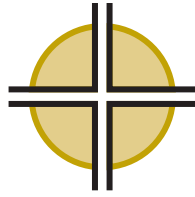




A Planning Guide  
**Memorial Services  
and Funerals**



**Southwood**  
Lutheran Church



Dear Southwood Family,

The Care Ministries of Southwood Lutheran Church serve our faith community in a number of ways. One of the most significant ways is providing care before, during, and after the death of a loved one. We hope this information will provide you with a path to guide you during this time.

It is our belief that a Christian funeral is a celebration of joy and triumph as our baptism points us to the promise of eternal life in Christ Jesus. Sin and death are destroyed. Christ is our hope for eternal life and we offer this hope to you, and to family and friends, that your loved one is now in God's eternal kingdom. This service also provides an opportunity to acknowledge your loss and gather together as a caring community to support one another.

Planning a service can be a blessing to those in grief. A time to laugh and to cry as the stories are shared and retold. It is an honor for us to walk with you and your family during this time.

For questions regarding funeral or memorial planning, please call the church at 402-423-5511 and we would be glad to help you.

Blessings to you,

Pastor Greg Olson  
Senior Pastor

Pastor Karl-John Stone  
Associate Pastor

Pastor Michael Ryan  
Associate Pastor

Pam Dinneen  
Care Ministry Director

# Planning for the Service

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## ❖ Pre-Planning—Before Death Occurs

The Care Ministry Director is available to visit with you and provide you with a planning document. Once completed, a permanent file will be made and your database record will reflect that you have pre-planned your service.

## ❖ When Death Is Imminent or When Death Occurs

When a death is imminent, our pastors are honored to come and pray with you. Please call the church office at 402-423-5511, and we will make every effort to have someone come to be with you.

If this is after office hours, please call the Southwood Care line: 402-405-8813. The staff member on call will return your call as soon as possible.

## ❖ Date, Time And Place Of Service

If you wish for one of our pastors to conduct the service for your loved one, please call the church office at 402-423-5511 before you schedule a date and time.

To avoid personal and building conflicts, the Pastor will contact the church to check on availability. The church Sanctuary is appropriate for a service, no matter the size, because this is where we baptize, confirm, marry and powerfully witness to the grace of God. What better place to gather and remember our future hope with God.

The Pastors are also available to conduct the service at the chapel of the funeral home if that is the family preference.

## ❖ Type of Service

There are several types of services to consider:

1. A traditional funeral (where the casket is present), graveside to follow
2. A memorial service (where there is no casket)
3. A graveside service only
4. A graveside service prior to the memorial service

Additionally, a visitation can be scheduled before the service on the service day and/or the evening before the service at the funeral home.

## ❖ Making Service Plans

Following the selection of the date, time, place and type of service, the Pastor will arrange to gather the family together to share thoughts and memories in preparation for the service. This meeting can either be at the family home or at the church. This will be a time to select favorite scripture and discuss musical choices as well.

Internally, the church staff works behind the scenes to handle all logistics such as contacting the necessary musicians and soloists, the custodial services and sound technician. You will be asked about the number of guests you might expect and discuss seating of the family and honored guests.

## ❖ Reception

Following the service, many families like to have a time to gather with those attending the service to share stories and support one another. Volunteers of the church offer the service of preparing a lunch for those attending. The Pastor or Care Ministry Director will discuss the food choice options. The church provides the beverages and paper products. Volunteers prepare, serve and clean up following the lunch. The family is asked to pay for the cost of the food.

## ❖ Fees

There are no fees assessed for funerals outside of food for the luncheon. If musicians are requested, the church will provide a suggested honoraria.

# Worship Service

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## Order of Worship

This is a guide for the service at Southwood:

- Music for Preparation
- Welcome
- Processional Hymn
- The Liturgy or the Word
- Memories/obituary (*optional*)
- Lessons
- Song for Reflection or Hymn
- Message
- Hymn or Special Music (*optional*)
- Apostles' Creed
- Prayers
- Holy Communion (*optional*)
- The Lord's Prayer
- Commendation
- Closing Hymn
- Postlude

## Symbols and their Meaning

### ❖ Paschal Candle—Christ Candle

This candle symbolizes the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Lit during Easter, baptisms and funerals, it reminds us of the promise of our baptism.

