**Funeral Policy**



*At a person’s death, the church shares the grief of those who mourn and remembers the brevity of life on earth. At the funeral we give voice to sorrow, thank God for our loved one, and entrust this companion of ours into the hands of God. Trusting in God’s promise in baptism that we are claimed by Christ forever, we rest in the sure hope of the resurrection. When the church gathers to mark the end of life, Christ crucified and risen is the witness of worship, the strength of mutual consolation, and the hope of healing*. – Evangelical Worship p. 279

When a loved one dies it can leave us feeling empty, sad, numb, or even angry. Grieving is a lifelong process and you may feel several of these emotions at once, or they may come on later in life as you remember your deceased loved one. Whatever you are feeling the community of faith at Lutheran Church of the Savior is here to support and help you.

A funeral is first and foremost a worship service. During this service we give thanks to God for the life of our loved one and we remember the promise and hope of the resurrection that we are given in Jesus Christ. For this reason, in the Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA) a funeral service is referred to as a Service of Witness to the Resurrection.

To help you with your funeral planning please review the following policies of our congregation.

**FOR YOUR HELP PLANNING**

* No pets or animals, except for service animals\*, are permitted in the church building.
* Any decorations used should be tasteful and appropriate for worship. They should not block any movement down the aisles, in the altar area, or in the chancel area.
* No flash photography or video recording during the service (opening greeting to dismissal).
* No smoking is permitted in any part of the church building. This includes electronic cigarettes, vaping, and marijuana.
* Smoking is permitted outside at the designated smoking area. Cigarette butts should be properly disposed of and not left on church property.
* Cremains may not be placed on the altar or in the altar area.
* Alcohol is permitted upon advanced approval of the LCS church council.
* Beverages or food items may be brought into the church with advance arrangement.
* Food and beverages are not permitted in the sanctuary.
* Funeral services for active members of Lutheran Church of the Savior shall be officiated by the pastor of LCS unless other arrangements are made.
* If you would like a guest book LCS will provide a stand or table upon request.

**ARRANGMENTS FOR WHICH YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE**

* If a printed program is prepared, a proof copy should be submitted to the pastor before printing. The church secretary does not type or print bulletins, unless special arrangements are made.
* You are responsible for engaging an organist, pianist, or other musicians. Don’t put this off—musicians are in high demand! The LCS organist has first call playing wedding services at LCS, please make arrangements with him/her as soon as possible. If you would like to use another organist, please make arrangements with LCS organist as soon as possible. See the below musician fee section for more information.
* If you wish to use recorded music, our sound system is available. All music used during the funeral service should be appropriate for the context of Christian worship. Music played during the luncheon/reception should be family appropriate.
* If you will be including Holy Communion during the service, you are responsible for providing the bread and wine unless prior arrangements are made with the LCS pastor.
* You are responsible for making arrangements with the church custodian or LCS representative to get into the building for any preparation before the service.
* You are responsible for arranging for food, beverages, etc. if you will be having a luncheon at LCS.

**FEES**

Use of the Church Building

There are no fees charged for the use of the church to active members. The church should be returned to its normal arrangement for worship following the service/reception. For all others a donation is requested for use of the church. This shall be paid prior to the service.

Custodial services

The LCS custodian is available to assist with clean up following the funeral/luncheon. Clean up does not include set up or take down from events. You must speak with him/her in advance to make arrangements prior to the service. For all nonmembers a cleaning fee of up to $250, depending on services rendered, should be paid to the custodian prior to the funeral/luncheon.

Musicians

The LCS organist has first call playing funeral services at LCS, please make arrangements with him/her as soon as possible. If you would like another musician to play, or if you have other musicians you would like to incorporate into the service, please speak with the LCS organist as soon as possible. There is a fee of $150 to be paid to the organist before the service.

There will be a fee of $25 payable to the church organist to familiarize another organist

with our organ.

Sound system operator

If you are using recorded music please make arrangements in advance with LCS. You must return the sound system to its normal settings when the service ends so it will be ready for worship.

Officiating clergy

The pastor of LCS will officiate at the funeral services of church members unless other arrangements are made. Other clergy may participate at the discretion of the LCS pastor. Although there is no fee assessed by the pastor for officiating for active members of LCS, many people give a monetary gift. While such a gift is appreciated, it is not a requirement. For all others there is an honorarium of $200.

If you will have other clergy/officiant leading the funeral service you should speak with them in advance regarding any honorarium policies they have.

\*A service animal is any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not considered service animals. – *From the Americans with Disabilities National Network* (https://adata.org/factsheet/service-animals)