



A **GUIDE**

for the *Burial of Christians*

An Informational Booklet

To Assist Your Family Through Funeral Planning

***St. John's Evangelical
Lutheran Church - Vilmar***



NORTH AMERICAN
LUTHERAN
CHURCH




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INTRODUCTION

The Gospel of Jesus Christ and His Church is life! He has promised that those who believe in Him have life, now and forever. Death does indeed come to all—believers and non-believers. However, for the believer there is hope now and beyond the grave. We believe that as we have been baptized into Christ's death, so also, having passed through the gate of death, at the resurrection we shall be raised to new life in Christ (Romans 6:1-8).

Even for Christians, the death of a loved one is a difficult experience. We grieve the loss of one who has been close, but we do not sorrow as those who have no hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13). It is our desire and privilege to minister to the families of our congregation in their time of need. These guidelines are provided to assist our families in planning and providing a Christian funeral.

AS YOU BEGIN PLANNING

- Remember that a Christian funeral is a worship service and its purpose is to glorify God and to proclaim the life-giving Gospel of Jesus Christ. Preparations are therefore made from the perspective of the Christian faith.
- Please start by discussing the death, the funeral, and your wishes/questions with the local funeral director and the pastor as soon as possible following the death. It is important for these persons to coordinate any plans that are made.
- During the pastoral vacancy, please contact Director of Communications Monica Edeker (319-939-7348) to help with arrangements. The church has a list of guest pastors that can be contacted to cover funeral services. The family is also able to request another local pastor to officiate during the vacancy, however please let Monica know as soon as possible so she can work with them to make the bulletin arrangements.
- Generally a service will take place at either the church or the funeral home. However, there may be alternative methods or locations for the conducting of services, such as a private graveside service for family members or a public service of worship (a memorial service) conducted at a later date, or in another location chosen by the family.

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STRUCTURE OF THE FUNERAL SERVICE

- A funeral or memorial service is a service of worship, celebrating the deceased person's life and the promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ. All parts of the service are to be consistent with the present worship practices of St. John's – Vilmar.
- The order for worship will follow the "Burial of the Dead" in the Lutheran Book of Worship (LBW, green hymnal). A sample is as follows:
- During the funeral worship service, the casket or urn will be draped in a pall, a sign of being clothed with Christ in Baptism. The pall is a visual linking our lives, baptism, and the promise of Christ pointing toward life eternal in the forgiveness of our sins.

Sample Order of Service

Prelude
Invocation and Entrance Rite
Entrance Hymn
Liturgy & Prayer
Scripture Readings
Congregational Hymn
Reading of the Obituary
Sermon
Congregational Hymn or
Special Music
Apostles' Creed
Prayers of the Church
The Lord's Prayer
Commendation
Recessional Hymn
Postlude

BULLETINS

- The funeral home will prepare the obituary bulletins, and the church will prepare the order of service bulletins; each of which will be distributed at the service.

FLOWERS

- Floral arrangements, plants and other memorials can bring dignity and beauty to the service. Flowers may be left in the basement fridge (as applicable) for the following Sunday worship service. Please leave a note with the flowers, which will be included in the morning worship announcements.

The graveside Committal Service and Final Prayers will take place immediately following the at the cemetery.

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SCRIPTURES

- It is recommended that the family consider and suggest appropriate Bible lessons or verses for reading at the service. Normally two lessons are read, one of which is a Gospel text.
- The pastor will provide guidance regarding the scripture passages.

Scripture Suggestions

Old Testament:

- Job 1:21
- Isaiah 25:6-9
- Isaiah 43
- Isaiah 61:1-3
- Lamentations 3:22-26, 31-33
- Psalm 23
- Psalm 39:4-8, 12
- Psalm 42:1-7
- Psalm 46:1-7
- Psalm 73:23-26, 28
- Psalm 91
- Psalm 103
- Psalm 121
- Psalm 139
- Psalm 143

Gospel:

- Matthew 5:1-12
- Matthew 11:25-30
- Matthew 25:1-13
- Luke 8:40-42, 49-55
- Luke 12:35-40

- Luke 14:15-24
- John 1:1-14
- John 3:16
- John 5:24-29
- John 6:37-40*
- John 6:35, 44, 47-51
- John 11:21-27
- John 12:23-26
- John 14:1-6
- John 15:1-5
- John 20:1-3, 10-18

New Testament Epistles:

- Romans 5:1-11
- Romans 5:17-21
- Romans 8:31-35, 37-39
- 1 Corinthians 15:12, 16-26
- 2 Corinthians 4:5-12
- 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
- 1 Peter 1:3-9
- 1 John 3:1-2*
- Revelation 7:9-17
- Revelation 21:2-7

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MUSIC

- One of St. John's organists will play for the funeral in the church.
- The singing of hymns is strongly recommended, both as a statement of faith and as a means of participation by the congregation. The pastor will provide guidance regarding music. St John's – Vilmar has 3 hymnals: Lutheran Book of Worship, Sing to the Lord, and With One Voice.
- Other music, whether sung or played by soloists or instrumentalists should receive prior approval by the pastor or director of communications.
- If the family wishes to have music played through the sound system, please provide the director of communications with a flash drive containing the audio file before the service.

VIDEO

- The Director of Communications will operate the sound system and video recording. At the families request, the service can be live-streamed to the church's Facebook page. A DVD copy of the service can be provided to the family upon request.

FAMILY FELLOWSHIP MEAL

- If a luncheon is desired after the funeral and burial, Vilmar's Funeral Committee will help coordinate the meal. The church will do everything reasonably possible to accommodate a member's request for a family meal after a funeral service.
- Two options are available. First, the family can choose to have the women take care of the entire meal (for the cost of the main course). Or, the family can choose to cater the meal through a private caterer at their own cost. If a private caterer is used, the committee will still be glad to help serve.
- An estimated number for the meal will need to be provided by the family. Arrangements can be made through the funeral committee leader, Margaret DeBower (319-269-1306).

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HONORARIUMS

Pastor	\$175 (+mileage, if applicable)
Organist	\$45
Janitor	\$100

Note: Honorarium may be handled through the funeral home or given directly to the individual(s), please talk with the funeral director about these arrangements. The custodial fee is currently set up to be paid through the funeral home.

MEMORIALS

- The family may designate memorial gifts to be given to St. John's – Vilmar. Such gifts will go into the Memorial Fund unless designated to a particular ministry of the church. The church will not manage, receive, or distribute funds for an outside institution.

CONTACTS

Pastor: Tamara J. K. Keen 316-655-3306

Director of Communications: Monica Edeker 319-939-7348

Council Chairman: Kurt Roose 641-425-3418

Funeral Committee Leader: Margaret DeBower 319-269-1306

Organists: Barb Wagner 641-330-0093

Diane Hummel 319-429-4611

Janitor: Stacey Uhlenhopp 641-425-6130

Cemetery Committee Leader: Kevin Edeker 319-239-2066

Deacons: Tyler Seehusen, Meredith Steere, Ron Taylor, and Dick Ulrich

**The church will contact deacons to assist during funerals*

Other Funeral Committee Members: Betty Debner and Barb Meyer