



**I**  
am the  
**RESURRECTION**  
and the  
**LIFE.**

-----  
He who  
believes in  
me will  
**LIVE,**  
even though  
he dies.

John 11:25

**MY LAST REQUESTS**



## PRE-ARRANGING YOUR FUNERAL

Talking about death is often difficult; talking about YOUR death and YOUR funeral may present additional distress. Be reminded that temporal death is one of God's gifts to Christians whereby "we shall all be changed. ...For our earthly bodies, the ones we have now that can die, must be transformed into heavenly bodies that cannot perish but will live forever" (selected verses from 1 Cor. 15). Listen to the confidence of St. Paul: "I want you to know what happens to a Christian when he dies so that when it happens, you will not be full of sorrow, as those are who have no hope. For since we believe that Jesus died and then came back to life again, we can also believe that when Jesus returns, God will bring back with Him all the Christians who have died" (1 Thess. 4:13, 14). Your faith in Jesus as your Savior and your confidence that death is merely an interlude in an on-going, intimate relationship with your Lord is evident in your decision to make advance arrangements about your funeral; this decision is also a clear witness of your faith and hope for your loved ones and survivors, and ought sustain them in their grief.

Pre-arranging your funeral is always tentative, contingent on circumstances remaining relatively stable during your remaining lifetime and during the lifetime of those whom you involve in the pre-arrangement. Unforeseen developments between the time of planning and of putting plans into effect could alter original plans. It is important to remember that while it is your funeral that you are arranging, the funeral is a worship service to strengthen, comfort, and encourage those who survive.

Below are several subjects that are part of the arrangements and decisions that someone will make regarding you, your death, your funeral, your burial, and your estate. Please check those subjects for which you wish to express your own preferences through advance arrangement.

### \_\_\_\_1. **WILL**

You are God's caretaker and trustee of the material blessings He has allowed you to accumulate in your life. This is why making a will is a responsibility as well as a privilege. Large and small estates are often greatly diminished by court costs, taxes, fees, and forced sales of property because people put off the important task of estate planning and will drafting. As a Christian you recognize that your responsibility does not end with your family and survivors. It includes also your concern for the continued proclamation of the Gospel, the education of pastors and teachers, the training of the young and old, the care of the sick and aged. This is putting God's will in your will.

In making your will, think about the material and spiritual blessings granted by the Lord and your obligation over them. Then think carefully what disposition you wish made of your material possessions – to your wife, children, other people, and church – including provisions, if the need arises, for the simultaneous death of your wife and yourself (are of the children, selection of a guardian of the children and of an executor of the estate). Consult your lawyer for legal requirements and formulation of your will.

An increasing number of people are remembering the church in their wills. Bequests usually give a percentage of the estate to the congregation or are designated for certain causes within the church and Synod. It becomes your final gift to your Lord and His Church. If you

already have a will but wish to change it to include your church and/or Synod, simply add a codicil; this should be prepared by a lawyer and witnessed in the same manner as the will itself. Your will is the last opportunity to show your dedication to God and your responsible membership in His Kingdom.

## \_\_\_\_\_ 2.       **PREFERENCE OF A MORTUARY OR FUNERAL DIRECTOR**

Many people give little or no thought to the selection of a funeral director until his services are needed. Then this important decision must be made suddenly, without sufficient time for investigation or comparison. Thought should be given to this matter in advance. Careful counseling in advance with an experienced and competent funeral director can avoid unwise planning and relieve anxious hearts. Our community is thankful for several reliable and competent funeral directors. They can assure you of the availability of full information about services, prices, or advance arrangements at any time you request it; and they have demonstrated a respect and responsiveness to our Lutheran beliefs and practices.

## \_\_\_\_\_ 3.       **RESTING PLACE**

Arrangements may be made ahead of need concerning the purchase of a cemetery plot or, in case of cremation, a niche. Closely related to either might be the purchase and erection of a monument or marker; bronze or stone; individual, husband and wife, or family.

## \_\_\_\_\_ 4.       **PRE-FINANCING YOUR FUNERAL**

Four separate and distinct categories of charges make up the cost of the funeral:

- a. those that specifically involve the funeral director, including his professional services, his facilities, and his motor equipment; and the casket and vault that you select.
- b. those dealing with the disposition of the body - cemetery plot and the charge for opening and closing the grave.
- c. those for a monument, headstone, or marker
- d. those miscellaneous expenses paid directly or through the funeral director, such as for special flowers, burial clothing, gratuities to organist and clergymen, extended transportation of remains to the organ bank or to pathological research center, certified death certificates, etc.

