

Funeral Preparation

For You or a Loved One!

Choose what your loved ones will hear from the Bible and sing from the hymnal when they attend your funeral.

Dear Friend: It is normal and natural to be sad about those who die but let us remember *these important truths* about those who die knowing Jesus as their Savior and Lord: “...the righteous are taken away to be spared from evil. Those who walk uprightly enter into **peace**; they find **rest** as they lie in death” (Isaiah 57:1-2 NIV).

Table of Contents

Page

- ◆ A Letter of Encouragement and Instruction: 2
- ◆ Frequently Asked Questions: 3-5
- ◆ Choose the Scripture Readings: 6-20
 - Psalm: 6-10
 - Old Testament: 11-12
 - Epistle: 13-17
 - Gospel: 18-20
- ◆ Choose the Hymns – If It’s a Church Funeral: 21-22
- ◆ Give a Brief Life Summary: 23-25
- ◆ Record the Service Folder Contents: 26
- ◆ Final Instructions: 27

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
7500 State Road ♦ Parma, Ohio 44134
www.BLC7500.com ♦ 440-845-2230

Last Revision: April 2024

Dear Friend,

We cannot escape physical death, *but we can prepare for it in the following ways:*

Soul Preparation:

- **Bad News:** We all have sinned, *so all have gone against the Almighty God and deserve His wrath and punishment. Furthermore, everyone is powerless to save himself!*
- **Good News:** *God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son to be our perfect substitute by living without sin, receiving our sins and eternal punishment, and laying down His life! God is calling everyone to repent, trust in Jesus, and have eternal life!*

Funeral Service Preparation:

- For yourself: Even though believers in Jesus will be in heaven, *they should carefully plan their funerals in advance:*
 - To make things easier for their loved ones!
 - To share their wishes about location, readings, and hymns.
 - As a final way to share the *bad news of sin* and the *good news of Jesus* with all who might gather!
- For a loved one: Use this booklet to choose location, readings, and hymns.

Funeral Home and Cemetery Preparation: I encourage you to make your arrangements in advance. A good funeral director will help you set everything in place now so that, at the time of death, things will be easier, less expensive, and less stressful for your loved ones.

I pray that God's promises are your source of comfort and strength, *especially if you have recently experienced the death of a loved one!* Always remember: For all who die in Jesus, their bodies are only sleeping, and their souls are in heaven: **"Brothers, we do not want you...to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him"** (1 Thess. 4:13-14 NIV).

In Christ,

Pastor Green

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the *Purposes* of a *Christian* Funeral Service?

1. Remember the eternal gifts given to the deceased.
2. Offer comfort to those who are mourning.
3. Encourage all who trust in Jesus.
4. Call all who have fallen away or have never known Jesus as Savior and Lord to turn from their sins and trust in Jesus for eternal life.

What Should I Consider When Planning a Funeral Service?

1. **When – At what age should a person begin to think about preplanning his own funeral?** Even though people are generally living longer today, we never know when our Lord will call us to our heavenly home; therefore, *it's never too soon!*
2. **Why – Why should I be involved in planning my own funeral service or the funeral service of a loved one?** All Christians have a strong desire for their family members and friends to ✦ have the gift of salvation, ✦ continue in their faith (through Word and Sacrament), and ✦ eventually die in Jesus. Since most people have family members and friends who do not yet know Jesus as Savior, planning your funeral service gives you an opportunity to communicate the seriousness of sin and the good news of salvation. Through the readings and hymns, God will bless your loved ones with the saving truth of His Holy Word!
3. **Where – Where should I have the funeral service?** Consider this quote out of The Altar Guild Manual: “It is proper that a baptized Christian be buried from the church” (105). A church funeral can better communicate God’s saving truths with ✦ various worship area symbols (crosses, altar, stained glass window), ✦ the funeral pall (symbolizing the blessings of Baptism), and ✦ theologically rich hymns. Other options: funeral home, cemetery chapel, or grave site.
4. **Day and Time – When should I have the funeral service?** Funerals generally take place a few days after death has occurred; however, the key is to schedule a day and time that will work for ✦ you and

your family, †the funeral home, and †the Pastor. Funerals usually begin at 10:00, 10:30, or 11:00.