### ❖ Funeral Pall

The cloth that drapes the casket or urn during the funeral service is called the Pall. It symbolizes the white (Easter color) baptismal clothes we put on for our life's journey with God. It reminds us of our baptism and the resurrection of Christ, our hope for eternity.

### ❖ Flowers

Flowers symbolize our joy in Christ and our human frailty. Flowers may be taken home by family, given away or designated to be used for Sunday Worship.



## Scripture

*“When we were baptized in Christ Jesus, we were baptized into his death. We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we, too, might live a new life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.” (Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 280)*

Scripture shares the foundation of our faith and the hope in which we believe. Favorite scripture of the loved one may be used in the service. Other verses to consider may be:

- *Therefore my heart is glad ...* (Psalm 16:9–11)
- *The Lord is my shepherd ...* (Psalm 23)
- *Out of the depths I cry to the Lord ...* (Psalm 130)
- *Do you not know? Have you not heard? ...* (Isaiah 40:28–31)
- *There is a time for everything ...* (Ecclesiastes 3:1–15)
- The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1–12)
- *I tell you the truth ...* (Matthew 18:3–4, 10, 14)
- *Let the little children come to me ...* (Matthew 19:14)
- *God so loved the world ...* (John 3:16)
- *I am the resurrection and the life ...* (John 11:25)
- *Do not let your hearts be troubled ...* (John 14:1–4, 18–19, 25–27)
- *If God is for us ...* (Romans 8:31B–32, 35–39)
- *If I speak in the tongues ...* (1 Corinthians 13:1–13)
- *Listen, I tell you a mystery ...* (1 Corinthians 15:51–57)
- *Then I saw a new heaven ...* (Revelation 21:1–5)

## Worship Information

### ❖ Ushers

The funeral home usually provides ushers. If you are having communion served, a communion assistant from the church will be provided. The Care Ministry Director will also be available to coordinate any needs you may have.

### ❖ Bulletins

Southwood will provide the bulletins which will contain the worship service, so all may participate.

## Music

Music is an integral part of any worship service here at Southwood. So often music can convey our feelings, when we are unable to speak ourselves. There is wonderful church music available in the traditional or contemporary styles. Your pastor will help you choose appropriate music for the service. Songs may be sung as a congregation or vocalists may be used to provide the music. Secular music is not used during the service, but may be used during the visitation or reception following the service.

## Music in the Service

### ❖ Music for preparation:

The organist/pianist will play for 15 minutes prior to the service. This will include requested hymns or a selection of the musician's choice.

### ❖ Processional:

The family will walk into the church with the Pastor, following the casket if present. They may be seated as they enter the pews.

### ❖ Solos and congregational hymns:

These add meaning and beauty to the service and will be interspersed at the discretion of the Pastor.

### ❖ Recessional Hymn:

The casket, if present, the Pastor and family will exit the sanctuary to this music.

### ❖ Postlude:

The organist/pianist will play until the guests have left the sanctuary.

## Suggested Congregational Hymns

*Evangelical Lutheran Worship Hymnal*

- #422 For All the Saints
- #423 Shall We Gather at the River
- #502 The King of Love My Shepherd Is
- #581 You Are Mine
- #597 My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less
- #608 Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling
- #613 Thy Holy Wings
- #614 There Is a Balm in Gilead
- #629 Abide with Me
- #638 Blessed Assurance

- #732 Borning Cry
- #733 Great Is Thy Faithfulness
- #742 What a Friend We Have in Jesus
- #763 My Life Flows On in Endless Song
- #773 Precious Lord, Take My Hand
- #779 Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound
- #781 Children of the Heavenly Father
- #785 When Peace like a River
- #787 On Eagle's Wings
- #790 Day by Day
- #838 Beautiful Savior
- #856 How Great Thou Art

There are also seasonal hymns such as Christmas hymns or Easter hymns that may also be appropriate for the service, depending on when the funeral is being held.

Southwood also has a CD of songs that may help you in selecting meaningful music to be sung by soloists or small groups. You may visit with your pastor about those selections appropriate during the service.

## Suggested Special Music

The memorial service and funerals are worship services, therefore, the music should turn our thoughts to God and enhance worship.

