort, Comfort Now My People	256
	Good Christian Friends, Rejoice	288
	Christ Has Arisen, Alleluia	364
	Thine Is the Glory	376
	Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen!	377
	Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty	413
	Shall We Gather at the River	423
	A Mighty Fortress Is Our God	504
	God Be with You Till We Meet Again	536
	Go, My Children, with My Blessing	543
<i>or</i>	You Are Mine	581
	Just As I Am, without One Plea	592
Hymn of the Day	My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less	597
	Thy Holy Wings	613
<i>or</i>	I Know That My Redeemer Lives!	619
	Rock of Ages, Clef for Me	623
Recessional Hymn	Blessed Assurance	638
	I Love to Tell the Story	661
	Just a Closer Walk with Thee	697
	Blest Are They	728
	Borning Cry	732
	Great Is Thy Faithfulness	733
	What a Friend We Have in Jesus	742
	My Faith Looks Up to Thee	759
	My Life Flows On in Endless Song	763
	Precious Lord, Take My Hand	773
Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound	779	

	When Peace like a River	785
	On Eagle's Wings	787
	Beautiful Savior	838
	How Great Thou Art	856
	Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory	890
*Communion Songs	All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly	461
	Bread of Life, Our Host and Meal	464
	By Your Hand You Feed Your People	469
	Let Us Break Bread Together	471
	Here Is Bread	483
	You Satisfy the Hungry Heart	484
	I Am the Bread of Life	485
	One Bread, One Body	496

The hymns listed above are merely suggestions for the service. These hymns have been selected as they are appropriate hymns for a funeral service and are familiar to the RLC congregation and accompanists. It is important to choose hymns that are familiar, so as to involve the entire faith community gathered.

Other music selections are welcome, however the music must be easily attainable for the congregation and accompanist to play and sing along, meaning that the accompaniment and a digital file of the music must be provided to the Worship and Music Coordinator *at least 3 days prior* to the service. This also ensures that RLC is following all copyright policy.

Prelude and Postlude music for the service is normally chosen by the accompanist. This will be music that is appropriate for a funeral service, therefore containing melodies derived from sacred songs.

Memorial Gifts

Memorial gifts provide a way for the children of God to continue in the service and mission of Jesus Christ. Memorial gifts may be designated to a certain area of RLC (for example: music, Sunday School, building fund) These gifts are tax deductible.

Fellowship

Following the service, a fellowship gathering (such as a luncheon or dessert) may be held in the Fellowship Hall. Please contact the Church Administrator to coordinate the fellowship hour and organize food service. RLC will provide a dessert as well as hot and cold beverages. Additional food, such as sandwiches, can be made and served by RLC volunteers. The family will be responsible for any costs for food (except dessert and beverages). If a larger meal is planned, RLC volunteers will serve, but the family will be responsible for contacting a caterer to arrange for delivery of the meal as well as communicating delivery time and the number of expected people with the RLC Church Administrator.

Fees and Honorariums

Being that a funeral service is an additional task to the RLC staff, fees and honorariums for the service are to be expected and are determined based on church involvement as listed below:

1. Active members are those who have been received as members and are active within the church at least one year prior to the death of the loved one.
2. Connected persons are those whose immediate (parents, children and siblings) family are active members of Resurrection Lutheran Church.

Item:	Cost:	
	Active members	Connected persons
Building Use Fee <i>This includes the use of all church facilities including the sanctuary, narthex, and fellowship hall.</i>	\$0	\$300
Administrative Fee <i>This includes the coordination and scheduling of all elements of the service and fellowship, as well as providing a worship aide for the funeral service.</i>	\$0	\$100
Facility Management Fee <i>This includes the set-up and clean-up of all church facilities.</i>	\$0	\$100
Pastoral Honorarium	<i>Not expected, but at the discretion of the family</i>	
Musical Honorarium	Cantor	\$75
	Pianist	\$125
Nursery Attendant Fee	\$50 (if necessary)	\$50

Please communicate with the RLC pastor(s) about how each check should be made out.

Family Responsibilities (if not working with a Funeral Home)

While Resurrection Lutheran Church takes care of all tasks relating to the funeral service, it is the responsibility of the family to:

- arrange the floral tributes at the service;
- write and submit obituary to newspaper(s), local radio stations;
- assemble and arrange photo boards;
- provide a guest register if desired;
- arrange for family/friends to serve as ushers and greeters;
- set up and remove all flowers before and after service (and visitation, if needed);
- remove all items related to the service from the church;
- provide any memorial cards for those attending the service;
- reimburse RLC for any costs associated with the Fellowship hour;
- pay all fees and honorariums prior to the date of the service;
- make cemetery arrangements for the burial;
- contact Veteran's Affairs/VFW/American Legion, if appropriate

Service Selections

Readings

Reading #1: _____ Reader: _____

Reading #2: _____ Reader: _____

Reading #3: _____ Reader: _____

Music

Processional Hymn: _____ ELW # _____

Hymn of the Day: _____ ELW # _____

**Soloist*

Title: _____ Composer: _____

*Holy, Holy: _____ ELW # _____

*Lamb of God: _____ ELW # _____

*Communion Song: _____ ELW # _____

*Communion Song: _____ ELW # _____

Recessional Hymn: _____ ELW # _____



Fees and Honorariums

		Pay to the Order of:	Amount Paid	Date	Check Number
Building Use Fee					
Administrative Fee					
Facility Management Fee					
Pastor's Honorarium					
Musical Honorarium	Cantor				
	Pianist				
Nursery Attendant Fee					

On behalf of the pastor(s), staff, and Resurrection Lutheran Church congregation, we extend our deepest sympathy to you on the death of your family member. Know that we will hold you in our prayers in these days of grief and loss.

*Almighty God, source of all mercy and giver of comfort, deal graciously with those who mourn,
that, casting all their sorrow on You, they may know the consolation of your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.*



Copy for RLC

Service Selections

Readings

Reading #1: _____ Reader: _____
 Reading #2: _____ Reader: _____
 Reading #3: _____ Reader: _____

Music

Processional Hymn: _____ ELW # _____
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**Soloist*
 Title: _____ Composer: _____
 *Holy, Holy: _____ ELW # _____
 *Lamb of God: _____ ELW # _____
 *Communion Song: _____ ELW # _____
 *Communion Song: _____ ELW # _____
 Recessional Hymn: _____ ELW # _____

Words of Remembrance

Presenter #1: _____ # of Minutes: _____
 Presenter #2: _____ # of Minutes: _____



RLC Office Use Only

		Pay to the Order of:	Amount Paid	Date	Check Number
Building Use Fee					
Administrative Fee					
Facility Management Fee					
Pastor's Honorarium					
Musical Honorarium	Cantor				
	Pianist				
Nursery Attendant Fee					

Preparations for All Saints' Sunday (*First Sunday of November*)

Photograph D.O.B. D.O.D. Full Legal Name