

Olivet Beacon of Light Lutheran Church
La Crosse, WI

Funeral Policies



John 14:1-4 *“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way to where I am going.”*

Funeral/ Memorial Services

Although funeral/memorial services may be held in funeral homes, the best place for conducting a funeral service upon the death of a church member is in the sanctuary of the church to which he or she belonged. At such times of loss, all may be reminded by even the place of service of what our hope and assurance are in Jesus Christ. Therefore, all members of Olivet are encouraged to use the church building for funeral/memorial services.

There can be alternative methods for conducting services at the time of death. These could include...

1. Funeral service which always involves the presence and final disposition of a deceased person.
2. Memorial service is any service, which commemorates a death, but does not involve the presence or disposition of the body, however the cremains of the deceased may be present.
3. Private graveside service for family members as soon after death as possible.

(We will use the term funeral service in this document, but it applies to all types of burial.)

The pastor will meet with the family to plan the funeral service.

Date and Time of Funerals

Dates and times for funerals at Olivet are to be arranged in consultation with the church office based on availability of a pastor, the facility, and the preferences of the deceased's family.

Who Will Officiate?

Pastoral ethics require that Olivet's pastors conduct all funeral services held at Olivet, unless by agreement with another pastor, he/she is invited to share in the funeral or act on behalf of the pastor of Olivet. Any requests for another pastor or lay person to officiate or assist in the service must be approved by Olivet's pastor/s.

Structure of the Funeral Service

A funeral service held in the church is a service of worship, celebrating the deceased person's life and the promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ. Consequently, all parts of the service are to be consistent with the present worship practices of Olivet Beacon of Light Lutheran Church.

Generally, the outline for the funeral and burial service, as found in the *Lutheran Book of Worship* will be followed. The family may suggest other items to be included in the service, with the approval of the pastor.

The celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion, shared in community around the familiar center of the table, is full of healing power for those who grieve. This sacrament is the gracious sign of the completion of baptism, the foretaste of the heavenly banquet, and the anticipation of all the faithful reunited before God and Christ, the Lamb of God. Therefore, it is appropriate to share Holy Communion as part of the funeral service. All those gathered for the service will be invited to the Table.

Family participants as readers and communion assistants in the service are welcomed.

Funeral Music

Normally, Olivet Worship Team members (musicians and soloists) will play at all funerals in the church, as he/she is familiar with the instruments and sound systems. If we do not have a team member available for the service, she/he will make a reasonable effort to provide a suitable replacement. We can also arrange with the family the use of pre-recorded music. Please note that the fees charged for musicians and soloists vary depending on the musicians.

Music performed at a service of Christian burial is understood as an act of worship, offered to God in devotion, thanksgiving and praise. Therefore, all music used during the funeral service (including prelude and postlude) must be sacred in nature and approved by the pastor and the Music Leader. The pastor will consult with the family regarding special requests for music to be used during the service.

Services by Fraternal Orders, Lodges etc.

Services by fraternal orders, lodges, or other organizations are not appropriate at a Lutheran funeral service. If they are held, they should be limited to the funeral home or graveside, and must be coordinated with the pastor prior to the service. Such services are not to be confused or combined with the funeral service or the committal service.

Decorations

Paraments on the altar, lectern and pulpit will remain the color of the day or season.

Families may wish to display the deceased's cremains, as well as certain mementos or photographs of the deceased and his/her family. The following guidelines would be applicable in these situations:

- Any displays or pictures must be appropriate to a worship setting.
- No nails, tacks, staples or screws shall be put in the walls or attached to the pews.
- All displays must be removed within 12 hours of the conclusion of the service.

Closed Casket

All caskets must be closed for the funeral service, but may be open during the viewing (or preceding the viewing, for the family only), if desired. When closed, the church's funeral pall covers the casket (see below). The casket remains closed throughout the service. When the service is in a funeral parlor or private house, the casket is closed and in place before the service begins. The funeral director shall be instructed concerning such matters as timing, closed caskets, music, flowers, etc.

