



Synod of Alberta & the Territories
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

GUIDELINES FOR CLERGY FUNERALS

The funeral of a pastor touches both the local community and the wider church. In the planning of the funeral liturgy, primary consideration shall be given to the needs and desires of the deceased's family.

The following should be considered at the time of a pastor's death:

- The pastor of the deceased shall be responsible for providing immediate pastoral care to the family and for seeing that necessary local arrangements are made for the funeral service. If a pastor should die while in office, and no other pastor is serving in the same ministry, the bishop shall appoint someone to make such arrangements.
- The pastor of the deceased should inform the Synod bishop of the death as soon as possible and shall keep in touch with the synod office as funeral arrangements unfold.
- It is appropriate for the bishop or bishop's representative to have a significant role in the funeral service, serving as a presiding minister and/or preacher. This participation would be confirmed by the family of the deceased.
- A phone call from the Bishop, a letter or card of condolence on behalf of the Synod shall be forwarded to the family of the deceased as soon as possible after the death.
- When funeral arrangements are complete, the Synod bishop shall communicate news of the death and particulars of the funeral service to the deans and to the wider church family by mail or email.
- Through the pastor, the family of the deceased may invite other clergy to participate in the funeral liturgy. Clergy may be invited to vest and to join in the funeral procession. While having regard for the role of the laity in the liturgy and for participation of members of the local community in the service, the local pastor may invite close associates of the deceased to serve as communion ministers, cross bearers, book bearer or the like.
- At the end of the service in the church, vested clergy may form an 'honour guard' from the door of the church to the vehicle used to convey the casket to the cemetery.
- The pastor may be buried in his or her eucharistic vestments.