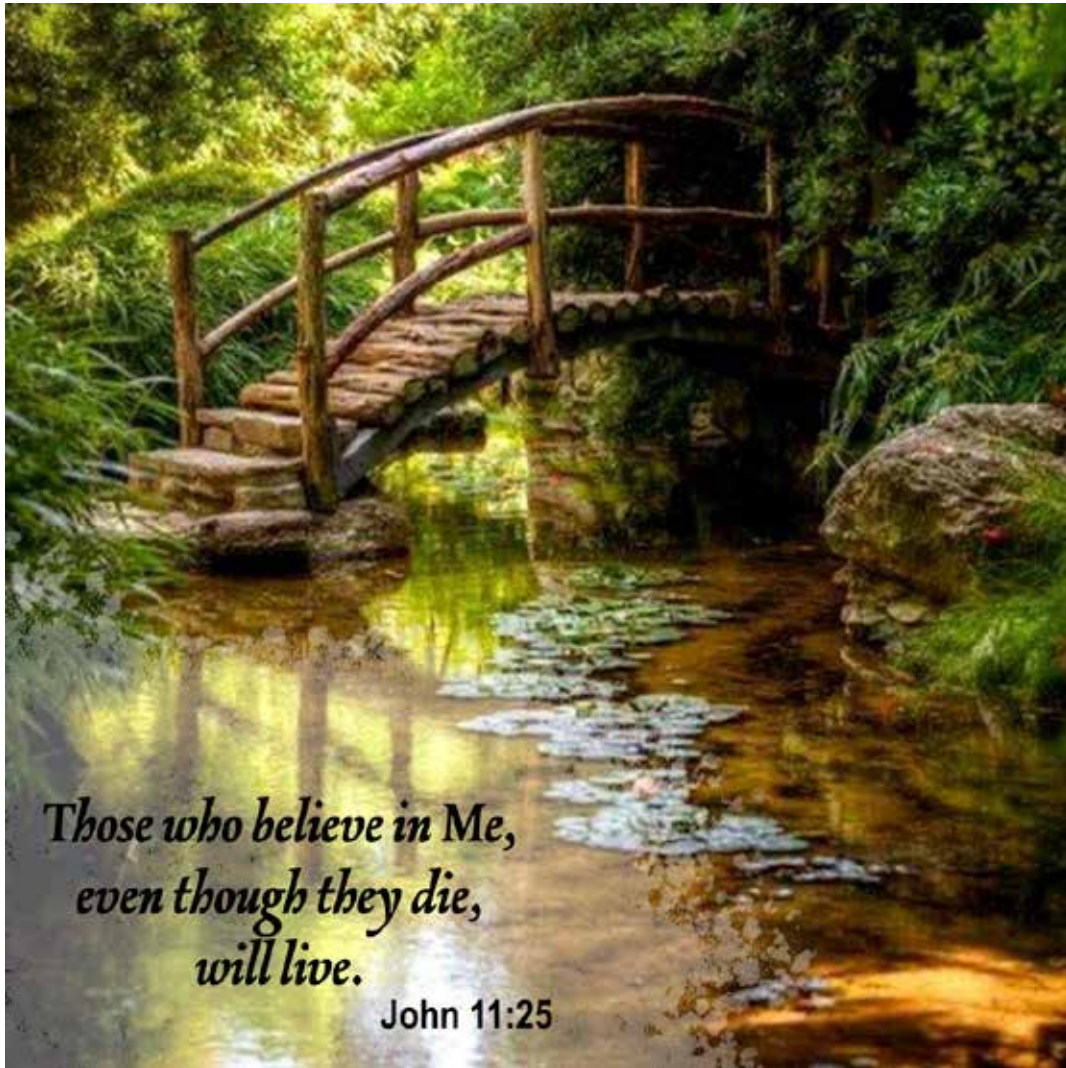


Pre-Planning Guide and Worksheet Funeral, Memorials or Celebration of Life



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Planning Guide and Worksheet

Jesus said: *"I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also."*

John 14:3

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. This guide will be helpful to you as you make plans and express your will and desires.

This guide will walk you through a series of questions. Your responses can be marked on the worksheet at the end. The Pastor is 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 the Pastor to share your worksheet so that it can be held in safekeeping in the church records for the future.