Paschal Candle

The paschal candle, which symbolizes Christ's triumph over the powers of death, is lit and placed near the casket as a reminder of the deceased's baptism into Christ.

Use of Pall

The church will provide a funeral pall to be placed over the casket during the service. The pall recalls the white robe given in Baptism, the robe of Christ's righteousness. The pall further prevents both the display of a costly casket and embarrassment of a simple one. This action of placing the pall over the casket will take place at the beginning of the service. The pall will be the only thing covering the casket while in the sanctuary.

Nursery

Under normal conditions, the church does not provide a nursery for funeral services.

Parking / Traffic Assistance

Parking assistance is generally provided by the funeral home. The church does not have any resources to assist in traffic control on city streets or highways.

Family Fellowship Meal

When available, the church will do everything possible to accommodate requests for a family fellowship meal following a funeral service. It is helpful for family members to designate one family member as the contact person. This person will be given contact information for our Funeral Team Leader for the month. If the family wishes to provide its own food, the Fellowship Hall may be used with prior approval.

There are three options for food service for the fellowship meal.

- 1) Catered meal/dessert
- 2) Sandwiches/dessert
- 3) Dessert only

The members of the church will provide paper products (plates, cups, napkins), beverages (coffee, water, lemonade), and desserts.

The family of the deceased will be responsible for covering the cost of the food.

If the family chooses to have the meal catered, the Funeral Coordinator will find out if they want the church to provide the dessert. Also, the coordinator will find out what will be expected as far as serving and beverages. The coordinator will have a list of 3-4 caterers if the family needs suggestions.

If the sandwich option is chosen, the Funeral Coordinator will place an order with a local grocery store for buns, meat, cheese, condiment packets, pickles/olives, chips, and deli salads if desired. Information for billing the funeral home/family is given to them. The bill for the food will be given to the funeral director and a copy to the family.

The family will decide how they would like leftovers handled.

Bulletins

If bulletins are to be given out during the service, they will be prepared by the church.

Memorials / Trust Funds

In certain circumstances, the family might request a trust fund or contribution to a charitable organization in lieu of flowers. These arrangements must be made with an organization outside the church. The church will not manage, receive or distribute designated funds for an outside institution.

Undesignated funds and funds designated for an established project at Olivet will be received by the church as part of the Memorial Fund. Funds designated for a project or ministry not previously established will be designated for such only with approval by the Operations Team.

Fees

Use of Church	No fee
Pastor	No fee
Musicians	Varies (\$75.00 - \$150.00)
Soloists	Varies (\$50.00 - \$100.00)
Tech Support (Audio & Video)	No fee
Use of Fellowship Hall	No fee
Custodial fee	No fee

Bible Reading Suggestions

Old Testament (except Psalms)

2 Samuel 12:16-23	Death of David's infant son
Job 19:23-27	My Redeemer lives
Proverbs 31:10-31	Portrait of a godly woman
Isaiah 35:3-10	The ransomed shall return
Isaiah 40:1-11	He shall feed his flock
Isaiah 40:27-31	They who wait for the Lord
Isaiah 55:1-3, 6-13	God's gracious covenant
Isaiah 61:1-4, 10-11	The Spirit of the Lord is upon me
Isaiah 65:17-25	A new heaven and a new earth
Jeremiah 31:31-34	Written on the heart
Zechariah 8:1-8	Children at play in God's city

Psalms

Psalms 16:1, 5-11	The Lord is my chosen portion
Psalms 23	The Lord is my Shepherd
Psalms 27:1, 4-5, 13-14	Whom shall I fear?
Psalms 34:1-8	Taste and see that the Lord is good
Psalms 42:1-6a	As the deer longs for flowing streams
Psalms 46	God is our refuge and strength
Psalms 90:1-6, 10, 12-17	So teach us to number our days
Psalms 91:1-2, 9-12, 14-16	In the shadow of the Almighty
Psalms 103:1-5, 10-18	God's steadfast love
Psalms 116:1-9, 12-15	Precious is the death of his saints
Psalms 121	The Lord will keep you
Psalms 130	Out of the depths
Psalms 139:1-12, 23-24	Pursued by God

