

# MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH OF CAMROSE

## FUNERAL POLICY

**Preamble:** A funeral is the solemn rite through which the Church remembers and honours those who die, and commends them into the arms of God's mercy. In the celebration of this service both the comfort of God's promises and the sure and certain hope of the resurrection are brought to those who mourn. The policies of the congregation, regarding the conduct of funerals, reflect its understanding that while, for the Christian, death is a time of sorrow; it also marks the point of entrance in the new life God has promised. The directions which follow are intended to provide assistance to families as they honour their loved ones and lay them to their final rest.

**1. The Pastor:** All funerals conducted from Messiah Lutheran Church are to be approved by a member of the Pastoral Staff. All funerals are to be led by a Christian Minister.

In those circumstances when the funeral is being conducted by a person who is other than a Messiah Pastor, a representative of Messiah, normally one of the Pastors, will extend a welcome to the worshippers on behalf of the members of Messiah and will read an appropriate scripture passage.

Bereavement counselling is provided, as appropriate, by a Pastor.

**2. The Arrangements:** Arrangements for the content and order of the service are made through consultation among the bereaved, the Pastor and the Funeral Home.

Normally, the Pastor is responsible for contacting the organist, the Messiah Lutheran Women (MLW) Funeral Coordinator (if there is to be a normal Reception, see #5 below), and the Custodian. The Pastor is to post funeral information on Messiah's web site or provide it to the Secretary for posting. This responsibility may be delegated to the Administrative Assistant who, in any event, will always confirm the arrangements.

**3. The Organist:** Arrangements for an organist are made through Messiah's Music Ministry Coordinator who is initially contacted by the Pastor. Subsequently the funeral party may be in direct contact with the organist for the funeral.

**4. Rites:** In keeping with the Constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, Messiah does not enter into corporate worship with any organization which practices the forms of religion without confessing faith in the Triune God and in Jesus Christ, the eternal and incarnated Son of God, as our only Saviour. Therefore, organizations, which wish to conduct a ritual in connection with the funeral service, may do so outside of the funeral liturgy and outside the church building. In general, the appropriate places and times for such rites would be at the funeral home before the funeral.

At all times, our ministry is with the grieving family to present the Gospel in word and deed, and to focus on God's saving act in Christ.

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## 5. The Reception

### a. Normal Pattern

MLW will provide a funeral reception at Messiah for a funeral held at Messiah:

1. when the deceased was a member, or
2. by special request of a member, when a Messiah pastor is conducting the service.

To arrange a reception, the Pastor (or Receptionist) will contact an MLW Funeral Group Coordinator as soon as possible. All detailed arrangements are then made through the Funeral Group assigned for that funeral.

If the family wants to provide the food for the event, that arrangement needs to be worked out with the Funeral Group assigned to that funeral. The per plate fee listed under 6 below would be adjusted.

The basement auditorium will normally be used in order that programming in other parts of the building may proceed without interruption.

The reception commences immediately following the funeral service. The family may choose to come to the reception either before or after the interment.

### b. Exceptional Pattern

If a funeral is being held at Messiah for a member of another congregation, a funeral reception may be provided at Messiah:

1. **by the members of that congregation.** The members of that congregation will work under the supervision of a liaison from Messiah. An MLW Funeral Group Coordinator, President or Secretary is to be contacted by Messiah's Pastor (or Administrative Assistant) to arrange for the liaison person. A fee, payable to the MLW, is levied as a thank you for the services of the volunteer liaison person.

2. **by a professional caterer.** If a funeral is being held at Messiah for a Messiah member, a funeral reception may be provided at Messiah by the family of the member. That family will work under the supervision of a liaison from Messiah. An MLW Funeral Group Coordinator, President or Secretary is to be contacted by Messiah's Pastor (or Administrative Assistant) to arrange for the liaison person. A fee, payable to the MLW, is levied as a thank you for the services of the volunteer liaison person.

The basement auditorium will normally be used in order that programming in other parts of the building may proceed without interruption. Because the fire code permits a maximum of 240 people, receptions beyond that number cannot be accommodated at Messiah.

Messiah's Facility Use Policy will be followed.

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**6. The Fees:** All fees are paid to the Funeral Home.

a. Organist - See *Fees & Suggested Donations*

b. Reception luncheon

Served by Messiah MLW - See *Fees & Suggested Donations*

Served under supervision of MLW liaison - See *Fees & Suggested Donations*

c. Custodian - See *Fees & Suggested Donations*

d. Audio/Video Technicians - See *Fees & Suggested Donations*

While there is no charge for use of Messiah's facilities, users should be aware that Messiah incurs added maintenance costs such as light and heat for such use. A suggested donation which recognizes this is always appreciated (see *Fees & Suggested Donations*). Because of income tax rules, we regret that we cannot issue an income tax receipt for such donations.

**7. Grand Piano:** The grand piano may not be moved without the permission of the Music Coordinator.

**8. Facility Use Policy:** Messiah's *Facility Use Policy* is applicable to those situations not specifically addressed in this *Funeral Policy*.

Approved by Church Council, January 25, 2006

Reviewed by Church Council, October 28, 2010

Amended by Church Council, January 25, 2012