- *10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)* (Matt Redman)
- *Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)* (Chris Tomlin)
- *Holy, Holy, Holy* (Steven Curtis Chapman)
- *How Great Thou Art* (Courtney)
- *I Can Only Imagine* (MercyMe)
- *If you Could See Me Now* (Kim Gordon Noblitt)
- *It is Well With My Soul* (R. Schram)
- *Jesus Loves Me* (Lori Line)
- *My New Life As Begun* (Ralph Funaro)
- *Still, My Soul, Be Still* (K. Getty)
- *The Lord's Prayer* (Malotte)
- *There is a Higher Throne* (Getty/Larson)
- *Untitled Hymn (Come to Jesus)* (Chris Rice)
- *You Raise Me Up* (Josh Groban)

## Shared Memories

Some families choose to have a special friend or family member share memories of their loved one. If this is an option you desire, we ask that you choose one speaker, and suggest they limit their comments to approximately three minutes or less to keep the service at an appropriate length. The reception following the service is an ideal time for others to be able to share more memories, either individually with you or to the entire group. A microphone can be provided for this opportunity in the Fellowship Hall upon request.

### ❖ Memory Table

Frequently, family members set up a memory table in the entry area with photos, albums, awards or certificates of achievement, hobby examples, and other personal items relating to their loved one. The church provides the table(s) and cloth(s) for these displays.

### ❖ Slideshow/Video

Families may create a slideshow/video to show during the reception following the service. A projector and screen is available in the Fellowship Hall for viewing during the reception so those attending may share stories and memories as they offer support to one another.

It is our policy at Southwood to *not* show slideshows or videos in the sanctuary.



## Children at Funerals

Although children do not completely understand the ceremony surrounding the death, being involved in the funeral helps establish a sense of comfort and understanding that life goes on even though someone has died. Since the funeral is a significant event, children should have the same opportunity to attend as any other member of the family. Explain the purpose of the funeral: a time to honor the person who died, a time to support each other and a time to affirm what we believe. If you would like resources to help in visiting with your child about death and the funeral, please contact the Care Ministry Director for resources and support.

Southwood also has Blessing Bags that provide young children with items they may use throughout the service. For very young children, you may wish to have another person available at the service that the child is comfortable with who could take them to the nursery or for a walk if they are unable to stay for the length of the service. There is a cry room at the back of the Narthex where you may take your child and still be able to see and hear the service.

## Memorial Gifts

Memorial gifts provide a meaningful way for individuals, families and groups to witness their thanksgiving to God for the life of a loved one. To give a gift in another's memory is a faithful expression of respect and love that goes beyond death.

Families may choose a favorite charity of their loved one to designate. If the family chooses to give a memorial to Southwood, they will meet at a later date with the Senior Pastor to discuss special items that could be purchased, which would benefit the church and the ministries carried out within the church.

## Grief Support

Grief is a long process, so be kind to yourself. Everyone in your family may grieve differently and prefer different means of support. Our Pastors and Care Ministry Director provide grief support following your loss. We also send grief information through the first year, which offer words of hope and encouragement.

Grief Groups are provided throughout the year to offer support as you begin the healing process. For information regarding current grief groups, please contact the Care Ministry Director at 402-423-5511.

# Funeral Homes, Cremation Facilities and Cemeteries

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There are many excellent providers in Lincoln. The church does not endorse anyone in particular. This is a very personal service and we suggest you interview and consult with them to make your decision.

## Funeral Home Responsibilities

These are a few of the things you should rely on the funeral home to provide or give guidance:

- Casket or urn
- Cemetery choice—plot or niche space
- Flowers
- Processional to cemetery
- Visitation, if held at the funeral home
- Obituary in the local newspaper
- Guest book

## When Going To The Funeral Home

Once you have chosen a funeral home, they will provide you with a list of items you will discuss and need to provide. The following items are helpful to take with you when you are planning with the funeral home:

- Information regarding your loved one for documents and obituary
- Social Security card, birth certificate, marriage license
- Special wishes or prearrangements for service planning
- Cemetery deed or proof of plot/niche ownership, if applicable
- Clothing/jewelry for loved one
- Names of people you would like included in the service

The number of decisions and the cost of funerals can be overwhelming. Remember, the money you pay for these arrangements is not a reflection of love you have for the person who has died. It is all right to have a budget and question costs and the necessity of items as you plan.

## Notes

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## Notes



Sunday Services at 8:30, 9:45 & 11:00 A.M.  
402.423.5511 • [SOUTHWOODLUTHERAN.ORG](http://SOUTHWOODLUTHERAN.ORG)  
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