

Funeral Planning Worksheet

As Christian people, we know that death does not have the final answer. Through God's grace, Jesus has conquered sin and death forever. As we profess in the Apostles' Creed, we believe in the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting.

Funerals are among the times that we as Christians do the task of the Church the best. We comfort one another in our grief, we gather in community, and we proclaim Christ crucified and risen. A Christian funeral is not a tribute to how wonderful you were, but instead it publicly affirms the saving power of God, as demonstrated in your life. We tell how God's story interacts with your story. Baptismal imagery is important because it reminds us of God's saving deeds. As Paul writes in Romans 6:5, "For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his."

In the days following a death, it can often be overwhelming for family members to put the details of a funeral together. Whether it is following a long illness or a surprising accident, your loved ones may wonder what your wishes really were. This worksheet is an opportunity for you to think about these things now, discussing them with your family, friends, and pastor. A copy will be kept in a confidential file at Amazing Grace to assist the pastor and your family in planning your funeral. It is not a legally binding document, but a guide and starting point for having conversation about what is to come.

Amazing Grace Lutheran Church

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Basic information

Full name:

Date of birth:

Place of birth:

Date of baptism:

Place of baptism:

Date of confirmation:

Place of confirmation:

Date of marriage:

Place of marriage:

Spouse's name:

Survived by:

Preceded in death by:

Work and education:

Hobbies, activities, and passions:

Next of kin and/or those making funeral arrangements:

Care of the body

This worksheet is not a binding document, but it can guide your loved ones in making decisions. Please talk with your family about these options now. Some decisions require separate signed documents.

Organ donation (circle one): Yes No

Donation for research (circle one): Yes No

Autopsy (circle one):

None unless legally required

If it will benefit medical research

Final decision made by:

Cremation (circle one): Yes, before service Yes, after service No

Have you done any pre planning with a funeral home? (circle one): Yes No

If yes, which funeral home?

Visitation

The visitation is an opportunity for friends and family to gather, often the evening before the funeral.

No visitation Visitation at funeral home Visitation at the church

Would you like the pastor to lead a short service of prayer and memories with the family before the visitation? (circle one): Yes No Unsure

Funeral service

The pastor of Amazing Grace normally preaches and officiates at funerals held at Amazing Grace. Other clergy may participate in the service at the pastor's invitation and discretion. At Amazing Grace, a white funeral pall covers the casket as a reminder of baptism, and the paschal candle is lit as a reminder of Christ's triumph over death. Lutherans leave the casket closed as a sign of resurrection. Communion can be a comforting option.

Funeral location (circle one):

Amazing Grace Lutheran Church

Funeral Home: _____

Other: _____

Body/remains present? (circle one): Yes (funeral) No (memorial service)

Communion? (circle one): Yes No Unsure

Would you be interested in discussing interment at Amazing Grace if the church were to build a columbarium to house ashes? (circle one): Yes No

You may choose one Old Testament reading, such as:

Job 19:23-27a: I know that my Redeemer lives

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8: For everything there is a season

Isaiah 25:6-9: God will swallow up death forever

Isaiah 40:1, 6-11: God will gather the lambs

Isaiah 40:1-11, 28-31: Comfort my people, says your God

Isaiah 43:1-3a, 5-7: I have called you by name

Isaiah 43:1-3a, 18-19: I am about to do a new thing

Isaiah 55:1-3, 6-13: Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters

Isaiah 61:1-3: The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me

Isaiah 65:17-20, 23-25: A new heaven and a new earth

Isaiah 66:10-14: As a mother comforts her child

Jeremiah 31:8-13: I will turn their mourning into joy

Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33: The steadfast love of the LORD

You may choose a Psalm to be prayed by the congregation, such as:

Psalm 23: *The LORD is my shepherd*

Psalm 42:1-5: *As a deer longs for flowing streams*

Psalm 46:1-7: *God is our refuge and strength*

Psalm 121: *I lift up my eyes to the hills*

Psalm 139:7-12: *The gracious omnipresence of the LORD*

Psalm 142:1-6: *I cry to the LORD with my voice*

Psalm 143: *LORD, hear my prayer*

You may choose a New Testament reading, such as:

