

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church Wedding Booklet

**Your Church Wedding
And the Christian Marriage**

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YOUR CHURCH MARRIAGE and the CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church wants to render the best possible service to its members and friends. You are welcome to the use of our facilities. We remind you that the wedding ceremony is one of the most sacred rites of the church. It is the desire of the Pastor and the church family to make every such ceremony a beautiful and worshipful experience. We extend to each wedding party every possible courtesy and assistance. It is the prayer of the church that the entire wedding service will be something you will always remember and that it will be a lasting testimony to all your loved ones and friends. It is our desire that your wedding indeed be a Christian wedding with all the glory and happiness that goes with such a wedding.

Therefore, in order to make available our services and to make it a joyous event, the following procedures have been adopted here at Our Saviour's. We ask that you read this booklet carefully and prayerfully, that everything about your wedding may witness to the fact that you are being married according to the words and vows included in this booklet. Please feel free to contact the office or the Pastor, should you have any questions concerning this booklet or your wedding service.

A wedding coordinator is also available to assist you in making your plans.

PRELIMINARY DECISIONS

The following matters with respect to the church should be decided by the bride and groom before going ahead with complete plans for the wedding.

1. The WEDDING DATE: Please contact the pastor or church office to set the date for your wedding. This should be done as early as possible before the wedding to avoid conflicts on the church schedule. It is well to have an alternative date in mind in case the church is in use or the pastor is not available on the first date selected. Please have the time of day for your wedding as well as the date in mind when you call.
2. The PASTOR: Our Saviour's pastor is available to help you with your marriage plans and ceremony. Clergy from outside Our Saviour's may take part in the service if the additional clergy *has first been approved by the Our Saviour's pastor*. However, Our Saviour's pastor or another ELCA pastor must preside or officiate at the wedding ceremony. In extreme situations, a pastor from another Christian faith may be sought only after approval by Our Saviour's Lutheran Church Council and Our Saviour's pastor.
3. The REHEARSAL DATE: Time for the rehearsal should be set up at the same time the wedding date is determined. The rehearsal normally takes about 1 hour.
4. The MARRIAGE QUESTIONNAIRE: There is a form to be filled out by each couple as they set the date for their wedding. This form gives the pastor an idea of what is expected. If there are any last minute changes, it should be brought to the attention of the pastor immediately.
5. The WEDDING LICENSE: **It is necessary for the wedding couple to bring the marriage license to the pastor or the church office no later than the week before rehearsal.** This enables the secretary to have it filled out prior to the night of the wedding and ready for the signatures that are necessary.
6. MARRIAGE PREPARATION COUNSELING: All couples to be married should participate in Marriage Preparation/Counseling sessions. A series of sessions are required. They will be determined by the Pastor.

RENTALS and FEES

BUILDING FEE: There is no rental fee for active members of the congregation for the use of the church. Non-active members (those who hold membership but no longer actively participate in the congregation by communing or giving financial contributions of record) will be charged a \$150 fee for use of the church. Non-members will be charged a \$500.00 fee for the use of the church with a \$150.00 non-refundable deposit to be paid when booking the church, with the balance paid on the night of the rehearsal. This fee should be made payable to Our Saviour's Lutheran Church.

Honorarium for the Pastor: Ministers are professionals. An honorarium covers the day of your wedding and the hours leading up to your wedding in crafting your ceremony, meeting with you and your partner, pre-marriage counseling, and doing appropriate paperwork. Please consider with your partner what an appropriate amount is for you. This is due at the rehearsal. Please make checks payable to the pastor.

Suggested scale: \$150-\$300.

(If neither the bride nor groom are active members, \$250 is the minimum and is required)

Pre-marital counseling: Pre-marital counseling and preparation is required if being married in our church. This can be done through our pastor, another pastor near to you, or a professional marriage counselor. The pastor can assist you in making this decision. *If choosing to use our pastor, a \$35 fee for the pre-marriage assessment survey that will guide your conversations, made payable to the church.*

There is no additional fee for pre-marital counseling sessions for active members. For inactive or non-members, sessions are \$50 per meeting, with the number of required sessions agreed upon after reviewing your pre-marital assessment survey.

