

Funeral today

When someone has passed away, the family gathers to "sing out" the dead. It can take place at home, in a hospital or nursing home, depending on where the death took place. You read out of the Bible and sing a hymn together. Sometimes a priest is present.

Funerals are conducted according to the Church of Sweden handbook and, upon request, in Sami or Swedish. Funeral homes are hired to take care of the practicalities, although many families dress the deceased and place him in the coffin themselves. Many dress in *kolt*, traditional clothing, either in the finest or in an everyday *kolt*. You can put some memento or the hymn book for the deceased in the coffin.

Before the coffin is carried into the church or funeral chapel, the relatives are given the opportunity to say goodbye. When all the funeral guests have arrived and are seated in the church, the coffin is carried inside. It is usually carried by close relatives, who also carry the coffin out to the burial in the cemetery. In the laestadian affected areas there are no or few flowers by the coffin. At the grave, the funeral guests say a final farewell and sing hymns. Cremation is unusual.

After the funeral, all the funeral guests gather for a meal or coffee, and the memorials are also read. The gathering can be large, when many relatives and friends have come, and lively, when there is much to talk about. Usually *kolt* is worn at funerals.

If it is a long way to the funeral, it has happened that the funeral procession had to spend the night with a relative on the way to the church. Here, more relatives could gather, a devotional was held and food was offered, before the journey continued the next day.

The grave in the cemetery or burial ground is marked with a cross or a hewn stone. It can then be visited and cared for by the surviving family.