



FUNERAL PLANNING GUIDE

TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
EAU CLAIRE WI

Funeral Planning Guide and Worksheet

Thank you for picking up Trinity's Funeral Planning Guide and Worksheet. This material is designed to:

- ▶ to provide a tool for planning for the future when your life on this earth ends, and
- ▶ to support and guide families making plans upon the death of a loved one.

In the first days following a loved one's death, the family makes an average of 200 decisions. During such an emotional, stressful and demanding time, plans that have been made earlier lighten the load after death. If you've not made advance plans, this guide will be helpful to you as you make arrangements for services and burial of your loved one.

This guide will walk you through a series of questions. Your responses can be marked on the worksheet at the end. The Trinity Pastors are available to discuss any items with you. When you are finished, please share your worksheet with a family member or friend who will act on your behalf after your death. It would also be helpful to contact a Trinity Pastor to share your worksheet so that it can be held in safekeeping for the future.

The Goal of the Christian Funeral Service

The gathering of family and friends, who form a community of hope for a funeral or memorial service, is a rich opportunity to recall the promises of God through Christ. Because of His suffering, death, and resurrection to new life, each time we gather to worship upon the death of a loved one, we do so in the context of God's promises. Every funeral includes praising God in Christ who is our hope and our salvation, even as we remember the deceased and give thanks to God for the time shared with that person.

Lutheran Christians believe in Jesus Christ whose bodily death and resurrection made possible life everlasting. We view death as another step in our life as children of God. Yet, Christians also experience death as a time of loss when sorrow, grief, and bereavement are both natural and appropriate. These two truths inform the Christian funeral service and guide the church in its ministry to those who have lost a loved one to death, affirming with both joy and tears the promise and hope of the Good News of Jesus.

A funeral or memorial service should be comforting to those who mourn as well as bear witness to our faith in Jesus Christ. The concern of gathered friends does minister to our grief and, above all else, a funeral is a service of worship to God. There, in God's presence together, we witness to our faith in the communion of saints, the resurrection of the body, and the life ever-lasting. In doing so, the assurance of God's love and salvation in Christ becomes a ministry, especially to the bereaved. Since a funeral is a service of worship, all that takes place should be consistent with this principle.

Planning Faithfully, Choosing Wisely

What is the difference between a funeral and memorial service?

Simply put, at a funeral service the body of the deceased is present, whereas at a memorial service either the deceased's ashes or no remains are present. Both services provide an opportunity to proclaim God's death defeating acts in Christ as we remember all that God has given us in the life of our loved one.

How does the Church view cremation?

Cremation is an acceptable way for Christians to deal with one's earthly remains. The Scriptures tell us that we are formed "of the dust of the ground" (Genesis 2:7) and, after death, we shall return "again to dust." (Job 34:15)

If I choose cremation, do I need to secure the services of a Funeral Director?

We highly recommend working with a Funeral Director. This professional will ease the strain upon family members by coordinating all the details and thus contributing to your wishes being carried out with dignity and honor. Even if cremation is your desire, a Funeral Director handles many details that are not taken care of by the church, the Pastor, or family members. Attempting to save money by not using a Funeral Director is likely to cause confusion and frustration at a time when you most need guidance and support.

Should I make pre-arrangements with a Funeral Director?

Making the decision to pre-arrange some aspects of your funeral and/or burial is helpful. An appointment with a Funeral Director in advance of death is a wise step to help you decide what you and your family need from the many services available. If you are a family member caring for a dying loved one, making an initial contact now with a Funeral Director can be very helpful and will lessen the decisions and demands you'll face upon death.

How soon after death does a funeral or memorial service take place?

Funeral services are generally held within three to five days following death, thereby allowing appropriate time for family members and friends to gather for the service. Memorial services can be held at any time. However, waiting for weeks or even months after a death will have a bearing on finding a sense of closure, and this will impact the grief work that follows the death of a loved one. Therefore, it is recommended that a memorial service be held within a few days or weeks after death.

