



# Preparing for a Funeral

It is our privilege to walk alongside of you in this journey of grief. We will help you plan and implement a Christian funeral or memorial service to honor the memory of your loved one and celebrate the hope of the resurrection. In the event of a death, our pastor is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and will be glad to respond to you with pastoral care and to begin the process of planning the service.

*Jesus said: "I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also." John 14:3*

## Funeral Planning

In the first days following a loved one's death, the family faces a deluge of decisions. During such an emotional, stressful and demanding time, plans that have been made earlier lighten the load after death and can be a "last gift" you give to loved ones. This guide may help you make advanced funeral plans for yourself as a helpful gift for those who survive you. When you complete the entire worksheet we encourage you to share the information with a family member or friend who will act on your behalf after your death. The pages regarding funeral service information (pages 10-14) may be shared with the church office where it will be kept on file for advanced planning of your funeral or memorial service.

## The Goal of the Christian Funeral Service

Upon a person's death, the Church shares the grief of those who mourn and remembers the brevity of life on earth. A funeral liturgy allows those who mourn to give voice to sorrow, thank God for their loved one, and entrust their loved one into the hands of God. The gathering of family and friends, who form a community of hope for a funeral or memorial service, is a rich opportunity to recall the promises of God through Christ. Because of His suffering, death, and resurrection to new life, each time we gather to worship upon the death of a loved one, we do so in the context of God's promise of Resurrection Life. Every funeral includes praising God in

Christ who is our hope and our salvation, even as we remember the deceased and give thanks to God for the time shared with that person. Lutheran Christians therefore shape the liturgy in order to “grieve, but not as those who have no hope.”

We gather to celebrate that sure and certain hope, even as we experience death as a time of loss when sorrow, grief, and bereavement are both natural and appropriate. These two truths inform the Christian funeral or memorial service in the Lutheran tradition – we create space and give voice to our grief and pain as we remember our loved one, but above all else, in God’s presence together, we witness to our Easter faith in the communion of saints, the resurrection of the body, and the life ever-lasting. Every funeral or memorial service is worship, and all that takes place should be consistent with these beliefs..

## **Faithful Funeral Planning Questions and Answers**

### **What is the difference between a funeral and memorial service?**

Simply put, at a funeral service the body of the deceased is present, whereas at a memorial service either the deceased’s ashes or no remains are present. Both services provide an opportunity to proclaim God’s death defeating acts in Christ as we remember all that God has given us in the life of our loved one.

### **Where should we hold the service?**

St. Paul Lutheran Church strongly encourages families to gather together at the church. Because the whole of Christian life is shaped by our Baptism into the crucified and risen Christ, formed by the proclaimed Word of God, and nurtured through the Sacrament of Holy Communion, the normal and preferred funeral rite of the Church also reflects these practices in the very place we experience them week after week. There are times when a funeral may be held at a funeral home or cemetery. In these cases, economic / financial realities or other practical factors affect the selection of the funeral location.

### **How does the Church view cremation?**

Cremation is not only an acceptable way for Christians to deal with one’s earthly remains, but also may be seen as wise stewardship. The Scriptures tell us that we are formed “of the dust of the ground” (Genesis 2:7) and, after death, we shall return “again to dust.” (Job 34:15)

## **Is the body or urn of ashes present at a funeral?**

Except in unusual circumstances, the body or cremated remains of a church member are present at the funeral, celebrating one's Baptism into Christ and promise of resurrection of the body. A white pall or cloth is placed over the casket or urn as a reminder of this Easter promise, as well as the Paschal Candle which is lit and accompanies the casket or urn during the liturgy.

## **If I choose cremation, do I need to secure the services of a Funeral Director?**

We do recommend, but do not require, working with a Funeral Director. This professional will ease the strain upon family members by coordinating all the details and thus contributing to your wishes being carried out with dignity and honor. Even if cremation is your desire, a Funeral Director handles many details that are not taken care of by the church, the Pastor, or family members.

## **Should I make pre-arrangements with a Funeral Director?**

Making the decision to pre-arrange some aspects of your funeral and/or burial is very helpful. An appointment with a Funeral Director in advance of death can be a wise step to help you decide what you and your family need from the many services available without pressure to spend unnecessary funds when you are in the midst of grief. St. Paul's pastor is available to talk with you about the selection of a Funeral Director or to refer you to those they know well and hold in high regard.

## **How soon after death does a funeral or memorial service take place?**

Funeral services are generally held within three to five days following death, thereby allowing appropriate time for family members and friends to gather for the service. Memorial services can be held at any time. However, waiting for weeks or even months after a death will have a bearing on finding a sense of closure, and this will impact the grief work that follows the death of a loved one. Therefore, it is recommended that a memorial service be held within a few weeks after death. If a funeral or memorial service is to be followed by a burial that same day, the schedule of the cemetery workers impact your decision. Surcharges often apply for evening or weekend burials, and burials are often not available on holidays. It is also possible to have the burial before the service which allows for a late afternoon or evening service.

### **What fees are associated with a funeral or memorial service at St. Paul?**

The pastor considers this a part of his ministry to members, although many do give an honorarium of their own choosing. There is also no fee for the use of the Fellowship Hall for a fellowship meal. Contact the church office for recommendations for musicians or other participants such as video recorders or custodial services. Your funeral director will be happy to assist you with this.

### **Who makes arrangements for the musician(s)?**

The pastor will work with you to schedule an organist/pianist. Another instrumentalist or vocalist may also be selected by you or your family, but must also be arranged through him.

### **May we have a visitation at the church the evening before the service, or must that take place at a funeral home?**

The visitation may take place at the church the afternoon or evening before the service if there are no other events already scheduled. In addition, a visitation time is typically offered at the church prior to the funeral.

### **Who is responsible for producing the order of worship and bulletin?**

After the service has been planned with the Pastor, the church office will produce the bulletin at no cost to your family.

### **Who is responsible for submitting the death notice and obituary to the newspaper?**

The Funeral Director will take care of this for you. A full obituary normally appears 2-3 days before the visitation and funeral. There is a cost for this, and the Funeral Director will assist you. Notices to other newspapers can also be handled by the Funeral Director at your request. St Paul will normally include such notices on our prayer chain and broadcast email to church members.

### **Who plans the reception following the funeral or memorial service?**

If you choose to gather in the church Fellowship Hall, the church office will schedule the room and make these arrangements with the Willing Workers Group and your family. While it is often difficult to estimate a number of people you anticipate attending, thinking about this ahead of time can help assure a sufficient amount of food and seating for all. Willing Workers asks the

family to pay for the entrée. Church members donate side dishes, salads, and desserts. Any leftover food is yours to take home, or may be delivered to agencies in the community that welcome donations.

### **What if I desire to have memorials directed to St. Paul or other organizations?**

This is a faithful and honorable thing to do. St. Paul Lutheran Church and any other organizations you choose are blessed when memorials are directed to support their ministries and missions. The Funeral Director will be happy to include any memorial designation(s) in the notices about the funeral service. All memorial gifts received directly by St. Paul will generate an acknowledgment to you. In addition, we encourage members of St. Paul Lutheran Church to consider leaving a legacy through major gift planning through wills or bequests. Information and education about such instruments which can leverage considerable generosity for years to come are available through the church office. Memorial offering envelopes for gifts to St. Paul are available at the church.

# **INFORMATION FOR ARRANGING MY FUNERAL**



## **Information for Arranging My Funeral**

The following pages are to inform your loved ones of your wishes when you die. Planning for one's death is not something most of us look forward to doing, but it will greatly help your family and loved ones who will handle your final affairs during a time of stress. Taking time today to thoughtfully complete this form can provide peace of mind to yourself and your family. Please discuss these wishes with your loved ones, make copies of your completed form, and give them to individuals who will be involved with your funeral, e.g. family, close friends, pastor, funeral director, etc.

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/20\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone#: (\_\_\_\_)-\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

I am a member of St. Paul Lutheran Church: Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

### **DOCUMENTS**

I have a prepared Health Care Directives document: Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

I have a prepared estate/trust document/Power of Attorney: Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

I have given copies of these documents to: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I have a will: Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_ Executor of my will: \_\_\_\_\_

I am an organ donor: Yes \_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_

### **MY BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Social Sec. # \_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Birthplace \_\_\_\_\_

Father: \_\_\_\_\_ Mother's maiden name \_\_\_\_\_

Brothers and sisters' names: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Childhood (spent in what city/state) \_\_\_\_\_

Educational history (high school, college, degrees earned): \_\_\_\_\_

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Military service (when, where, how long, awards/honors): \_\_\_\_\_

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Married (whom, when, where): \_\_\_\_\_

Children's names: \_\_\_\_\_

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Vocational (work) history (for whom, where, position): \_\_\_\_\_

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Tributes/awards received, when retired: \_\_\_\_\_

Church affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Baptized (when and where): \_\_\_\_\_

Confirmed (when and where): \_\_\_\_\_

### **ARRANGEMENTS**

Have you made pre-planning arrangements with a mortuary, crematory, or cemetery? **If so**, fill out the following information. **If not**, proceed to the "My Wishes Are" section below.

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_)-\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_ Contact person: \_\_\_\_\_



Type of plan you have arranged: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you paid in advance or purchased insurance to cover the costs of your funeral arrangements? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ If yes, please specify type of arrangements (contract or policy numbers, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If you have a burial plot provide the name and location of cemetery:

\_\_\_\_\_

Military burial: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Military ID# \_\_\_\_\_

**MY WISHES ARE:**

Autopsy: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ or may be decided by \_\_\_\_\_

Burial: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Place: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Type of casket: \_\_\_\_\_

My burial marker should read: \_\_\_\_\_

Cremation: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ I have an urn: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Cremation before or after the funeral service? Before \_\_\_ After \_\_\_

Display Items to be On or Near the Casket/Urn

\_\_\_ Floral Spray and/or additional Flower Bouquets

\_\_\_ Bible or Other Symbol of Faith: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Photograph

\_\_\_ Cross

\_\_\_ Flag (Only Used During Visitation and at Cemetery)

Please Note: The Funeral Pall will always be used to cover the casket during the worship service unless expressly declined.

Visitation: The evening before the funeral/memorial service \_\_\_\_\_  
Just before the service \_\_\_\_\_  
Both before the service and the evening prior to the service \_\_\_\_\_  
No visitation \_\_\_\_\_

Viewing preferences: None \_\_\_\_\_ Immediate family only \_\_\_\_\_  
Open casket \_\_\_\_\_ All family and friends \_\_\_\_\_

My favorite flowers: \_\_\_\_\_

Viewing/burial with special clothing, jewelry, etc.: \_\_\_\_\_

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**FUNERAL/MEMORIAL SERVICE INFORMATION**

What type of service: \_\_\_\_\_ Funeral ( a service where the body is present)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Memorial ( a service where the body is not present)

*Note: Either type of service is acceptable in the Christian Faith*

Where do you prefer the service to be held: Church \_\_\_\_\_ Funeral Home \_\_\_\_\_

Name/Location (address): \_\_\_\_\_

Clergy/person to officiate, if possible: \_\_\_\_\_

Pallbearers (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

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Do you want a eulogy to be given? (A Christian Eulogy is not simply a statement that the deceased was a "good person." Instead it is personal words of remembrance shared by a family member or friend, which thank God for the life and legacy of the loved one):

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, by whom: \_\_\_\_\_

## **BIBLICAL TEXT PREFERENCES:**

### **Favorite Biblical Theme or Image**

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### **Readers**

\_\_\_ The Pastor who officiates will read.

\_\_\_ I would like this/these person(s) to read at my service:

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### **Bible Readings**

\_\_\_ The Pastor who officiates may choose the readings.

\_\_\_ My Family will choose the readings.

\_\_\_ I have chosen the readings as indicated below.

#### **Old Testament**

Job 19:23-27

Isaiah 40:1-11, 28-31; Isaiah 40:28-31; Isaiah 65:17

Psalms 23; Psalm 46:1-5, 10-11; Psalm 90:1-10, 12; Psalm 121; Psalm 130;

Psalm 139:1-12

#### **Gospels**

Matthew 5:1-12a

Luke 23:33, 39-43

John 11:17-27

John 14:1-6, 25-27

#### **New Testament**

Romans 8:14-23, 31-39

Romans 14:7-9, 10b-12

1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 35-38, 42-44, 50, 53-58

2 Corinthians 4:16-5:1

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Revelation 21:1-4, 22-25, 22:3-5

Revelation 22:1-5

#### **Other Readings Selected:**

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**MUSIC PREFERENCES:**

Organist: Church Provided \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Soloist(s): None \_\_\_\_ Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Hymns or other music: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Christian Funeral Hymn List**

Hymn numbers are from *Lutheran Service Book*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 438 A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth          | 672 Jerusalem the Golden                  |
| 878 Abide with Me                            | 741 Jesus Christ, My Sure Defense         |
| 596 All Christians Who Have Been Baptized    | 490 Jesus Lives! The Victory's Won        |
| 601 All Who Believe and Are Baptized         | 743 Jesus, Priceless Treasure             |
| 477 Alleluia, Alleluia! Hearts to Heaven     | 741 Jesus Christ, My Sure Defense         |
| 633 At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing         | 490 Jesus Lives! The Victory's Won        |
| 467 Awake, My Heart, with Gladness           | 743 Jesus, Priceless Treasure             |
| 697 Awake, O Sleeper, Rise from Death        | 708 Lord, Thee I Love with All My Heart   |
| 676 Behold A Host Arrayed in White           | 880 Now Rest beneath Night's Shadow       |
| 725 Children of the Heavenly Father          | 395 O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright   |
| 509 Christ is Surely Coming                  | 449 & 450 O Sacred Head, Now Wounded      |
| 458 Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands | 679 Oh, How Blest Are They                |
| 420 Christ, the Life of All the Living       | 675 Oh, What Their Joy                    |
| 605 Father Welcomes                          | 598 Once in the Blest Baptismal Waters    |
| 677 For All the Saints                       | 671 Sing with All the Saints in Glory     |
| 742 For Me to Live is Jesus                  | 508 The Day Is Surely Drawing Near        |
| 607 From Depths of Woe I Cry to Thee         | 709 The King of Love My Shepherd Is       |
| 594 God's Own Child, I Gladly Say It         | 710 The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want |
| 740 I Am Jesus' Little Lamb                  | 758 The Will of God Is Always Best        |
| 461 I Know That My Redeemer Lives            | 762 There Is a Time for Everything        |
| 486 If Christ Had Not Been Raised from Death | 482 Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying      |
| 724 If God Himself Be for Me                 | 760 What God's Ordains Is Always Good     |
| 748 I'm But a Stranger Here                  | 730 What Is the World to Me               |
| 745 In God, My Faithful God                  | 763 When Peace, like a River              |
| 938 In Peace and Joy I Now Depart            | 483 With High Delight Let Us Unite        |

**During Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany, the following may be used**

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|-----------------------------------|--|
| 397 As with Gladness Men of Old   | 334 O Lord, How Shall I Meet You           |
| 364 Away in a Manger              | 355 O Savior, Rend the Heavens Wide        |
| 347 Comfort, Comfort Ye My People | 376 Once in Royal David's City             |
| 349 Hark, the Glad Sound          | 348 The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns |
| 380 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing  | 402 The Only Son from Heaven               |
| 386 Now Sing We, Now Rejoice      |  |

**Contemporary Christian Worship Songs for Funerals**

(Numbers below are for your ease of reference only)