5. **Organist** – **Will the funeral service require an organist?** Yes – *for church funerals*; please plan to compensate the organist – *either through the funeral home arrangements or personally*: Her fee is \$150. If the funeral is at a funeral home, you could check into the possibility of singing hymns played from a CD.
6. **Solo** – **Can a solo be sung during the funeral service?** Yes, but you must provide your own soloist; also, the words and music must be appropriate for a Christian worship service.
7. **Calling Hours and Location** – **Are calling hours with an open casket important?** They can be an important part of the grieving process. It's also an excellent opportunity for family members and friends to offer words of support and encouragement. You may choose to have calling at the church right before the funeral.
8. **Cremation** – **What is the position of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod on cremation?** The LCMS has no official position on cremation; however, in the textbook, Pastoral Theology, LCMS Pastors Norbert H. Mueller and George Kraus explain why this practice is now being viewed more favorably: "Not too long ago, the church viewed cremation negatively. Because the public associated the practice with heathen religions and/or an attempt to disprove the possibility of the resurrection, Christians were reluctant to consider it. The practice has no theological significance and may be used in good conscience. In fact, because of space limitations in some areas..., and because of health considerations, cremation is increasing in favor. Cost, too, is a legitimate consideration, although the family considering it for this reason should be reminded that cost is saved only when there is no public viewing and, thus, no need for embalming and use of the visitation room." You may want to follow these steps in this order: Calling hours, funeral, cremation, cemetery committal.
9. **Luncheon** – **What about a luncheon after the committal?** Most people follow that practice; ask your funeral director for suggestions. Our space at Bethlehem for such an event is limited.

What Should I Do When My Loved One Dies?

10. **Contacting the Pastor/Church** – When my loved one dies, *when should I call?* The pastor and church members want to be supportive, and the pastor and secretary will need to prepare for the funeral, so please do not delay in calling (Pastor: 440-292-5915; Church: 440-845-2230).
11. **Getting Funeral Information to the Pastor** – *What does the Pastor need and when does he need it?* Please **complete pages 23-26** of this booklet; then return the whole booklet to Bethlehem no later than Noon on the day before the funeral.

What Should I Know and Consider on the Day of the Funeral?

12. **Before a funeral begins** – **What happens before a typical church funeral?** The deceased is brought into the narthex of the church by the funeral home approximately one hour before the service is scheduled to begin. The casket may be open for viewing or it may remain closed – *your choice*. About five minutes before the service is scheduled to begin, the casket will be closed (if open). The family is welcome to stay in the narthex to see the casket closed or be seated near the front on the pulpit side just before that time.
13. **The funeral itself** – **How will the service begin and end?** Since God brings most people into His holy family through Holy Baptism, the service will begin at the entrance of the church with a prayer and a reference to the Funeral Pall, *which symbolizes God's work in baptism to unite sinners to Christ*. Then the casket will be moved to the front of the church during the reading of the selected Psalm. Finally, at the end of the service, the casket will be moved from the worship area to the narthex during the postlude. The family and others will follow the casket to the Narthex.
14. **When a funeral ends** – **What happens after a typical church funeral?** Most are followed by a committal service at a cemetery, which is followed by a luncheon – *according to whatever has been planned*.
15. **Pastor** – Faithful Bethlehem members give an honorarium, which means the payment is at the discretion of the payer. For others, \$200 is suggested.

Choose the Scripture Readings

As You Read the Following Bible Passages:

1. *Read with assurance*, remembering that God ✠ is almighty – *able to keep His promises*, ✠ is holy – *so He must keep His promises*, and ✠ loves you – *proven in the sacrifice of His Son for all sins!*
2. Choose an appropriate ✠ Psalm, ✠ Old Testament reading, ✠ Epistle reading, and ✠ Gospel reading for the funeral service. As you make your choices, record them on page 26 of this booklet. You may also select other Bible passages that are not included below.

