

Guidelines for Christian Burial

Guidelines for funerals conducted by the pastor(s) of and for funerals conducted from
Zion Lutheran Church of Auburn

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord! The Christian funeral witnesses to the professed faith of the deceased. Therefore the conduct of Christian funerals impacts the Congregation's witness to the gospel and its declaration of hope in the resurrection.

Whether or not the policy of the congregation permits the pastor to conduct a funeral in a given situation, the congregation and the pastor realize that the bereaved, whether members or non-members, are in great need of personal and loving ministry. The pastors of the congregation will minister to all who come for help, with the admonition and the comfort of God's Word.

There are three related issues when it comes to a Christian funeral.

- Who will officiate at the funeral?
- Where the funeral services will be held?
- Who may be buried in the cemetery of Zion Lutheran Church?

Pastor(s) of Zion Lutheran Church of Auburn, will be bearing a proper and positive witness to the Gospel when he/they officiate(s) at the funeral of

- Those who died as members in good standing of Zion Lutheran Church of Auburn.
- Those who died as members in good standing of a sister congregation provided the request is made by the deceased's pastor and the survivor(s) stated valid reasons for the wish of the deceased to have a service officiated by Zion's pastor.
- Those non-members who were in the process of becoming a member; or those to whom the pastor has ministered and who seems to have departed this life in the Christian faith.

Other clergy participation

- Clergy from congregations not in fellowship with Zion Lutheran will not be allowed to participate in funeral services from Zion Lutheran.
- Normally the called pastor(s) of Zion Lutheran church will officiate at all funerals at Zion. For services conducted at Zion, other clergymen of churches in fellowship with Zion may be invited to assist in the service officiated by Zion's pastor if there is a compelling reason for doing so. The pastor(s) of Zion Lutheran Church should extend the invitation to any other clergymen.
- Requests for funeral services from Zion officiated by someone other than the called pastor(s) of Zion must be approved by designated members of the Board of Elders.

It is contrary to the truth, to offer Christian burial to those who are not Christian, the excommunicated or those who were indifferent to Christ's church.

Because burial from the sanctuary of the church is a privilege best reserved for those who have regularly participated at the altar and faithfully attended services.

- Funeral services for those who die as members in good standing of the congregation may be conducted from the sanctuary of the church.
- While Zion's pastor may officiate at graveside, funeral home or another setting, funeral services of those who are not members in good standing of Zion will normally not be held from Zion's sanctuary.

Fees

- There is no fee for the use of Zion's facilities for a funeral service.
- There are no fees for the services of the called pastoral staff in connection with a funeral.
- It is customary that the survivors pay the organist the church's standard fee for providing music for the funeral. In cases where paying such a fee is a financial hardship the survivors are asked to consult with the pastor.

Miscellaneous Details

- Arrangements for funeral luncheons are covered by a separate policy.
- Burial privileges in Zion Lutheran Cemetery are not addressed by this policy. For information concerning such burial privileges consult the Zion Lutheran Cemetery guidelines.