



Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church
208 Woods Drive
Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania 17050

A member congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

GUIDELINES FOR FUNERAL SERVICES

PURPOSE

The funeral service in the Christian Church is to give honor to Christ, our Lord. It provides an opportunity for Christians to mourn the end of earthly life of one of their fellow believers. It also proclaims the promises of resurrection and everlasting life given to the deceased who has died with faith in Christ. Christ's disciples who see the effects of sin and death in their fellow believers also have the promises of resurrection and everlasting life given to them renewed. In this way, the funeral service is a time to worship Christ and His power over death and the grave.

ELIGIBILITY

Funeral services are conducted for members of Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church or for individuals who have received direct pastoral care from the current pastor. Committal services for members of other congregations who are in fellowship with Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church may be conducted by the pastor.

CONDUCT OF SERVICE

Funerals conducted under the auspices of Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church will be consistent with the teachings and practices of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) and the rubrics of *Lutheran Service Book*. The pastor of Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church will preside and assistants may be used with his permission. The pastor, by virtue of his office and training, will make final decisions pertaining to the order of the service and the ceremonies connected with it.

FORMAT OF SERVICE

Funerals are preferably conducted within the sanctuary of Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church or other Christian sacred spaces. The format of a funeral service held at Calvary is similar to the Divine Service. The Sacrament of the Altar may be offered at the request of the family. If the Sacrament is offered, it will be distributed to all who are eligible to receive it and the Parish Communion Statement will be included in the service folder. The musical setting of the Divine Service will be the setting from *Lutheran Service Book* currently used during the time of the church year at Calvary.

Though not preferable, funerals may be conducted at funeral homes or other non-sacred spaces. For such services, the Prayer Office for the Dead will be used. This includes psalms, Scripture Readings, hymns, and prayers; the prayer office may be adapted to circumstance. No Sacrament of the Altar will be offered.

FUNERAL PLANNING

Planning one's funeral prior to death is a worthwhile endeavor. Members of Calvary can be provided with materials to help make funeral arrangements while they are still living. This helps individuals understand the purpose of the funeral service, as well as to hear again the promises of resurrection that are an essential part of the Christian faith.

Amidst the grief and sorrow, several actions must take place immediately after the death of a loved one:

- (1) The family should contact the funeral director of their choice or with whom the deceased has made prior arrangements.
- (2) The family should contact the pastor to learn when the church and he are available for a funeral service.
- (3) The family should speak with the pastor about burial arrangements for the deceased, especially if the committal service will take place at a later date than the funeral service (e.g. committals at national cemeteries).
- (4) Following discussions with the family, the pastor will inform the deacon chair and the altar guild that a funeral will take place. The deacon chair will work with the pastor to ensure that the church is ready for the funeral service.

PARTICIPATION OF CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS

Participation in civic organizations may have been an important aspect of the deceased's earthly life. These organizations may wish to honor their member with their own ceremonies. The following rules are given concerning these ceremonies in relation to funerals at Calvary:

- (1) No ceremonies contrary to Lutheran tradition or practices (e.g. rites of fraternal organizations) will be conducted during the funeral service or committal service or on the grounds of Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church.
- (2) Any services or ceremonies conducted by military orders or civic organizations should be held at the funeral home or another location.
- (3) Military or governmental honors that the deceased is privileged to have will be conducted following the committal service.

FUNERAL LUNCHEONS

Gatherings of families and friends for funerals provide opportunities for social interaction. Our congregation will attempt to facilitate that interaction by providing a venue for a luncheon following the funeral service. Families may use the Social Hall, which has a seating capacity around 85. Arrangements for a luncheon will be made with the Calvary Ladies Aid Society. The pastor will provide contact information to the family.

RULES REGARDING FUNERAL PRACTICES

- Public Viewings** Public viewings may take place in the narthex prior to the funeral service. Public viewings will end ten minutes prior to the scheduled funeral service start time. No viewings will take place following the funeral service.
- Scripture Readings** Readings will consist of at least one psalm and two other selections from the Scriptures, one of which shall be from the Gospels. A second psalm is used at the committal service. Readings will be selected by the pastor in consultation with the family. If a family member is asked to be allowed to do a reading, the pastor will select a psalm to be read. No extra-scriptural readings will be allowed.
- Hymns** Hymns to be used during the service will be selected by the family in consultation with the pastor. In a typical funeral, three or four hymns are sung.
- Soloists** A soloist may be used during the service with approval from the church organist. Non-sacred music will not be played or sung.
- Eulogies** No eulogies will be given during the funeral service. Eulogies may be given at the funeral home during visitation or at the post-service reception.
- Funeral Pall** The funeral pall will be used for the service. The pall will be placed on the casket as it enters the sanctuary; the pall is removed as the casket leaves the sanctuary. Nothing is to be placed on top of the funeral pall. Caskets will be closed prior to the beginning of the funeral service.
- Casket Flags** If the deceased is privileged to have the national or state flags drape the casket, this will take place following the funeral service. The funeral pall will be removed and the flag will then be draped over the casket.
- Cremains** If the deceased has been cremated, then the urn can be displayed at the funeral service. A funeral pall for urns will be used to cover the urn. Families are suggested to ask whether the funeral director has a casket that can be lent, so that the full ceremonies of the funeral service can be conducted with the cremation to take place at a later date. The pastor may conduct a committal service for the cremains based upon his availability.
- Portraits** Portraits of the deceased may be displayed in the narthex. No pictures will be allowed in the sanctuary.
- Floral Arrangements** Two flower arrangements may be placed on the flower stands in the chancel. Other flower arrangements will be placed in other locations outside the sanctuary. Should the funeral service take place during times when seasonal decorations utilized by the congregation are present, those decorations will remain in place.
- Processional Crucifix** The processional crucifix will be used during the funeral service at the church. At the request of the family, it can be taken to the cemetery for use at the committal service. This request may be denied due to inclement weather conditions.

FUNERAL SERVICE RUBRICS

The following rubrics govern funeral services held at Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Processional Order	Crucifer Torchbearers [<i>when present</i>] Assisting Ministers or Visiting Clergy [<i>when present</i>] Officiant Casket Family of Deceased
Funeral Pall	When available, assisting ministers complete the task of placing the funeral pall on the casket at the beginning of the service and removing the funeral pall at the end of the service. Funeral palls for urns will be placed prior to the service.
Scripture Readings	Scripture Readings are chosen by the pastor in consultation with the family of the deceased. Assisting ministers may be used as readers.
Paschal Candle	The Paschal Candle will be lit for funerals. For non-eucharistic funerals, the Paschal Candle is placed close to the chancel opening on the Gospel side. For eucharistic funerals, the Paschal Candle is placed on the Gospel side of the altar.
Recessional Order	The recessional follows the same order as the processional.
Family Seating	Family members of the deceased will be seated in the first two pews on the Epistle side of the sanctuary. Should more seating be required, further pews may be reserved.
Ushers	Members from the scheduled usher team should be present for funeral services. In case of a large number of attendees, deacons who are not responsible for duties in the funeral service should serve as ushers.