Psalms

In the service the Psalm will conclude with everyone saying:

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

PSALM: 23:1-6

ESV

With the Lord as our Shepherd, we have everything we need!

L: The LORD is my shepherd;

C: I shall not want.

L: He makes me lie down in green pastures.

C: He leads me beside still waters.

L: He restores my soul.

C: He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

L: Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me;

C: your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

L: You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;

C: you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

L: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,

C: and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

God is our ever-present help in trouble.

L: God is our refuge and strength,

C: an ever-present help in trouble.

L: Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way

C: and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,

L: though its waters roar and foam

C: and the mountains quake with their surging.

L: There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,

C: the holy place where the Most High dwells.

L: God is within her, she will not fall;

C: God will help her at break of day.

L: Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall;

C: he lifts his voice, the earth melts.

L: The LORD Almighty is with us;

C: the God of Jacob is our fortress.

L: Come and see the works of the LORD,

C: the desolations he has brought on the earth.

L: He makes wars cease to the ends of the earth; he breaks the bow
and shatters the spear,

C: he burns the shields with fire.

L: "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the
nations,

C: I will be exalted in the earth."

L: The LORD Almighty is with us;

C: the God of Jacob is our fortress.

All who fear the LORD ♦have godly sorrow, ♦trust in Jesus for heaven, and
♦are not shaken!

- L: Praise the LORD. Blessed is the man who fears the LORD,
C: who finds great delight in his commands.
 L: His children will be mighty in the land;
C: the generation of the upright will be blessed.
 L: Wealth and riches are in his house,
C: and his righteousness endures forever.
 L: Even in darkness light dawns for the upright,
C: for the gracious and compassionate and righteous man.
 L: Good will come to him who is generous and lends freely,
C: who conducts his affairs with justice.
 L: Surely he will never be shaken;
C: a righteous man will be remembered forever.
 L: He will have no fear of bad news;
C: his heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD.

Confession and assurance.

- L: I lift up my eyes to the hills—
C: where does my help come from?
 L: My help comes from the LORD,
C: the Maker of heaven and earth.
 L: He will not let your foot slip—
C: he who watches over you will not slumber;
 L: indeed, he who watches over Israel
C: will neither slumber nor sleep.
 L: The LORD watches over you—
C: the LORD is your shade at your right hand;
 L: the sun will not harm you by day,
C: nor the moon by night.
 L: The LORD will keep you from all harm—
C: he will watch over your life;
 L: the LORD will watch over your coming and going
C: both now and forevermore.

The Lord invites us to repent and trust in Him for forgiveness and help!

L: Out of the depths

C: I cry to you, O LORD;

L: O Lord, hear my voice.

C: Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy.

L: If you, O LORD, kept a record of sins,

C: O Lord, who could stand?

L: But with you there is forgiveness;

C: therefore you are feared.

L: I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,

C: and in his word I put my hope.

L: My soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning,

C: more than watchmen wait for the morning.

L: O Israel, put your hope in the LORD,

C: for with the LORD is unfailing love and with him is full redemption.

L: He himself will redeem Israel

C: from all their sins.

The Lord made us, knows us, and loves us.

L: O LORD, you have searched me and you know me.

C: You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.

L: You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.

C: Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD.

L: You hem me in--behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me.

C: Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

L: Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

C: If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

This Psalm continues, see the next page!

- L: If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,
C: **even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.**
- L: If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,"
C: **even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.**
- L: For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.
C: **I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.**
- L: My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth,
C: **your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.**
- L: How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!
C: **Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand. When I awake, I am still with you.**
- L: Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts.
C: **See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.**

Please mark your selection on page 26.

Old Testament Readings

OLD TESTAMENT: Isaiah 25:6-9 NIV

A beautiful picture of heaven!

⁶ On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine-- the best of meats and the finest of wines. ⁷ On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; ⁸ he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken. ⁹ In that day they will say, "Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation."

OLD TESTAMENT: Isaiah 40:28-31 NIV

Only in the Lord are we truly strong!