This fee is separate from the honorarium the pastor receives for planning and conducting your wedding.

A fee of \$100.00 made payable to one of the Our Saviour's sound technicians is charged for the sound technician operating the sound board during the wedding rehearsal and ceremony. This fee should be paid on the night of rehearsal. Call the church office at least one month prior to wedding to make arrangements.

ROOMS and AREAS AVAILABLE FOR USE

The dressing room for the bride and her attendants is in the nursery area in the lower level of the church, by the kitchen. Mirrors, plug-ins for curling irons, etc. are available there, as well as a special hanger for the wedding dress. The bride may obtain a key for this room if she wishes to place items in this room ahead of time. A women's bathroom is next door.

A \$25 deposit is required when the key for the dressing room is picked up. This deposit will be returned when the key is returned.

The Youth Room, also located in the lower level, may be used by the men in the wedding party for dressing or storing clothing. A men's bathroom is located at the front entrance of the dining room by the flower cooler.

The Centennial Room, located just off the narthex of the church, may be used for family or members of the wedding party to wait prior to the ceremony. We ask that this room NOT be used as a dressing room, please.

DECORATIONS

The sanctuary is complete in its architectural lines and its appointments, and a minimum of decoration is required or desired. Floral pieces and palms may be used in the Chancel and must always leave the altar unobstructed and in full view of the congregation.

The color of the paraments is coordinated with the church year. These paraments are not to be changed.

Care must be taken to avoid damage by the use of nails, wires, or scotch tape.

The pews may be decorated with flowers, ribbons, candles, etc. There are approximately 24 plastic holders available that snap on the pew ends to hold decorations. These are in the cupboard in the bride's room.

All floral decorations must be provided by the bridal party. There are flower stands available.

Flowers left from the wedding, for use at the church service on the Sunday following will be greatly appreciated.

The church has the following items available on request:

| | |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| 2 floor candelabra | (white oil candles provided) |
| 2 altar candelabra | (in dining room) |
| Unity candle table | (candles provided by couple) |

NOTE: These items are for use in the Church building only. They are not to be taken from the Church for use elsewhere.

MUSIC

Music used with the ceremony should be in keeping with the sacredness and dignity of the wedding service. It is important that all music used meet with the approval of the pastor prior to it being printed in the program. This should be done early in the wedding plans and in conjunction with the selection of a soloist. Congregational hymns may be used if desired.

Our Saviour's has sound technicians available to run the sound system. Our Saviour's requires that one of these technicians operate the sound board during the wedding rehearsal and ceremony. They must be contacted in advance. They will be available to work with the musicians at the rehearsal as well as the wedding ceremony.

Fees for the soloist and musicians are a private arrangement and should be arranged in advance. This is the responsibility of the bridal couple.

The Wedding Service

A Christian wedding is, first of all, a worship of the God who calls a couple together in marriage. Guided by God's Word, we are intent upon keeping Christ uppermost in thought, words, and action. We won't ignore the bride and groom since this is a public announcement of your marriage, but the center is already occupied – by our Lord. The wedding is a willing and happy witness to that.

Suggestions in this booklet are intended to be an aid to the pastor and the couple in planning a meaningful Christian celebration for one of the most important happenings in life.

PLANNING THE WEDDING

- (1) **ORDER OF SERVICE** – The basic order of service is on pages 286 – 291 in the Evangelical Lutheran Worship hymnbook. The following is a good example:

Prelude
Processional
Invocation
Declaration of Intent
Prayer
Scripture Readings
Meditation
Hymn or Solo
Vows
Exchange of Rings
Announcement of the wedding
Marriage Blessing
Hymn or Solo (if desired)
Unity Ceremony (if desired)
Prayers
The Lord's Prayer (Solo, if desired)
Benediction
Recessional

The pastor should be consulted about modifications.

- (2) **SCRIPTURES** – The couple may make a choice from the following list, or other appropriate text. The number of passages chosen is up to the couple. One to three texts are common, depending on length.

