

The St. Luke's United Methodist Church family is here to support you before, during, and after the loss of a loved one. You are not alone. God loves you, knows the depths of your grief, and is with you – whether or not you feel His presence.

St. Luke's team of caring staff and volunteers compiled this guide to help you plan a meaningful service to celebrate the life of your loved one. You may also meet with the Care Team to pre-plan your service. If you have a particular question which is not addressed in this guide, St. Luke's pastors and Care Team staff can assist you. Above all, we are praying for you during this time.

Grace and Peace,



The Rev. Dr. Jennifer Stiles  
Williams

*St. Luke's Lead Pastor*

## WHEN DEATH IS IMMINENT OR WHEN DEATH OCCURS

When a death is imminent our pastors are honored to come and pray with you and anoint your loved one. During regular business hours, please call the church and ask for the Care office **(407.876.4991 ext. 265)**. After hours, please call the Emergency Hotline at **407.876.4991 ext. 316**. A pastor will respond as soon as possible.

## FUNERAL HOMES, CREMATION FACILITIES, AND CEMETERIES

There are many excellent providers in the Central Florida area. The church does not endorse specific providers; however, we do work closely with Compass Pointe Funeral Services **(compasspointecremationservices.com or 407.797.6200)**.

## DATE, TIME, AND PLACE OF SERVICE

If you wish to schedule a memorial or funeral service at St. Luke's, please reach out to one of the pastors or contact Antony Larry, Associate Director of Care Ministries & Worship Engagement, at **407.876.4991 ext. 265** to discuss date, time, and location options. Services are typically scheduled Monday through Friday between 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. and on Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Depending on venue availability, funerals and memorial services can be held in the prayer chapel in Building C, the main Sanctuary, or Founder's Hall.

## FEES

Fees vary depending on church membership status and the technical aspects of the service. The funeral coordinator can review all these details with you when you inquire about holding the service at the church. Call **407.876.4991 ext. 265** to inquire about funeral/memorial service and musician/technician fees.



“I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.”

*John 11:25-26*

## TYPE OF SERVICE

Memorial, funeral, and graveside services are worship services and are intended to glorify God, affirm our belief in the resurrection to life everlasting, and to comfort the bereaved. With this in mind, all that takes place should be consistent with this principle.

St. Luke's offers a variety of options for services:

1. A traditional funeral where a casket is present, graveside to follow
2. A memorial service (where there is no casket)
3. A graveside service (service of committal) only

Additionally, a visitation can be scheduled beforehand on the day of the service.

Interment in St. Luke's Memorial Garden is available to church members before or after a memorial service. For more information and fees associated with St. Luke's Memorial Garden, please visit [st.lukes.org/memorialgarden](http://st.lukes.org/memorialgarden).

## MAKING SERVICE PLANS

Following the selection of the date, time, and service location, the pastor will arrange to gather with the family and learn more about your loved one. This will be a time to share memories and other information about your loved one and how you would like your loved one to be honored.

St. Luke's Care team works with you behind the scenes to handle all logistics including scheduling musicians and soloists as well as coordinating audio/video and custodial services. The Care team will ask about the number of guests you expect and discuss all protocols.

## SCRIPTURE

Your loved one may have already pre-selected Scripture verses to include in their service or you can visit [st.lukes.org/funerals](http://st.lukes.org/funerals) to view a selection of verses to be read during the service. A pastor can also assist.

## MUSIC

Music is another way to enhance the funeral/memorial experience and can have a profound impact on the grieving and healing process. St. Luke's employs musicians and vocalists who can provide meaningful music in the spirit of worship and remembrance. This can be a mix of solos and congregational hymns. A St. Luke's pastor can assist with music selection.

## FLOWERS

Floral offerings are a beautiful and visual way to pay tribute to a loved one. Floral arrangements need to be delivered on the day of the service as the church does not have an area to keep the flowers cool if delivered earlier. Removal of flowers after the service is the responsibility of the family or funeral home. Many families choose not to have floral arrangements but request memorial gifts in lieu of flowers to be made in honor of their loved one.

## MEMORABILIA

Personal items can be a beautiful way to pay tribute to your loved one. If you have an item that you would like to be displayed on the altar during the service, please speak with the funeral coordinator.

“Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they will be comforted.”

*Matthew 5:4*



## LEAN ON OTHERS

The planning of a loved one's funeral/memorial service can be very overwhelming. Friends, co-workers, neighbors and family members often want to help but do not know how to help during this difficult time. Lean on them when they offer help. Don't be afraid to ask them to assist by helping to order or pick up food for the funeral reception, decorate the funeral reception area, start a meal train for the family and your guests, or take care of younger family members during the service. A good support

system of people who come together to help in big and small ways is essential in helping you concentrate on the bigger tasks at hand as you plan to honor your loved one.

## MEMORIAL GIFTS

Memorial gifts provide a meaningful way for individuals, families, and groups to share their thanksgiving and express their love for the life of a loved one. To give a gift in another's memory is a faithful expression of respect and love that goes beyond death. If you plan to share memorial gifts in memory of your loved one with a charitable organization(s) please provide this information to the officiating pastor.

Memorial gifts may be designated to St. Luke's UMC or to a specific ministry at the church. Gifts may also be made to the Endowment Fund to advance St. Luke's ministry and mission activities. The Fund is built entirely upon the vision and generosity of St. Lukers and is totally separate from the church's annual operating budget and building funds. Available funds are distributed to support projects above and beyond normal budgeted items.

## AFTER CARE

You are not alone following the loss of your loved one. St. Luke's sends grief booklets throughout the first year which offer words of hope and encouragement and St. Luke's pastors are available to offer care and support.

You will also receive information about our grief support groups – GriefShare offered each spring and fall. When you are ready, we encourage you to join a GriefShare support group led by lay leaders who have experienced loss themselves. This 13-week program provides a place where grieving people can find healing and hope for the future.

We also have trained Stephen Ministers (lay Christian listeners) available who can meet with you on a weekly basis to encourage, support, and pray with you during your grief journey. To learn more about Stephen Ministry visit [st.lukes.org/funerals](http://st.lukes.org/funerals) or contact St. Luke's Care office at [care@st.lukes.org](mailto:care@st.lukes.org) or 407.876.4991 ext. 262.

St. Luke's Community Counseling Center also has licensed mental health counselors who provide grief counseling. St. Luke's counselors are both approved providers for many insurance companies and offer a sliding fee scale in addition to the standard fee. Call **407.876.8237** Monday through Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. to make an appointment and visit [st.lukes.org/counseling](http://st.lukes.org/counseling) to meet St. Luke's counselors.