²⁸ Do you not know? Have you not heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. ²⁹ He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. ³⁰ Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; ³¹ but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

OLD TESTAMENT: Isaiah 53:2-6 NIV

A prophecy of Jesus' life and suffering to save us!

² He [*Jesus*] grew up before him [*God the Father*] like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

³ He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed [*honored*] him not.

⁴ Surely he took up our infirmities [*illnesses*] and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken [*tormented*] by God, smitten [*struck hard*] by him, and afflicted.

This reading continues, see the next page!

⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.

⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him [Jesus] the iniquity [sin, evil, wickedness] of us all.

OLD TESTAMENT: Isaiah 57:1-2 NIV

The blessings that belong to all who die in Jesus!

¹ The righteous perish, and no one ponders it in his heart; devout men are taken away, and no one understands that the righteous are taken away to be spared from evil. ² Those who walk uprightly enter into peace; they find rest as they lie in death.

OLD TESTAMENT: Isaiah 60:19-20 NIV

Those who die in the LORD are forever blessed!

¹⁹ The sun will no more be your light by day, nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you, for the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory. ²⁰ Your sun will never set again, and your moon will wane no more; the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your days of sorrow will end.

OLD TESTAMENT: Isaiah 61:1-3 NIV

The Prophet Isaiah looks ahead to the glorious coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

¹ The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, ² to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, ³ and provide for those who grieve in Zion-- to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor.

Please mark your selection on page 26.

Epistle Readings

EPISTLE: Romans 3:20-22

NIV

Since we are unable to keep God's law perfectly, God offers us His gift of righteousness through faith in Jesus!

²⁰ Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

²¹ But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify.

²² This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe....

EPISTLE: Romans 8:31-39

NIV

Paul reminds us of the awesome love that God has demonstrated toward us in Jesus!

³¹ What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all-- how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died-- more than that, who was raised to life-- is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

³⁶ As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." ³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Paul notes the key aspects of Jesus' saving work!

¹ Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. ² By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

³ For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. ⁶ After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. ⁷ Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, ⁸ and last of all he appeared to me...

Paul tells us what will happen when Jesus returns!

⁵¹ Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed-- ⁵² in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. ⁵³ For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.

⁵⁴ When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory." ⁵⁵ "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" ⁵⁶ The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Those who die in Jesus will not be forgotten!

¹³ Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. ¹⁴ We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.

¹⁵ According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.

¹⁷ After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸ Therefore encourage each other with these words.

No one can save himself, so God is working by the Holy Spirit through the Bible to save all people through faith in Jesus!

³ At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures. We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.

⁴ But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, ⁵ he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

The Son of God became like us to save us from our sins!

¹⁴ Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death-- that is, the devil-- ¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

¹⁶ For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. ¹⁷ For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.

¹⁸ Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Peter emphasizes some of the many benefits of faith!

³ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade-- kept in heaven for you, ⁵ who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.

⁶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. ⁷ These have come so that your faith-- of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire-- may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed.

⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, ⁹ for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

We are God's very children by grace through faith in Jesus as our Savior!

¹ How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

² Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

John gives us a blessed glimpse of heaven!

⁹ After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.

¹⁰ And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

¹¹ All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, ¹² saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honor and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!"

¹³ Then one of the elders asked me, "These in white robes-- who are they, and where did they come from?"

¹⁴ I answered, "Sir, you know." And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." ¹⁵ Therefore, they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. ¹⁶ Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. ¹⁷ For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Please mark your selection on page 26.

Holy Gospel Readings

HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 6:25-34 NIV

Jesus calls His followers to live with trust and without worry!

²⁵ “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes?”

²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

²⁸ And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

³¹ So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 28:18-20 NIV

Jesus wants all people to ✦be His followers, ✦live His teachings, and ✦rejoice in His constant presence!

¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

HOLY GOSPEL: Mark 10:13-16 NIV

Jesus emphasizes His love for children and the great necessity of a child-like faith!

¹³ People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴ When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁵ I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." ¹⁶ And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.

HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 10:38-42 NIV

Seeing the important difference between Mary and Martha, let us put Jesus first in our daily Christian lives!

