



## GETHSEMANE LUTHERAN CHURCH FUNERAL/MEMORIAL SERVICE POLICY

Gethsemane Lutheran Church seeks to support families during times of grief, offering them comfort, prayer, and words of hope received through the death and resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ. We do not distinguish between members and nonmembers, because we believe that all people desperately need to hear the message of salvation through the cross of Jesus Christ.

The church office should be notified as soon as possible following the death of a member of the congregation (906-788-4234 or 906-753-4932). A tolling bell will be rung as soon as the staff is notified, indicating the age of the deceased. The pastor will set up a time to meet with the family to make arrangements, discuss the life of the deceased, and offer words of comfort. Please consult with the pastor directly, or have the funeral director consult with the pastor, to schedule the services of the pastor or use of the church building before firming up those arrangements. The funeral/memorial service itself will be planned in consultation with the pastor.

A few notes on Lutheran funeral/memorial services:

- The casket will be closed before the funeral and not re-opened. Earth is used during the committal service.
- Upon request, Holy Communion can be part of the funeral/memorial service.
- Gethsemane currently does not have any musicians on staff. Gethsemane does have pre-recorded music that can be used, but the selection is somewhat limited. Any live music should be arranged with the musicians. Those honorariums should be worked out with the musicians. All music within the service should reflect Christian themes. Please have all music pre-approved by the pastor.
- “The ceremonies or tributes of social or fraternal societies have no place within the service of the Church.” (*Occasional Services: A Companion to Lutheran Book of Worship*, Burial of the Dead, Rubric 2.)
- Military honors must be done before the service or burial, and there must be a distinction made between the military honors and the worship service.

A typical funeral/memorial service honorarium for a pastor in our area is \$75-\$300.

Gethsemane has a volunteer funeral luncheon committee. Please inform the church staff whether a luncheon at the church is desired. The church will need to know approximately how many people to expect and what food is already being provided (example: ham and buns). The committee will set up the luncheon, provide food, serve the meal, and clean up afterward. Family and friends may bring in extra food. There is no charge for the fellowship lunch. However, the family may consider making a donation to Gethsemane’s WELCA (Women of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America). A building use form will be filled out by the family for the luncheon.

The pastor retains discretion in matters concerning conducting funeral/memorial services.