Romans 5:1-11: *Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*

Romans 8:31-35, 37-39: *Who will separate us from the love of Christ?*

1 Corinthians 15:12-26: *Christ, the first fruits, has been raised*

2 Corinthians 4:6-12, 16-18: *Treasure in clay jars*

1 Thessalonians 4:13-14, 18: *Teaching about those who have died*

Hebrews 12:1-2: *Surrounded by a cloud of witnesses*

1 Peter 1:3-9: *A living hope through Jesus' resurrection*

1 John 3:1-2: *See what love the Father has given us*

Revelation 7:9-17: *God will wipe away every tear*

Revelation 21:2-7: *I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem*

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

The pastor will read one Gospel, such as:

Matthew 5:1-10: *Blessed are those who mourn*

Matthew 11:25-30: *I will give you rest*

Matthew 18:1-5, 10-14: *A child is the greatest in the kingdom*

Mark 10:13-16: *Let the little children come*

Mark 16:1-7: *The resurrection of Christ*

Luke 24:1-9: *The resurrection of Christ*

John 1:1-5, 9-14: *The light shines in the darkness*

John 6:37-40: *I will raise them up on the last day*

John 10:11-16: *I am the good shepherd*

John 11:21-27: *I am the resurrection and the life*

John 14:1-6: *I prepare a place for you*

John 14:25-27: *Peace I leave with you*

Music

Through music, we are often able to express what words alone cannot. For services at the church, Amazing Grace's pianist will normally be the musician. In rare circumstances, other musicians may participate at the pastor's invitation and discretion. In selecting music, it is important to consider how the hymn proclaims Christ crucified and risen as demonstrated in the life of the deceased, as well as feasibility for congregational singing. A recording of your favorite country/western song, show tune, or hip hop track might be more appropriate as background music at the visitation or luncheon, if it is appropriate at all. At Amazing Grace, we have copies of the green Lutheran Book of Worship and blue With One Voice hymnals. This list is a starting point, and by no means exhaustive. Choose three to five hymns:

Green Lutheran Book of Worship (LBW)

Abide with Me	272
Alleluia! Sing to Jesus	158
Amazing Grace	448
Beautiful Savior	518
Children of the Heavenly Father	474
For All the Saints	174
Guide Me Ever, Great Redeemer	343
He Leadeth Me	501
How Great Thou Art	532
I Know of a Sleep in Jesus Name	342
Lift High the Cross	377
My Faith Looks Up to Thee	479
Now Thank We All Our God	534
O God, Our Help in Ages Past	320
O Jesus, I Have Promised	503
The King of Love My Shepherd Is	456
What a Friend We Have in Jesus	439
When I Survey the Wondrous Cross	482
When Peace, Like a River, Attendeth My Way	346
Who is this Host Arrayed in White?	314

Blue With One Voice (WOV)

Baptized in Water	693
Blessed Assurance	699
Day by Day	746
Go, My Children, with My Blessing	721
Great is Thy Faithfulness	771
I Was There to Hear Your Borne Cry	770
Precious Lord, Take My Hand	731
Shall we Gather at the River	690
Thine the Amen, Thine the Praise	801
Thy Holy Wings	741

Remembrances

Sharing stories and memories can be a helpful way of celebrating and grieving. However, discomfort with public speaking and strong emotions can make this a difficult task for many. The sharing of memories during the service itself should be limited to no more than three preselected people who have prepared their words in advance. An open time for memories is appropriate during the luncheon or with the family before the visitation.

Memories during the service? (circle one): Yes No

Names (no more than three):

Time for sharing memories among the family before the visitation?

(circle one): Yes No

Open time for sharing memories during the luncheon?

(circle one): Yes No

Including others

There are several opportunities for including friends and family in the service.

Pall bearers (up to eight):

Honorary pall bearers:

Readers (up to three):

Ushers (two to four):

Acolyte:

Assisting minister:

Funeral luncheon

Amazing Grace loves to provide food and hospitality at funerals.

No luncheon Food at Amazing Grace Food at a home

If food: Full meal Coffee and dessert Finger food appetizers

Burial

Internment (circle one): In the earth Mausoleum Cremation

If internment in the ground, have you secured a cemetery plot?

(circle one): Yes No Where?

Please share any additional details or requests:

Name of person preparing this form (print):

Signature:

Date:

Do you desire a visit with the pastor to discuss these plans? (circle one): Yes No

Please feel free to call upon the pastor at any time for help with issues of death, dying, grief, or mourning.

Please return this worksheet to:

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