Money for funeral and burial purposes usually come from one or more sources. Some of the proceeds of life insurance; allowances of governmental agencies (Social Security death benefits, Veterans Administration, Workmen's Compensation, welfare and others); union benefits; savings and estate funds – these are all primary sources. Sometimes there is an especially designated insurance policy which provides funds for the beneficiary to use for funeralization and final disposition and burial costs.

Among several methods of pre-paying a funeral, one popular way is a “funeral trust agreement.” It is recommended that the prepaid funeral agreement include the provision for a trust fund with the person making the payment maintaining control of the account. The fund

should include all money paid in advance of need for services and merchandise including burial vault. The agreement should also entitle the person in control of the trust to the interest earned with the option of applying it to the principle to offset any increased inflationary costs. The person making the payment should retain the right to terminate the contract at any time without forfeiture of any of the funds paid or earnings accrued.

## \_\_\_\_ 5.      **YOUR BIOGRAPHICAL HISTORY**

There is certain factual data about yourself that might be known to those closest to you at this present time but might not be easily recalled at a later date for personal or legal needs.

Information includes date and place of birth; names of parents (including mother's maiden name), brothers and sisters, children; year of death of family members; year when residence was taken up in this community, this state & this country; various occupations held and length of stay, if possible; if veteran, state way, rank and branch and serial number (VA); Social Security number; whom to notify in the event of your death; and other helpful information that you wish to include.

Having completed the above information, it should be kept in a safe place, accessible to whomever you designate. It is good to list and make available to your designate all information relative to the location of will(s), cemetery deed (s), bank account (s), real estate deed (s), birth and marriage certificates, Social Security card, Selective Service or draft card, stock (s), bond (s), negotiable paper (s), mortgage (s), contractual agreement (s), promissory note (s), trust fund data and any other pertinent information.

## \_\_\_\_ 6.      **THE FUNERAL CHURCH SERVICE**      (from death details)

When the ceremonial portion of the last rites involves our Christian congregation and/or the pastors of this congregation, the concept of worship is a central factor in determining the nature and content of the service.

First of all, the service includes more than a mourning family and visiting friends; mourners, members of the parish, visiting friends, working associates are attending a church service of the congregation as worshippers rather than as spectators.

Second, the chief purpose of the service- -as of any worship service- -is to glorify God. (From Reuben C. Baerwald's "Hope in Grief," CPH) "It is God who confronts man in death. It is God who speaks in the Word read and preached. It is God who has acted in Jesus Christ to remove the sting of death through redemption from the power of sin and the consequences of rebellion. It is God who offers in Jesus Christ forgiveness of sin, comfort, hope, and the promise of resurrection. It is God who has given the faith by which men live and the fellowship of the church in which men can bear one another's burdens and share grief. The funeral service does not direct attention primarily to the dead or to those mourning the dead, but rather to God who wants to speak to the event of death."

Third, a properly structured funeral service calls the congregation to respond in faith, praise, joy, hope, courage, and obedience. The congregation sings hymns and prays and considers together the meaning of life and death in the context of our Christian faith as the Word

is read and preached. The singing of hymns offers an excellent opportunity for Christian witness and for a demonstration of fellowship with the mourners. Christian hymnody is a treasury of the church's response to God's activity. Hymns offer expressions of faith from many different periods of time and can point one another beyond the immediate sorrow, raising the note of confidence and hope amid despair. The music ought to sound forth the notes of joy, gladness and victory, of strength and hope in the risen Christ; the theme of Easter and the triumphant fellowship of saints as seen in the hymns of the church seem more appropriate than some of the more depressing hymns and sentimental tunes. With these thoughts in mind, you are encouraged to select hymns for congregational singing. If you desire a soloist or special group singing, it is suggested that this be in addition to congregation singing.

#### A Church Service with the Remains Present or Absent

The more familiar funeral service has the casket placed in a prominent location amid flowers and other symbolic expressions. Some people hold that a funeral with the body present gives identity and purpose to the service. Some regard the funeral as a rite of separation confirming the reality of the death of this person for those who might deny that such a person's life on earth has ended; viewing the body serves to reverse the process of denial while it promotes the acceptance of reality. Also, a body properly prepared and/or restored for viewing may erase the effects of a lingering illness or a violent death. Those who survive are then left with an image of the deceased most familiar to them. Cosmetic restoration is not an attempt to deny death by creating an illusion of life but rather it gives the bereaved an acceptable image of this person to remember.