From the Old Testament:

| | |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 | Two people are better than one |
| Song of Solomon 2:10-13 | Love in the Spring |
| Song of Solomon 8:7 | Unquenchable love |
| Isaiah 63:7-9 | The steadfast love of God |
| Jeremiah 32:38-41 | God's faithfulness |
| Psalms: 33, 100, 117, 127, 128, 136, 150 | |

From the Epistles:

Romans 12:1-2

1 Corinthians 12:31---13:13

Ephesians 5:21-33

Colossians 3:12-17

A living offering

The hymn of divine love

Marriage and the church

Live in love and thanksgiving

From the Gospels:

Matthew 19:4-6 or Mark 10:6-9 Faithfulness in marriage

John 2:1-10

The wedding at Cana

John 15:9-12

Love one another

(3) VOWS – The couple may choose to write their own or select the form of vows they prefer from the following:

From the *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* hymnbook:

I take you, _____, to be my wife/husband from this day forward, to join with you and share all that is to come, and I promise to be faithful to you until death parts us.

In the presence of God and this community,
I, _____, take you, _____, to be my wife/husband;
to have and to hold from this day forward,
in joy and in sorrow, in plenty and in want, in sickness and in health,
to love and to cherish, as long as we both shall live.
This is my solemn vow.

ALTERNATE WEDDING PROMISES

_____, I take you to be my wife/husband from this time onward, to join with you and to share all that is to come, to give and to receive, to speak and to listen, to inspire and to respond, and in all circumstances of life together to be loyal to you with my whole life, and with all my being, as long as we both shall live.

I take you, _____, to be my wife/husband. I promise before God and these witnesses to be your faithful husband/wife, to share with you in plenty and in want, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, to forgive and strengthen you and to join with you so that together we may serve God and others as long as we both shall live.

I take you, _____, to be my wife/husband and these things I promise you: I will be faithful to you and honest with you; I will respect, trust, help, and care for you; I will share my life with you; I will forgive you as we have been forgiven; I will try with you to better understand ourselves, the work, and God, through the best and the worst of what is to come as long as we both shall live.

(4) MUSIC – Guidelines in selecting music:

Music used in the Marriage Service may be instrumental and/or vocal. It may be organ music or other instrumental music such as woodwind, strings, or brass performed by a soloist or an ensemble. It may be choir, or congregational hymns.

Because the wedding service is a worship service, we encourage congregational hymns at your wedding. A partial list from your hymnal:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now | No. 527 |
| Son of God, Eternal Savior | No. 655 |
| We Praise You, O God | No. 870 |
| Praise to the Lord, the Almighty | No. 858, 859 |
| Love Divine, All Loves Excelling | No. 631 |
| Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee | No. 836 |

Many others – consult organist and/or the pastor.

Secular songs with words and sentiments that do not fit well with the Christian wedding service are, therefore, considered inappropriate. The music selected should not distract from the mood of the service and should definitely be within the ability of the performers to play or sing with assurance.

Before any music is selected it must be discussed with the organist and the pastor. The pastor has the right to prohibit music that is inappropriate.

THE WEDDING REHEARSAL

PLEASE BE ON TIME FOR THE REHEARSAL!

See that all participants are present. These include: the couple, the parents of the bride and groom, the best man and maid of honor, the bridesmaids, groomsmen, flower girl, ring bearer, ushers, candle lighters, and those providing the music.

Please follow instructions carefully. The person in charge should not have to spend unnecessary time with the rehearsal. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to make these rules known to all members of the wedding party.

Additional Notes Regarding the Wedding

The wedding is a **WORSHIP** service. Participants and guests should conduct themselves accordingly.

NO RICE, BIRDSEED, OR CONFETTI, ETC. is to be thrown inside the church.

DRESSING ROOMS shall be left in the same condition as they were found. Personal clothes are not to be left overnight in the church unless arrangements have been made.

THE WEDDING LICENSE should be at the church office no later than the week before rehearsal.

If your **CAR** has been filled with paper, straw or similar things, you are asked not to dump them on or near the church property, but drive to a place where these can be disposed of without littering.