If a funeral or memorial service is to be followed by a burial that same day, the schedule of the cemetery workers dictates that burials be held during normal business hours for city cemeteries. Surcharges apply for weekend burials, and burials are not available on holidays. It is also possible to have the burial before the service which allows for a late afternoon or evening service.

Funeral or memorial services on Sunday are highly discouraged, as Sundays are reserved for the worship services of the congregation.

What fees are associated with a funeral or memorial service at Trinity?

There are fees/honorariums for the people involved in providing the worship service as well as those who prepare and clean up following the service and reception. A fee schedule is available from the church office and area Funeral Directors. There is no building rental fee for Trinity members. Payment of these fees/honorariums are coordinated through the Funeral Director.

Who makes arrangements for the musician(s)?

A vocalist may be selected by you or your family, or the vocalist can be arranged by the Trinity's Funeral Coordinator. Trinity's organist serves as the organist/pianist for all funerals. If the organist is not available to play, the Funeral Coordinator will contact a substitute organist/pianist from the area.

May we have a visitation at the church the evening before the service, or must that take place at a funeral home?

The visitation may take place at Trinity the afternoon or evening before the service if there are no other events already scheduled in the Worship Center and Lobby. In addition, a visitation time is typically offered at the church one hour prior to the service.

Who is responsible for producing the order of worship and bulletin?

After the service has been planned with the Pastor and Funeral Coordinator, the church office will produce the bulletin at no cost to your family.

Who is responsible for submitting the death notice and obituary to the newspaper?

The Funeral Director will take care of this for you. A simple death notice is printed in the Leader Telegram shortly after death at no cost to you. A full obituary normally appears 2–3 days before the visitation and funeral. There is a cost for this, and the Funeral Director will assist you. Notices to other newspapers can also be handled by the Funeral Director at your request.

Who plans the reception following the funeral or memorial service?

If using the Trinity Room, the Funeral Coordinator will schedule the room and make these arrangements with the Funeral Director and your family. When plans are being made for the funeral following death, the Funeral Coordinator will work directly with you to order food appropriate to the number of people you anticipate attending. We know it is difficult to estimate a number. But we have years of experience at planning these events and, with a few questions, we can assist in that estimate. We do our best to assure sufficient food and seating for all who choose to attend the reception. Any leftover food is yours to take home, deliver to agencies in the community that welcome donations (such as the Community Table), or leave at Trinity to be distributed through the Trinity Food Pantry. Payment for the reception food and servers is coordinated through the Funeral Director.

Guidelines for use of Technology at Funerals

In times of death, we seek to support families in their time of grief remembering the life of the deceased—while also remembering and finding hope in the promises of God, of life eternal. We understand that communication today is increasingly visually based, and that is the norm for funeral homes to offer to do a video of photos set to music of the deceased. We encourage families to play this video tribute prior to the service, during the visitation.

If any technology should be requested for during the service itself, we ask that families respect the following guidelines.

- In keeping with the flow and nature of the funeral as a worship service, we ask that any video to be used during the service be kept to three minutes in length (or one song on the soundtrack).
- The choice of any song on the video, again, be in keeping with a Christian worship service (classical, instrumental, or Christian music is preferred).
- Technology—while it can enhance the worship experience—it can be fickle. Our staff will make every reasonable effort to play the video during the visitation. However, we ask families to understand that with time and staffing restraints, we can only do what we can. We seek to begin all worship services on time.
- We are unable to accommodate playing just a portion of any video during the service.
- If the family chooses to produce it's own video without the assistance of the funeral home, it needs to arrive at the church 24 hours in advance to ensure the video will work with our technology.

Can my service be streamed online for those who are unable to attend?

Yes. Everyone can schedule a funeral/memorial to live stream from our website. Family and friends can access the viewing page live, and for a full year after the event on our YouTube page.