In recent years the memorial service has been strongly suggested by others. The body is buried very soon after death in a simple grave-side ceremony for the immediate family. At a later date - the same day, another day, perhaps an evening, perhaps the next Sunday - a worship service of the kind described above, without the body present, is held. Those favoring a memorial funeral service submit that costly caskets, large displays of flowers, focus of attention on the physical body, elaborate embalming procedures - all are eliminated. Some contend that a public viewing has merit and can be arranged to help the family and friends accept the reality of this death and to help them work through the sociological and psychological needs that are part of the grief experience; but they hold that the presence of the body in the church service draws the attention away from the "praise, joy, hope, courage" available through Jesus Christ, the Victor over death.

#### \_\_\_\_7.       **ORGAN AND BODY DONATIONS**

Some of our members are expressing interest in offering their bodies for pathological study, exploratory research, or surgical practice. Others are desirous of giving to various organ banks their corneas, their eyes, their heart, kidneys, liver, and whatever other living organism might sustain life for another person. Some are asking about the moral and spiritual implications of such desires - do these desires violate the integrity of this God-given and Christ-redeemed body? Others are curious about the relation between the claiming of one's offered body or the organs and the funeral service.

#### \_\_\_\_8.       **MISCELLANEOUS**

## Flowers and Other Memorials

Many persons wish to express their sympathy for the family and their desire to remember the deceased by sending flowers or other memorial tribute, in addition to extending their condolences in person.

It is in order for you to express your own preferences about flowers at your funeral; it is in order for you to suggest a certain memorial or memorials that might be conveyed to those who ask. However, the voicing of your preference ought not be so forceful as to exclude any other memorial tribute.

## Pall Bearers

Perhaps you have a desire to make a tentative list of pall bearers (casket bearers) or to suggest certain clubs, societies, or groups to which you belong and from which a selection might be made at the time of need.

## Cremation

Cremation has not been a customary form for disposing of the remains in our community. It can have certain moral and spiritual implications that need to be discussed if there is an earnest desire for cremation.

Some are attracted to cremation to avoid the seemingly high cost of casket, plot, and other features of earth interment. What is not known is that the cost of cremation does include casket, transportation costs to the crematorium, cost of cremation, and urn for the "cremains." Beyond this there can be cost for a placement of the cremains - a niche or a cemetery plot, together with a headstone or marker.

If the remains are cremated, a decision needs to be made whether it will precede or follow the funeral service.

## WHOM TO SEE ABOUT WHAT FOR PRE-ARRANGEMENT

will and testament - consult your family lawyer

selection of funeral director - if undecided, meet with several funeral directors in our area and ask questions; select the one with whom you feel comfortable and who you feel would be most comforting and helpful to your family.

You biographical history - your funeral director will give you biographical forms that ask the basic questions and certain others

purchase of cemetery plot - ask your funeral director for advice and referral to those cemeteries in our community

financing the funeral - depending upon which method you prefer, seek the advice of your insurance agent, your broker, banker, funeral director, or financial consultant

putting your final arrangements into effect - to whom do you give authority to make the final arrangements and to make changes if circumstances warrant a change? The person ought to be informed of your wishes. Also, your pastors ought to be notified as to whom you have chosen to make these final arrangements.



## PRE-ARRANGING YOUR FUNERAL

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

one copy for you  
one copy on file in St. Luke's church office  
one copy given to your designate \_\_\_\_\_

### I. Will

- A. Do you have a will now? \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Do you wish to make changes in your will? \_\_\_\_\_
- C. If no will, do you have an attorney? \_\_\_\_\_
  - 1. If simultaneous death, what is the disposition of your children?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - 2. Have you selected a guardian? \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3. Have you selected an executor of the estate? \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4. Have you included your final gift to your Lord and His Church? \_\_\_\_\_

### II. MORTUARY or FUNERAL DIRECTOR

- A. Do you have a first choice for a funeral director? \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Do you have a second choice for a funeral director? \_\_\_\_\_

### III. RESTING PLACE

- A. Do you own a cemetery plot? \_\_\_\_\_ where \_\_\_\_\_  
lot number \_\_\_\_\_ block number \_\_\_\_\_ space number \_\_\_\_\_
- B. What arrangements for perpetual care? \_\_\_\_\_
- C. What specifications for monument, headstone, or marker?  
\_\_\_\_\_

### IV. PRE-FINANCING YOUR FUNERAL

- A. Do you have a financial arrangement designed to cover cost of funeralization?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- B. Who is your beneficiary or designate authorized to pay the cost of your funeral?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- C. Do you wish to set a ceiling on how much ought to be spent for vault and casket (casket cost ordinarily includes professional costs and services of your funeral director)?
- D. Do you wish to set an approximate amount to be spent on headstone or marker?