The Goal of the Christian Funeral, Memorial and Celebration of Life

The gathering of family and friends, who form a community of hope following a death, 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 promise. Every such gathering 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. Christians view death as another step in our life as children of God. Yet, Christians also experience death as a time of loss, sorrow, grief, and bereavement. Both are natural, appropriate, and need to be expressed. These two truths inform the gathering 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.

Our gathering 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, 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 become a ministry, especially to the bereaved. Since our gathering 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 and celebration of life?

Simply put, at a funeral service the body of the deceased is present, whereas at a memorial or celebration of life 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)

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. The Pastor is available to talk with you about the selection of a Funeral Director or to refer you to Funeral Directors they know well and hold in high regard.

How soon after death does a funeral, memorial service or celebration of life 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 or celebration of life can be held at any time. However, waiting for weeks or even months after a death will have an impact on the grief work that follows the death of a loved one. Therefore, it is recommended that a memorial service or celebration of life be held within a few weeks after death.

If the gathering 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.

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

What fees are associated with a gathering service at Trinity?

There are fees 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 are coordinated through the Funeral Director.

Who makes arrangements for the musician(s)?

Speak with the Pastor regarding your wishes for music (organ, piano or other). A vocalist may be selected by you or your family, or the vocalist can be arranged by the Trinity or the Funeral Director.

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 or Atrium. In addition, a visitation time is typically offered at the church prior to the service.

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

After the service has been planned with the Pastor, 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 full obituary normally appears 2-3 days before the visitation and gathering. 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 or celebration of life?

If using the Trinity building, the church office staff will schedule the room and make these arrangements with the Funeral Director and your family. When plans are being made for a gathering following death, the Funeral Director will work with the Trinity office staff 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 assure you that there will be 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, or leave at Trinity to be distributed through one of our ministries. Payment for the reception food and servers is coordinated through the church office. Call the church office for current cost.

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.

Planning Worksheet

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

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

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 the Pastor. Your information will be kept in a confidential file available only to the Pastor at 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 Will or Trust Plan
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 service 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?

- Yes
 No

Location of Visitation

- At the Funeral Home
 At Trinity Lutheran Church
 Other: _____

Will the Remains be Present at the Visitation?

- Coffin with Viewing of Body
 Closed Coffin
 Urn with Photograph next to it
 No Remains Present

Time of the Visitation

- Evening Prior to the Service
 Before the Service Only
 Both

Displays

- Photographic Displays
 Momentos (Awards, Certificates, etc.)
 Bible of the Deceased
 Video Tribute (Usually Produced by the Funeral Home)
 Other: _____

Christian Worship Service Plans

Location of Service

- Trinity Lutheran Church
 Funeral Home
 Cemetery (A Graveside Service Only)
 Other: _____ (i.e. Care Facility Chapel, etc.)

Time of the Worship Service

- Morning
 Afternoon
 Evening

Will the Remains be Present at the Worship Service?

- Yes (Coffin or Urn with Ashes)
 No

Will Holy Communion be Celebrated? (*We encourage for services at Trinity.*)

- Yes
 No

Display Items to be Near the Casket/Urn

- Floral Spray and/or additional Flower Bouquets
 Bible or Other Symbol of Faith: _____
 Photograph
 Cross
 Flag (*Only Used During Visitation and at Cemetery*)

Please Note: The Funeral Pall will always be used to cover the casket during the worship service.

Favorite Biblical Theme or Image _____

Readers

- The Pastor who officiates will read.
 I would like this/these person(s) to read at my service:

Bible Readings

- The Pastor who officiates may choose the readings.
 My Family will choose the readings.
 I have chosen the readings as indicated below.

- First Reading
 Second Reading
 Psalm
 Gospel
 Other Reading
 Other Reading

Readings and Psalms

At the processions

- *Psalm 23 - The Lord is my shepherd
- Psalm 90 - Our dwelling place in all generations
- Psalm 118 - God's steadfast love endures forever
- Psalm 130 - Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord
- Isaiah 41:9b-10 - Do not be afraid, for I am with you
- Matthew 11:28-29 - I will give you rest
- John 11:25-26 - I am the resurrection and the life
- John 14:27 - Peace I leave with you
- Romans 14:7-9 - Whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's
- Revelation 1:17-18 - Do not be afraid, I am the first and the last
- Revelation 14:13 - Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord

In the service

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
 *Psalm 23 - The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not be in want (Ps. 23:1)
 *Psalm 42:1-5 - I thirst for God, for the living God (Ps. 42:2)
 Psalm 46:1-7 - God is our refuge and strength. (Ps. 46:1)
 *Psalm 121 - I live up my eyes to the hills; my help comes from the Lord. (Ps. 121:1, 2)
 *Psalm 139:7-12 - Your hand will lead me and hold me fast. (Ps. 139:10)
 *Psalm 142:1-6 - I cry out to you, O Lord; listen to my cry. (Ps. 142:5,6)
 Psalm 143 - Lord, hear my prayer; answer me in your righteousness. (Ps. 143:1)
 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 4:13-18 - 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

 *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

**Although most of the suggested readings and hymns are suitable for a funeral involving a person of any age, these may be especially useful at the death of a child.*

Congregational Hymns/Songs

_____ The Pastor who officiates may choose the hymns/songs.

_____ My family will choose the hymns/songs.

_____ I have chosen the hymns/songs as indicated below.

_____ Opening Hymn/Songs

_____ Gospel Acclamation

_____ Song of the Day

_____ Song during Preparation of the Lord's Table

_____ Preface Response (Setting)

_____ Lamb of God (Setting)

_____ Communion Song

_____ Communion Song

_____ Communion Song

_____ Sending Hymn/Song

Suggested Song Possibilities

308	O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright!
313	O Lord, Now Let Your Servant
351, 352	O Sacred Head, Now Wounded
377	Alleluia! Jesus Is Risen!
*381	Peace, to Soothe Our Bitter Woes
391	This Joyful Eastertide
409	Kyrie! God, Father
422	For All the Saints
423	Shall We Gather at the River
429	In Our Day of Thanksgiving
447	O Blessed Spring
483	Here is Bread
500	Now We Remain
502	The King of Love My Shepherd Is
503-505	A Mighty Fortress Is Our God
531	The Trumpets Sound, the Angels Sing
*595	Jesus Loves Me!
*613	Thy Holy Wings
621	Jesus Lives, My Sure Defense
622	Neither Death nor Life
629	Abide with Me
636	How Small Our Span of Life
637	Holy God, Holy and Glorious
639	When We Are Living
660	Lift High the Cross
721	Goodness Is Stronger than Evil
730	Lord Our God, with Praise We Come
750	Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart
759	My Faith Looks Up to Thee
760	O Christ the Same

770	Give Me Jesus
773	Precious Lord, Take My Hand
778	The Lord's My Shepherd
786	O Holy Spirit, Enter In
787	On Eagle's Wings
*815	I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light
826	Thine the Amen

**Although most of the suggested readings and hymns are suitable for a funeral involving a person of any age, these may be especially useful at the death of a child.*

Other Hymns/Songs Selected: _____

Soloist

Our musician will choose a vocalist unless otherwise negotiated.

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)

_____ Yes
 _____ No

I would like this person to speak: _____

Reception Following Worship

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

_____ Yes
 _____ No

I would like the Reception

_____ 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

_____ Dessert and Coffee/Beverage
 _____ Light Lunch (Sandwiches, Salads, dessert)
 _____ Secure your own caterer and wait staff.
 _____ 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 Visitation but Before Funeral Service
_____ 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: _____

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 Church Endowment Fund *(This is an Endowed Fund where memorial gifts are invested, and the interest growth is disbursed annually to support a variety of ministries and missions of Trinity)*

Trinity Lutheran Church Memorial Fund

Specific Mission or Ministry: _____
(ideas include: Music Ministry, Children's Ministry, Trinity Preschool, Youth Scholarships, One of Our Own Fund)

Other: _____

*Columbarium: A columbarium is in the planning process at Trinity Cemetery. (Approximate completion end of 2025)

Obituary

Full Name (including Maiden Name) _____

Birth Date and Location _____

Parent's Names (including Mother's Maiden Name) _____

Baptism Date, Church, and Location _____

Confirmation Date, Church, and Location _____

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, record additional information including place(s) of residence, special events, hobbies/interests, schools attended and degrees received, accomplishments, memberships, employment history, volunteer activities, military service, etc. Include as many full names, city of residence, birth and death dates, etc. as possible. All this information is important to your family. 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.

Location and Date of Will/Living Trust _____

Location of my 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



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