³⁸ As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. ³⁹ She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made.

She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!" ⁴¹ "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, ⁴² but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

HOLY GOSPEL: Luke 20:37-38 NIV

To God "all are alive."

³⁷ "...in the account of the burning bush, even Moses showed that the dead rise, for he calls the Lord 'the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' ³⁸ He is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for to him all are alive."

HOLY GOSPEL: John 1:29 NIV

Jesus sacrificed Himself for our eternal benefit!

²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

Jesus assures us that we have eternal life through faith in Him!

³⁷ “All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. ³⁹ And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. ⁴⁰ For my Father’s will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.”

Jesus offers great words of comfort and hope to all who believe in Him!

²¹ “Lord,” Martha said to Jesus, “if you had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.”

²³ Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” ²⁴ Martha answered, “I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; ²⁶ and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

²⁷ “Yes, Lord,” she told him, “I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world.”

Jesus is the only way to the Father who is in heaven!

¹ “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. ² In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. ⁴ You know the way to the place where I am going.”

⁵ Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”

⁶ Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

Please mark your selection on page 26.

Choose the Hymns

See pages 21 and 22

1. For church funerals, choose three or four hymns.
 2. LSB = Lutheran Service Book; TLH = The Lutheran Hymnal
 3. For funerals in other locations, *hymns are not normally included*.
 4. Please record your choices on page 27.
-
- Christ, the Life of All the Living ----- LSB 420 / TLH 151
 - I Know that My Redeemer Lives ----- LSB 461 / TLH 200
 - Alleluia, alleluia! Hearts to heav'n ----- LSB 477
 - How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds ----- LSB 524 / TLH 364
 - Crown Him with Many Crowns ----- LSB 525 / TLH 341
 - Oh, for a Thousand Tongues to Sing ----- LSB 528 / TLH 360
 - One Thing's Needful ----- LSB 536 / TLH 366
 - Beautiful Savior ----- LSB 537 / TLH 657
 - Lamb of God ----- LSB 550
 - The Lamb ----- LSB 547
 - God Loved the World So that He Gave ----- LSB 571 / TLH 245
 - My Hope is Built on Nothing Less ----- LSB 575 / TLH 370
 - Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence ----- LSB 621
 - The Church's One Foundation ----- LSB 644 / TLH 473
 - Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word ----- LSB 655 / TLH 261
 - Behold a Host, Arrayed in White ----- LSB 676 / TLH 656
 - For All the Saints ----- LSB 677 / TLH 463
 - Come unto Me, Ye Weary ----- LSB 684 / TLH 276
 - Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus ----- LSB 685 / TLH 409
 - My Faith Looks Up to Thee ----- LSB 702 / TLH 394
 - Oh, that the Lord Would Guide My Ways ----- LSB 707 / TLH 416

| | | |
|--------------------------|--|-------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | The Lord's My Shepherd ----- | LSB 710 / TLH 436 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Jesus, Savior, Pilot Me ----- | LSB 715 / TLH 649 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Eternal Father, Strong to Save ----- | LSB 717 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Jesus, Lead Thou On ----- | LSB 718 / TLH 410 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me ----- | LSB 722 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Children of the Heavenly Father ----- | LSB 725 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | On Eagles' Wings ----- | LSB 727 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I Am Trusting Thee, Lord Jesus ----- | LSB 729 / TLH 428 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Precious Lord, Take My Hand ----- | LSB 739 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | For Me to Live Is Jesus ----- | LSB 742 / TLH 597 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Amazing Grace ----- | LSB 744 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I'm But a Stranger Here ----- | LSB 748 / TLH 660 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Be Still, My Soul ----- | LSB 752 / TLH 651 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me ----- | LSB 761 / TLH 376 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | When Peace Like a River (It is well...) ----- | LSB 763 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | What a Friend We have in Jesus ----- | LSB 770 / TLH 457 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Take My Life and Let It Be ----- | LSB 783 / TLH 400 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Praise to the Lord, the Almighty ----- | LSB 790 / TLH 39 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | How Great Thou Art ----- | LSB 801 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Great is Thy Faithfulness ----- | LSB 809 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Lift High the Cross ----- | LSB 837 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Abide with Me! (Fast Falls the Eventide) ----- | LSB 878 / TLH 552 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Go, My Children, with My Blessing ----- | LSB 922 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Holy God, We Praise Thy Name ----- | LSB 940 / TLH 250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Nearer, My God, to Thee ----- | TLH 533 |