It is expected that members of the wedding party will **REFRAIN FROM ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES** before both the rehearsal and the wedding. No alcoholic beverages are to be used in the church or on church property. The pastor has the right to take necessary action when this rule is broken or abused in any way by any member of the wedding party.

There shall be **NO SMOKING** in the church.

WEDDING CEREMONY

At the appointed time of the wedding, the guest book is closed and the ushers or candle lighters will immediately light the candles that are to be used for the wedding.

When the candles are lit, the ushers will usher the parents of the groom to the right front pew to be seated. When they are seated, the ushers will seat the mother of the bride in the front pew on the left side of the church.

The maid of honor immediately precedes the bride unless a ring bearer and flower girl are used, then they follow the maid of honor to the front of the church.

When all the wedding party except the bride are at the chancel area, the bride proceeds down the aisle. They are met by the groom at the front of the church. The bride and groom proceed to the altar.

At the conclusion of the ceremony, the bride and groom leave together, followed by the rest of the wedding party. The ushers return to escort the parents from the church. The parents of the bride are ushered out first, followed by the parents of the groom. The ushers then dismiss the congregation pew by pew, making sure that the line is never too long requiring people to stand for a great length of time.

The ushers should extinguish all candles after the congregation has left the church.

The ushers should, on the night of rehearsal, acquaint themselves with the church, exits, doors, rooms, etc. They should familiarize themselves with the "route" to the reception hall so that on the day of the wedding they are able to efficiently direct the guests if any questions arise. Many guests are from out of town and are not acquainted with our church and it is the duty of the ushers to make these people feel at home.

The above is the traditional and suggested order. It is recognized that the couple may desire variations in the order and form of ceremony. You should discuss these with the pastor prior to the rehearsal.

ADDITIONAL NOTES REGARDING THE CEREMONY

The Christian wedding ceremony is a joyous and happy occasion. The conduct of all participants should be in keeping with the solemnity of the service. Photographers are allowed to move about the service but are asked to not distract from the bride and groom or stand in the way of the witness's being able to see the service. The church has a video camera and someone from the church may be available to video if prior arrangements are made.

WEDDING QUESTIONNAIRE

Please complete this form as soon as possible after confirming your date with our church and pastor. Completed forms can be returned by mail or emailed to the church office at oslcparriver@gmail.com

Names: _____

Wedding Date: _____ Time: _____

Rehearsal Date: _____ Time: _____

Reception at Church: _____ (yes/no) Pastor: _____

Photographs at (time): _____

Will the bride and groom be seeing each other prior to the wedding ceremony? Yes/no

Number of Attendants: Bride _____ Groom _____

Number of Flower girls: _____ Ring bearers: _____

Number of Ushers: _____

Seating of Guests: Balanced _____ Traditional _____

Person able to identify people to be ushered to special seats: _____

Special seating requirements: (Parents, grandparents, sponsors, siblings, etc.)

Special requests for how the wedding party will enter:

Musicians: _____ Soloists: _____

What songs to be sung and when?

Processional: _____

Bride: _____

Bridal Party: _____

Unity Ceremony*: _____

Recessional: _____

Other: _____

*Will you be including a unity ceremony piece in your order of service? (yes/no)

If yes, what type of unity ceremony? (sand/candle/braiding/etc) _____

Communion? ___ Yes ___ No

If yes, who will assist in serving the elements? _____

Other ceremony notes:

PEOPLE ASSISTING THE COUPLE:

Guest Book: _____

Gifts: _____

Gift Table: _____

Usher responsible for removing all articles belonging to the wedding party following the ceremony and reception: _____

Other person's assigned special duties:

Post-ceremony notes (receiving line, photos, etc...):

Will you be utilizing dressing rooms for the bride? _____ (yes/no) Groom? _____ (yes/no)

Will you be needing a key to either of these dressing rooms to leave items before the wedding day? ___ yes/no

Decorating can begin the day of rehearsal. Will you need a key to the building to decorate before the rehearsal? Yes / No

What time do you expect to begin decorating? _____

Will you need any of the decor items the church has on hand or will you be providing your own items? If needing church items, please list below: