



THE **wesleyan** CHURCH

Education & Clergy Development

COVID-19 and Funerals

(Adapted from The Christian Reformed Church)

In our current COVID19 context, with “physical distancing” encouraged and public gatherings prohibited, it is important for pastors and Local Church Boards to consider how they will deal with funeral protocols during this pandemic.

1. Communicate *ahead of time* with your local board of how you will handle funerals when the need arises. Do not wait until a funeral is needed. It is important that if at all possible, this conversation occurs prior to an actual situation arising. It is far better to be prepared in advance so everyone knows what to expect, rather than waiting until a crisis arises.
2. Consider holding a small, graveside ceremony for immediate family and loved ones; There may be appropriate situations that might allow for live streaming a service.
3. Consider postponing a memorial service until people are allowed to gather again. As difficult as it might be, It may be important to forego the practice of visitation at the funeral home for the time being.
4. Attend to whatever regulations are in place in a given state or province. So, check with current local, state, or provincial guidelines.
5. Communicate it openly to your congregation.

There may be concern and resistance from some members and families, but for the wellbeing of pastors and church communities, a thoughtful posture and decision by pastoral leadership is vital. Of course, it is also vital that our practices are an appropriate response to the health threat of this pandemic.

May God continue to bless and guide you in wise decision-making.