Give a Brief Life Summary

1. The following information will be edited, written out, and included in the funeral service folder.
2. This information is intended to ♦summarize the life of the departed and ♦emphasize the temporal and eternal blessings given to the departed by the Triune God.
3. Include as little or as much as you desire.

Birth: Date: _____

City, State: _____

Name (first, middle, last): _____

Names of Parents: _____

Baptism: Date: _____ *(if unsure – estimate infant, youth, adult)*

City, State: _____

Church: _____

Officiating Pastor: _____

Confirmation: Date: _____ *(if unsure – estimate youth, adult)*

City, State: _____

Church: _____

Bible verse: _____ *(if known)*

Officiating Pastor: _____

Marriage: Spouse: _____ Date: _____

City, State: _____

Church: _____

Officiating Pastor: _____

Children: _____

Grandchildren: _____

Great Grandchildren: _____

Siblings: Still living (*oldest to youngest*): _____

Deceased (*oldest to youngest*): _____

Military Service: _____

Work History (Company Names, Locations, Types of Work): _____

Home Locations (City, State): _____

Church Membership Locations (City, State): _____

Ways of Serving at Various Churches: _____

Favorite Bible Passage: _____

Physical Death: Age: _____ years, _____ months, and _____ days

Funeral Home Name, Address, and Phone: _____

Cemetery Name and Address: _____

Other Pertinent Information: _____

Record the Service Folder Contents Here

✚ **Date of Death** (*if known*): _____

✚ **Date and Time of the Funeral Service** (*if known*): _____

✚ **Location of the Funeral** (*indicate your choice*):

Church Funeral Home Cemetery Chapel Grave Site

Other: _____

✚ **Psalm you selected:** _____

✚ **Old Testament reading you selected:** _____

✚ **Epistle reading you selected:** _____

✚ **Holy Gospel reading you selected:** _____

✚ **Hymns you selected:**

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

✚ **Names of Pall Bearers** (*if known and you want them included in the service folder*): _____

✚ **Reception after the Cemetery Committal** (*if everyone is invited to such a gathering, the following information will be included in the funeral service folder*):

1. Name of Location: _____

2. Address of Location: _____

✚ **An Estimate of the Number of People who will Attend the Funeral Service** (*so we know how many folders*): _____

Final Instructions

➔ When planning the funeral service of a loved one:

1. Return this booklet to the church secretary or the pastor as soon as possible – at least by noon on the on the day before the funeral.
2. If you want to meet with Pastor when you drop it off, contact him to schedule a time when he will be available.
3. This booklet will be returned to you after the funeral; *please use it for your own personal comfort as you mediate on the eternal promises of God.*

➔ When preplanning your own funeral service:

1. Return this booklet to the church secretary or the pastor at your convenience.
2. If you want to meet with the pastor about your funeral plans, contact him to schedule a time when he will be available.
3. The church secretary will copy pages 23-26 for our records; then return this booklet to you.
4. Please let your family member know of your plans, *so that they know how to proceed when the time comes.*

➔ May God grant you His comfort, peace, strength, and guidance both now and forevermore!

➔ May all your hope and all your confidence *be and remain* in ♦*God the Father who created you*, ♦*God the Son who redeemed you*, and ♦*God the Holy Spirit who sanctified you* (made you holy in God's sight) through your faith in Jesus Christ. *Amen!*

➔ If spiritual assistance is needed, please contact Pastor – *he will be glad to assist you or anyone!* Pastor's contact information:
Mobile: 440-292-5915; Email: RevRLGreen@aol.com

➔ For more information about Bethlehem Lutheran Church, go to:
www.BLC7500.com