

Advanced Planning for Memorial or Funeral Services: Celebrating a Life

Salem Lutheran Church, Sycamore, IL.

Leaving ideas or instructions for your family upon your death is a most thoughtful thing to do. Time is at a premium when a death occurs, and emotions run high. Setting your hopes into print will assist your family in creating a service that will both honor the things that are important to you and allow them to express themselves as well.

Values of a Funeral:

- Enables us to celebrate someone's life and faith*
- Allows mourners time to remember/honor their loved one*
- Serves as a central gathering place for family & friends*
- Allows others to express their care and support*
- Provides closure for the bereaved*
- Initiates the grieving process*
- Confirms the reality and finality of the death*
- Encourages mourners to face the pain of their loss and express thoughts/feelings*
- Helps survivors to better cope with their grief and begin to move forward with life*

Name: _____

Preferred Funeral Home: _____

Have you prepaid Funeral expenses? If so, please indicate where:

Are you an Organ Donor or do you plan to donate your body to science?

Place and type of Burial: _____

(Do you have a preferred cemetery or have you already purchased lots? Do you prefer full service embalming, direct cremation, or full service cremation?)

Place of Service: _____

(Church, Funeral Home, Gathering Place)

Preferred Pastor/Church: *(If available)*

Would you like your family to participate in covering the Casket with the Funeral Pall? _____

(This is a large cloth cover with a cross on it, symbolizing your baptismal relationship with Christ.)

Would you like to include Holy Communion in the service? _____

(If agreeable to your pastor.)

Type of Marker or Gravestone preferred: _____

(Symbols, designs, size, material) _____

Do you have any suggestions for a luncheon or coffee following the memorial service/interment? _____

(Church, restaurant, club, type of menu) _____

Do you have a preferred church, charity or project to direct Memorial Funds to?

Do you have a preference of flowers? _____

Do you have a preference of casket? _____

(Steel, wood, designs if available) _____

Is there something in particular you would like to be dressed in if possible?

(Jewelry, rings, colors) _____

People other than family you would like notified upon your death:

Are there any thoughts you would like shared upon your death?
(Faith expressed, appreciation, special life experiences, poems, anecdotes, etc.)

Other wishes or
instructions? _____

This document is meant to be a guideline to help you think of things that might be important for your family to know when it comes time to plan for your burial and memorial service. You might continue to add to the list as you contemplate what that will be like for them. Write your thoughts down and then choose a time to share them with your family or trusted friend. Let them know where copies of your wishes will be stored. Take them out and review them every few years to see if you have changed your mind about anything. Having a guideline to follow that expresses your own preferences will be a comfort to your family and a living testament to who you are. Being able to accept death as a part of life is a gift. Preparing yourself and your family as best you can will also be a gift when the time comes. Thank you for considering now what will be needed in the future.

Salem Staff

Signature & Date _____