Epistle

Roman 5:1-11	While we were yet sinners
Romans 6:3-9	Baptized into Christ's death
Romans 8:14-23	Joint heirs with Christ
Romans 8:31-35, 37-39	Who shall separate us?
1 Corinthians 13	But the greatest of these is love
1 Corinthians 15:1-11	Raised on the third day
1 Corinthians 15:12-28	But Christ has been raised
1 Corinthians 15:51-58	O, death, where is thy sting?
2 Corinthians 4:5-18	God's power in our weakness
2 Corinthians 5:1-10	A house not made with hands
Ephesians 3:14-21	The love of Christ
Ephesians 6:10-18	The whole armor of God
Philippians 2:5-11	He emptied himself

Bible Reading Suggestions (Continued)

Philippians 3:7-16, 20-21	Becoming like him in his death
Philippians 4:1, 4-9, 13, 19	Rejoice in the Lord
Colossians 3:1-4, 12-17	Do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18	The comfort of his coming again
1 Thessalonians 5:1-11, 23-24	Destined to obtain salvation
2 Timothy 2:8-13	Remember Jesus Christ, risen
Hebrews 11:1-10	By faith they obeyed
Hebrews 11:32-12:2	A cloud of witnesses
Hebrews 12:3-14	Disciplined by God
1 Peter 1:3-9	Born anew to a living hope
1 John 1:1-7	Walk in the light
1 John 3:16-24	Love in deed and in truth
1 John 4:7-21	Love is of God – God is Love
Revelation 7:9-17	A great multitude in white robes
Revelation 21:1-7, 22-25	Behold, I make all things new
Revelation 21:22-27	The heavenly Jerusalem
Revelation 22:1-7	The Lamb of God and the Tree of Life

Gospel

Matthew 5:1-16	The blessed life
Matthew 6:19-34	God provides
Matthew 11:25-30	Easy yoke, light burden
Matthew 18:1-5, 10-14	Become like children
Matthew 25:31-40	You gave me food
Mark 10:13-16	Let the children come to me
Luke 7:11-17	Raising the widow's son
Luke 18:15-17	Let the children come to me
Luke 23:32-43	Today ... in Paradise
Luke 24:13-35	Known in the breaking of the bread
John 3:16-21	God so loved the world
John 5:19-29	The Son gives life
John 6:35-40, 47-51	The Bread of Life
John 10:7-16	The Good Shepherd
John 11:17-27, 38-44	I am the Resurrection
John 14:1-7, 15-21, 25-27	The Way, the Truth, the Life
John 15:1-17	The vine and the branches

Music Suggestions

- Amazing Grace
- A Mighty Fortress is Our God
- Abide With Me
- All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name
- All Your Anxiety
- Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen
- Be Still My Soul
- Be Thou My Vision
- Blessed Assurance
- Children of the Heavenly Father
- Christ the Lord Is Risen Today
- Come Away to the Skies
- Come, Christians, Join to Sing
- For All the Saints
- Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken
- God, Our Help in Ages Past
- Great Is Thy Faithfulness
- Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah
- He Giveth More Grace
- He Leadeth Me
- I Know That My Redeemer Liveth
- I Know Whom I Have Believed
- I Must Tell Jesus
- In the Garden
- Jesus, Lover of My Soul
- Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
- Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go
- Near to the Heart of God
- Nearer My God to Thee
- Now I Belong to Jesus
- O Blessed Spring
- O Christ the Same
- Precious Lord, Take My Hand
- The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want
- Thy Holy Wings
- We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight
- What a Friend We Have in Jesus
- When We All Get to Heaven

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