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|--|--|
| 1. I Can Only Imagine by MercyMe                         | 25. Hungry (Falling on My Knees) by Kathryn Scott            |
| 2. I Will Rise by Chris Tomlin                           | 26. Revelation Song by Kari Jobe                             |
| 3. Save a Place for Me by Matthew West                   | 27. Messiah/You're Beautiful by Phil Wickham                 |
| 4. Homesick by MercyMe                                   | 28. The Air I Breathe by Vineyard's Best (Kathryn Scott)     |
| 5. Heaven Song by Phil Wickham                           | 29. Eagles Wings by Hillsong Worship                         |
| 6. With Hope by Steven Curtis Chapman                    | 30. Somewhere Somehow by Michael Smith and Amy Grant         |
| 7. Amazing Grace (My Chains are Gone) by Chris Tomlin    | 31. Healing Is in Your Hand by Christy Nockels               |
| 8. Broken Vessels (Amazing Grace) by Hillsong Worship    | 32. All the Way My Savior Leads Me by Chris Tomlin           |
| 9. Untitled Hymn by Chris Rice                           | 33. In Christ Alone by Natalie Grant                         |
| 10. Footprints in the Sand by Leona Lewis                | 34. Potters Hand by Hillsong Worship                         |
| 11. 10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord) by Matt Redman       | 35. Draw Me Close to You by Hillsong United                  |
| 12. Friends by Michael W. Smith                          | 36. Let Your Mercy Rain by Chris Tomlin                      |
| 13. How Can I Keep from Singing by Chris Tomlin          | 37. As It Is in Heaven by Matt Maher                         |
| 14. Dancing with the Angels by Monk & Neagle             | 38. It Is Not Death to Die by Sovereign Grace                |
| 15. Praise You in This Storm by Casting Crowns           | 39. Soon by Hillsong United                                  |
| 16. I Will Lift My Eyes by Bebo Norman                   | 40. Jesus Messiah by Chris Tomlin                            |
| 17. Oceans by Hillsong United                            | 41. Came to My Rescue by Hillsong United                     |
| 18. Hosanna by Hillsong United                           | 42. I Am Not Alone by Natalie Grant                          |
| 19. Who Am I by Casting Crowns                           | 43. My Hope by Hillsong Worship                              |
| 20. Lord, I Need You by Matt Maher                       | 44. Cornerstone by Hillsong Worship                          |
| 21. You Hold Me Now by Hillsong Worship                  | 45. With All I Am by Hillsong Worship                        |
| 22. Welcome Home by Michael W. Smith                     | 46. There Will Be a Day by Jeremy Camp                       |
| 23. Till I See You by Hillsong United                    | 47. Power of Your Love by Darlene Zschech (Hillsong Worship) |
| 24. When Silence Falls/When the Tears Fall by Tim Hughes |  |

**Funeral/Memorial Service (continued)**

Committal Service: At graveside? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

At disposal of ashes? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

I want memorial gifts designated to the following organization(s), persons etc:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Any requests concerning the small biographical leaflet typically provided by the funeral home: \_\_\_\_\_

Other instructions (e.g. bulletin cover for service): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

After my death, final decisions concerning these funeral requests should be made by: \_\_\_\_\_

I have discussed these wishes with the following people:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

My Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Jesus said to him, "I am the way and the truth, and the life." John 14:6*

## **Additional Information Helpful for an Obituary**

*Full Name (including Maiden Name)*

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*Birth Date and Location*

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*Parent's Names (including Mother's Maiden Name)*

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*Baptism Date, Church, and Location*

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*Confirmation Date, Church, and Location*

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*Marital Status, Marriage Date, and Name of Spouse*

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*Other Marriages/Divorces/Spouse(s)*

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*Names of Children*

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*Additional Next of Kin*

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**PERSONAL HISTORY**

Work: *List job titles, employers, year worked, accomplishments, year retired, etc.*

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Church Leadership and Participation: *List church groups in which you participated or served (for example choir, usher, council member, Sunday School teacher, etc.).*

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Organizational Leadership and Participation: *List organizations in which you participated or served (for example baseball coach, Scout leader, soup kitchen volunteer, etc.).*

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Major Life Events: List some of the major events in your life (for example, was honored for \_\_\_\_\_, met President \_\_\_\_\_, etc.).

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Hobbies and Other Interests: List your favorite hobbies and other things that interest you.

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Additional Notes:

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**IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS AND ADVISORS**

It is important that survivors be able to locate vital records and important documents. Before your death, you should have a current will/living trust and related health care directives which express your wishes on important personal, financial, medical, and charitable issues for your survivors. If you need information regarding estate planning, planned giving, and/or the inclusion of a Christian preamble for your will, please consult your legal or financial advisor.

*Location and Date of Will/Living Trust*

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*Location of my Living Will*

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*Attorney/Will Preparer*

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*Power of Attorney/Financial*

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*Power of Attorney for Health Care*

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*Executor of Will/Estate*

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*Guardian (for Minor Children)*

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*Additional Comments*

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