

FUNERAL POLICY FOR
ST. LUKE'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

St. Luke's Funeral Services Committee has adopted the following policy:

All funerals for our members will be held at the church unless the family has other wishes. If so, the pastor must first be notified. The casket will not be open during or after the service.

The casket should be at the church no less than two hours before the scheduled funeral.

The casket will be placed to the left in the nave for viewing prior to the service. If an urn is used for ashes, it may be placed to the left by the Baptismal font and Christ candle, although it need not be present at all. A picture of the deceased may be placed close to the font if the family so desires.

St. Luke's ushers will assist in seating people as they arrive.

Approximately five minutes before the funeral is to begin, the casket will be closed by the funeral home staff and not opened again. When a pall is available, the flowers will be removed and the pall will be draped over the casket.

The pall bearers and family will meet in the basement. The funeral home staff will usher the pall bearers into the nave five minutes before the service begins. The family may process in behind the pastor during the singing of the first hymn or prior to it, whichever works best. After the family is in place, the funeral home staff will move the casket to the center aisle chancel area, with the head of the deceased away from the altar, unless the deceased is a pastor, in which case the head of the casket will face the altar. The Paschal candle will be lit before the other candles are lit and placed at the end of the casket.

During the last hymn, the pastor will lead a procession from the sanctuary. Pall bearers, casket, family, and congregation, in that order, will follow. At the back of nave, the pall will be removed and casket carried to hearse. The pastor will lead the procession to the hearse and open the back door of the hearse so that the casket may be rolled in. The funeral home staff may place flowers back on the casket any time after the pall has been removed.

Many families choose to display a collage of pictures depicting the life of the deceased. Normally, this will not be displayed in the nave, but rather placed in the basement so it can be viewed at leisure during the time refreshments are served following the funeral service.

When the services are completed at the cemetery, consideration should be given to lowering the casket into the ground before everyone leaves. This will be a family decision.

A family service for family and close friends is normally held the evening before the funeral at the mortuary, church, home, or any place and time of the families choosing. This service gives opportunity to talk about the deceased with tears and laughter both in evidence. This service is offered by the pastor, and encouraged by the congregation, but the family will have final say as to whether it happens.

Approved by St Luke's Church Congregation Council
February 11, 2002;
Revised October 18, 2010.