What if I desire to have memorials directed to Trinity or other organizations?

This is an honorable thing to do. Trinity and any other organizations you choose are blessed when memorials are directed to support their ministries and missions. The Funeral Director will be happy to include any memorial designation(s) in the notices about the funeral service. All memorial gifts received directly by Trinity will generate an acknowledgment to you and be listed in the monthly newsletter.

For Family Members Making Plans for the Funeral of a Loved One Nearing Death or Recently Deceased:

Please use this worksheet to assist with plans that will honor your loved one's expressed wishes or desires and will reflect his/her values. If you haven't already contacted a Funeral Director, please consider doing so now. The professional services, compassionate care, and guidance they provide will greatly assist you in the days ahead.

When death occurs, please contact the funeral home of your choice and/or the Funeral Coordinator at the church office at 715.832.6601 or, after hours, please use the personal phone numbers of the pastors listed on the Trinity newsletter (available online at www.trinity-ec.org). Area Funeral Directors also have personal contact information for all the Trinity Pastors and Funeral Coordinator and will contact them on your behalf.

FUNERAL PLANNING WORKSHEETS

When planning your funeral, or a funeral for a loved one, there are many choices to make. Discussing some of those choices now will make the process less demanding for your loved ones later. This Funeral Planning Worksheet will lead you through a variety of decisions. After death, a Pastor of Trinity will meet with family members and review your worksheet to form the funeral or memorial service.

This worksheet may be used by:

- ▶ an individual making their advance plans known, or
- ▶ a family planning the funeral of a loved one nearing death or recently deceased.

Please supply as much information as you wish to share on any parts of the worksheet.

Guide for the Christian Funeral of:

Full Name: First, Middle (Maiden), Last

Date Completed:

For the Person Making Advance Plans:

When you have completed this worksheet, please consider sharing it with a Trinity Pastor or Funeral Coordinator. Your information will be kept in a confidential file available only to the Pastors of Trinity. It will be used in consultation with your family or whomever you have directed to carry out these wishes upon your death.

Also, after completing the worksheet, consider telling someone you trust about it. You may wish to discuss with them what you have written to be certain that it is clear. Consider providing copies:

1. To your Family
2. Attached to your Five Wishes Booklet and/or your Will or Trust Plan
 - a. (see www.agingwithdignity.org/five-wishes.php)
3. To a Funeral Director

Or simply give it to someone you trust with a note that says,

I have recorded my desires regarding my death and burial. I keep this information in the following place: _____ (i.e. on file at the church, with my will, etc.). At the time of my death, I ask that you use this information to provide guidance for my family and my church in making arrangements for the funeral I desire. Although this information is being left for safekeeping, I understand that it is not legally binding or enforceable. This worksheet does not make the church or anyone obligated or responsible for the execution of these instructions.

With gratitude,

Signature and Date

Visitation

A Visitation is an informal gathering for friends and family to express sympathy, view photographs/video tribute, etc. You are invited to consider Trinity for the visitation when you work with a professional Funeral Director.

Will a Visitation be Held?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
<input type="checkbox"/> No	

Location of Visitation

<input type="checkbox"/>	At the Funeral Home
<input type="checkbox"/>	At Trinity Lutheran Church
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:

Time of the Visitation

<input type="checkbox"/>	Evening Prior to the Funeral or Memorial Service
<input type="checkbox"/>	Before the Funeral or Memorial Service Only
<input type="checkbox"/>	Both

Will the Remains be Present at the Visitation?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Coffin with Viewing of Body
<input type="checkbox"/>	Closed Coffin
<input type="checkbox"/>	Urn with Photograph next to it
<input type="checkbox"/>	No Remains Present

Displays

<input type="checkbox"/>	Photographic Displays
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mementoes (Awards Certificates etc.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bible of the Deceased
<input type="checkbox"/>	Video Tribute (Usually Produced by the Funeral Home) shown during the visitation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:

Christian Worship Service Plans

Location of Service

<input type="checkbox"/>	Trinity Lutheran Church
<input type="checkbox"/>	Funeral Home
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cemetery (A Grave Side Service Only)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (i.e. Care Facility Chapel, etc.)

Time of the Worship Service

<input type="checkbox"/>	Morning
<input type="checkbox"/>	Afternoon

Will the Remains be Present at the Worship Service?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Coffin or Urn with Ashes
<input type="checkbox"/> No	

Display Items to be On or Near the Casket/Urn.

The Funeral Pall will always be used to cover the casket during the worship service unless expressly declined

<input type="checkbox"/>	Floral Spray and/or additional Flower Bouquets
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bible or Other Symbol of Faith:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Photograph
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ Flag <i>Only Used During Visitation and at Cemetery</i>

Stream my service for family and friends that cannot attend.

A cantor will be used during streaming services to assure viewers will hear hymns clearly

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
<input type="checkbox"/> No	

Readers

<input type="checkbox"/>	The Pastor who officiates will read.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I would like this/these person(s) to read at my service:

Bible Readings

<input type="checkbox"/>	The Pastor who officiates may choose the readings.
<input type="checkbox"/>	My Family will choose the readings.
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have chosen the readings as indicated below.

Typically we have two to three readings during the service. You are not limited to three readings. Please see the attached Scripture Reference Sheet for ideas and suggestions.

Christian Worship Service Plans Con't

Favorite Biblical Theme or Image :

Instrument preference (I would prefer)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Piano
<input type="checkbox"/>	Organ

Congregational Hymns

<input type="checkbox"/>	The Pastor who officiates may choose the hymns.
<input type="checkbox"/>	My family will choose the hymns
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have chosen the hymns as indicated below.

Choosing Hymns

Typically we have three hymns during the service. You are not limited to three hymns. Please see the attached hymn reference sheet for ideas and suggestions.

Soloist

<input type="checkbox"/>	If possible, I would like this vocalist to sing:
--------------------------	--

Vocal Solos Selected

Selection of solos must aim to reflect the spirit of Christian worship.

Remembrances to be Shared During Worship by a Family Member or a Friend

Please ask speakers to limit their remarks to 3 minutes.

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
<input type="checkbox"/> No	

I would like this person to speak:

Hymn Reference Sheet

629 Abide with Me	597 My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less
779 Amazing Grace	763 My Life Flows On in Endless Song
468 Around You, O Lord Jesus	782 My Shepherd, You Supply My Need (Psalm 23)
362 At the Lamb's High Feast	622 Neither Death nor Life
836 Beautiful Savior	839 Now Thank We All Our God
425 Behold the Host Arrayed in White	500 Now We Remain
638 Blessed Assurance	447 O Blessed Spring
728 Blest Are They	760 O Christ the Same
656 Blest Be the Tie That Binds	627 O Day Full of Grace
732 Borning Cry	880 O God beyond All Praising
781 Children of the Heavenly Father	632 O God, Our Help in Ages Past (Psalm 90)
607 Come, Ye Disconsolate	542 O Living Bread from Heaven
855 Crown Him with Many Crowns	313 O Lord, Now Let Your Servant
790 Day by Day	441 Oh, Happy Day When We Shall Stand
422 For All the Saints	787 On Eagle's Wings (Psalm 91)
427 For All Your Saints, O Lord	773 Precious Lord, Take My Hand
879 For the Beauty of the Earth	418 Rejoice in God's Saints
770 Give Me Jesus	623 Rock of Ages
428 Give Thanks for Saints	423 Shall We Gather at the River
543 Go, My Children, with My Blessing	426 Sing with All the Saints in Glory
564 God, Who Made the Earth and Heaven	878 Soli Deo Gloria
637 Holy God, Holy and Glorious	488 Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness
414 Holy God, We Praise Your Name	654 The Church's One Foundation
413 Holy, Holy, Holy	502 The King of Love My Shepherd Is
856 How Great Thou Art	778 The Lord's My Shepherd (Psalm 23)
636 How Small Our Span of Life	531 The Trumpets Sound, the Angels Sing
485 I Am the Bread of Life	342 There in God's Garden
769 If You But Trust in God to Guide You	826 Thine the Amen, Thine the Praise
619 I Know That My Redeemer Lives!	824 This is my Father's World
630 In Heaven Above	327 Through the Night of Doubt and Sorrow
867 In Thee Is Gladness	613 Thy Holy Wings
628 Jerusalem, My Happy Home	451 We Are Baptized in Christ Jesus
697 Just a Closer Walk with Thee	449 We Know That Christ Is Raised
592 Just As I Am Without One Plea	742 What a Friend We Have in Jesus
660 Lift High the Cross	487 What Feast of Love
765 Lord of All Hopefulness	666 What Wondrous Love Is This
767 Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me	785 When Peace Like a River
750 Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart	639 When We Are Living
631 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling	

Scripture Reference Sheet

Psalms

- Psalm 23 ... The Lord is my shepherd
- Psalm 25:1–10 ... To you I lift up my soul
- Psalm 42:1–7 ... As a deer longs for flowing streams
- Psalm 46:1–7 ... God is our refuge and strength
- Psalm 63 ... Eagerly I seek you
- Psalm 84 ... How lovely is your dwelling place
- Psalm 90 ... You have been our refuge
- Psalm 91 ... I will protect those who know my name
- Psalm 116 ... You have delivered my soul from death
- Psalm 118 ... Out of my distress I called on the Lord
- Psalm 121 ... I lift up my eyes to the hills
- Psalm 122 ... Let us go to the house of the Lord
- Psalm 130 ... Out of the depths I cry to you
- 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

Old Testament readings

- Numbers 6:22–27 ... The Lord bless you and keep you
- Job 19:23–27a ... I know that my Redeemer lives
- Ecclesiastes 3:1–9 ... For everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose
- Isaiah 25:6–9 ... God will swallow up death forever
- Isaiah 40:1–2; 11; 28–31 ... Comfort, comfort my people, says your God
- Isaiah 61:1–3 ... The Lord has anointed me...to bind up the brokenhearted
- Isaiah 41:9b–10; 55:1-3a, 5–7 ... I will strengthen you, I will help you
- Isaiah 65:17-20, 23-25 ... for they shall be offspring blessed by the Lord
- Lamentations 3:22–26, 31–33 ... The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases

New Testament readings

- Matthew 5:1–12 ... Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted
- Matthew 11:28–30 ... Come to me...and I will give you rest
- Matthew 18:1–5, 10–14 ... Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.
- Mark 10:13–16 ... Let the little children come to me

- Luke 2: 25–32 ... Now you are dismissing your servant in peace...for my eyes have seen your salvation
- John 3:16–17 ... For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son
- John 5:24–29...all who are in their graves will hear his voice
- John 6:37–40 ... I will raise them up on the last day
- John 11:21–27 ... I am the resurrection and the life
- John 14:1–6 ... I am the way, and the truth, and the life
- John 14:18–21 ... because I live, you also will live
- John 14:27 ... Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you
- Romans 5:1–11 ... While we were yet sinners Christ died for us
- Romans 5:17–21 ... Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more
- Romans 6:1-5 ... all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death
- Romans 8:31–35, 36–37 ... [Nothing] will be able to separate us from the love of God
- Romans 12:9–13, 15–16, 21 ... Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep
- Romans 14:7–9 ... Whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's
- 1 Corinthians 13:1–13 ... he greatest of these is love
- 1 Corinthians 15:12–26 ... Christ has been raised from the dead
- 2 Corinthians 4:6–12, 6–18 ... Let light shine out of darkness
- Philippians 4:8–9 ... the God of peace will be with you
- 1 Thessalonians 4:13–15 ... that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope
- 1 Peter 1:3–9 ... a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection
- 1 John 3:1–2 ... Beloved, we are God's children now
- 1 John 4:7–12 ... Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God
- Revelation 7:9–17 ... Who are these robed in white? ...God will wipe away every tear
- Revelation 21:1–7 ... Death will be no more
- Revelation 22:1–5 ... And there will be no more night

Reception Following Worship

I would like a reception following the service for mutual conversation and consolation.

Yes

No

The reception will be

Immediately Following the Worship Service; Before Burial

Following the Worship Service and After Burial

Location for the Reception

Trinity Lutheran Church

Other location:

Menu for the Reception

All include Coffee/Water

Dessert

Cold Lunch (sandwiches/wraps, salads, fruit trays, veggie trays) dessert (cupcakes, bars, cookies, cake)

Hot Lunch (fried chicken, oven-baked ham, potatoes, vegetables) dessert (cupcakes, bars, cookies, cake)

Other:

Funeral Home

Preferred Company

Specific arrangements in advance at the funeral home of your choice are encouraged.

Have Pre-Arrangements Been Made

Yes

No

Disposition of the Body

Embalm Body *Usually required if unrefrigerated over 24 hours before burial.*

Cremate Body Shortly After Death

Cremate Body After Visitation and/or Service

Burial Wishes

Bury Coffin/Urn in Cemetery

Other:

This might include keeping ashes with a family member, spreading ashes at a favorite spot, etc

Bury Coffin or Urn

Before Visitation

After Funeral Service but Before Luncheon Reception

After Luncheon Reception

At a Later Date

Grave Marker

I have made arrangements for a grave marker with this company:

I would like the following to be included on the grave marker:

Name:

Dates: (birth/death dates)

Maiden name:

Bible Verse:

Graphic:

Other:

Funeral Home Cont'd

Eligible for Military Honors

 Yes

 No

Names of Pall Bearers

Six Pall Bearers needed only when there is a coffin for burial.

Cemetery

 I have made arrangements for my burial.

 Name of Cemetery

 Location of Cemetery

 I do not have arrangements for my burial. I suggest the following arrangements:

 I have arrangements for a memorial marker with the following company:
Include Contact Information

Desired Expressions of Sympathy

 Flowers

 I desire Memorial Gifts in lieu of Flowers

Memorial Suggestions

 Trinity Lutheran Funds

Trinity Lutheran Endowment Fund, Trinity's Memorial Fund, Specific Mission or Ministry: Music Ministry Children's Bible Fund, Trinity Library, Noah's Ark Preschool, Youth Scholarship, Missionary Fund, Prayer Shawl Ministry

 Other:

Obituary

Full Name *including Maiden Name*

Birth Date and Location

Parent's Names *including Mother's Maiden Name*

Baptism Date

Confirmation Date

Marital Status, Marriage Date, and Name of Spouse

Other Marriages/Divorces/Spouse(s)

Names of Children

Additional Next of Kin

Personal History

On a separate page

This information does not need to be prepared in paragraph form.

Important Documents and Advisors

It is important that survivors be able to locate vital records and important documents. Before your death you should have a current will/living trust and related health care directives which express your wishes on important personal financial medical and charitable issues for your survivors. If you need information regarding estate planning planned giving and/or the inclusion of a Christian preamble for your will please consult your legal or financial advisor. Additional information is available at www.trinity-ec.org at the Endowment Trust page under the Give menu.

Location and Date of Will/Living Trust

Location of my Five Wishes Booklet or Living Will

Attorney/Will Preparer

Power of Attorney/Financial

Power of Attorney for Health Care

Executor of Will/Estate

Guardian (for Minor Children)

Additional Comments

Trinity Lutheran Church
A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
1314 East Lexington Blvd, Eau Claire, WI 54701
715.832.6601
www.trinity-ec.org

“Serving in Christ’s Love and Sharing the Good News”