### V. YOUR BIOGRAPHICAL HISTORY

- A. Do you have a written, detailed record of your biographical history? \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Where is a copy of this record kept? \_\_\_\_\_

C. Who has accurate knowledge of the location of your valuable papers?

---

#### VI. THE FUNERAL SERVICE

A. Do you have instructions regarding public viewing either at church or at the mortuary chapel?

B. Is the casket to be placed in church for the funeral service? \_\_\_\_\_

C. What hymns would you choose for congregation singing?

---

---

D. Do you wish to have a soloist or special group to sing? \_\_\_\_\_

E. Do you have other wishes regarding music?

---

F. Do you have instruction regarding the committal or graveside service?

---

#### VII. ORGAN AND BODY DONATION

A. Do you wish to offer any usable organs or living tissue to organ banks? \_\_\_\_\_

B. Do you wish to offer your body for pathological practice? \_\_\_\_\_

C. What banks or medical centers are to be recipients?

---

#### VII. MISCELLANEOUS

A. Do you have instructions regarding flowers? \_\_\_\_\_

B. Do you wish to designate a particular memorial or memorials?

---

---

C. What are your wishes regarding pall bearers?

---

---

D. Do you wish to consider cremation? \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### PLANNING HELPS FOR FUNERAL SERVICE

1. **Time and date:** \_\_\_\_\_ Time and date of funeral to be mutually agreeable for family, pastors, and funeral directors. Morning or afternoon times may be considered.

Funeral Home: \_\_\_\_\_; Cemetery: \_\_\_\_\_  
Will there be visitation at church? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

2. **Luncheon:** \_\_\_\_\_ St. Luke's would like to serve a luncheon for family and friends. The women of the church do the serving. The family provides the food or pays for the cost of it. The pastor will put someone in contact with you in regard to arrangements.

Funeral committee chairperson to be contacted: \_\_\_\_\_

3. **Prayer Service:** \_\_\_\_\_ The pastors are willing to arrange a brief prayer service for the family. Most often this is the evening before the funeral though it could be the morning of the service if preferred.

4. **Worship Service:** St. Luke's provides a printed funeral bulletin. We would like input from the family for possible hymns, lessons, etc. The pastors would make the final plans of how the service is to be arranged.

a. Estimate number of people at service. \_\_\_\_\_

b. Hymns that might be considered.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The pastors prefer that congregation singing be involved even if a soloist is part of the service.

c. Scripture readings that could be considered: Psalm: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

d. Soloist: \_\_\_\_\_ (if family chooses and arranges this with pastors)

e. Assisting Pastor \_\_\_\_\_

f. Organist: \_\_\_\_\_ will be arranged by the pastors unless the family has a preference.

g. Elder: \_\_\_\_\_

h. Usher: \_\_\_\_\_

i. Names of Pallbearers:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Notes:**

Both pastors generally participate at the service. The roles they fulfill are determined by the weekly preaching schedule, prior commitments, etc.

The pastors see funeral arrangements as part of their ministry as called pastors of the church and therefore do not accept gratuities for this ministry. If you choose to give a gift, please give it to St. Luke's Memorial Fund or a designated need in the church.

Organists and soloists are not full-time staff persons and should be compensated for the services they provide. The pastor can suggest appropriate amounts.

A donation of \$40.00 payable to St. Luke's requested for custodial care.

**Possible Hymn Selections for the Funeral Service**

537	Beautiful Savior	685	Let Us Ever Walk With Jesus
570	Just As I Am, Without One Plea	733	O God, Our Help in Ages Past
710	The Lord's My Shepherd	655	Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Thy
770	What a Friend We Have in Jesus	Word	
761	Rock of Ages	464	The Strife is O'er, The Battle Done
656-57	A Mighty Fortress is Our God	801	How Great Thou Art
461	I Know That My Redeemer Lives	744	Amazing Grace
480	He's Risen, He's Risen		
878	Abide With Me	<u>Suggested Psalms:</u>	
677	For All the Saints Who from Their	67	
	Labors	121	
748	I'm But a Stranger Here	27	
811	Oh, That I had a Thousand Voices	23	
649	Blest Be the Tie that Binds	100	
575-76	My Hope is Built on Nothing Less	130	
528	Oh, For a Thousand Tongues to Sing	46	
452	All Praise to God Who Reigns		
	Above		