

St. Luke's Lutheran Church Wedding Policies



2010

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St. Luke's Wedding Policies



Wedding Planning

A couples' wedding day is one of the most important days in their lives. When a couple requests that their wedding be officiated by a pastor of St. Luke's Lutheran Church, they deserve the best ministry we can provide for them. Planning a marriage service should meet the highest standards for Christian worship and reflect the joy of the wedding day. Planning the worship is only one aspect of the ministry that occurs during the time leading up to your wedding.

What To Do First

Contact St. Luke's church office and request a date. You will receive a wedding policy booklet and a Request for Wedding Date form. (For more information on the Wedding Request form, see page 9, "Wedding Request Form.") Then the Wedding Coordinator from St. Luke's will contact you to arrange a first meeting. During this meeting the bride, groom and wedding coordinator will work through this wedding booklet, tour the sanctuary, and answer some of your initial questions. The wedding coordinator will work with you throughout your preparation period, assist in leading your wedding rehearsal, and be present during your wedding. They will also provide prayer support for you during your preparation period.

Your Marriage

Being married is even more important than the wedding itself. St. Luke's clergy are committed to working with the couples to provide pre-marital counseling, which will help prepare the couple for a faith-filled and joyful married life.

Planning for the wedding and your future married life are of vital concern to the congregation and to the whole Christian Church. The couple and the pastor work together in premarital preparation, towards a meaningful wedding day and a deepened understanding of how God undergirds family life with His strength and love.

The pastors serve on behalf of God, the whole Christian church and the local congregation. Working with couples' on behalf of the church is ministry. Clergy do not provide marriage services to customers; rather clergy serve as pastors, as shepherds, to Christians who are planning to be married.

As the pastor and a couple work together, there is an opportunity for the three of them to become well acquainted. Our hope is that couples will come to experience St. Luke's clergy as caring and supportive pastors. Couples who are not members of the church may discover that the pastor is a person who can help them grow in faith.

Prepare and Enrich is an evaluation tool that may be used in order to get the conversation started. For more information about this helpful step, please go to their web site: www.prepare-enrich.com





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Commercial Wedding Consultants

Wedding planning includes a variety of people, including your families, friends, and sometimes, an outside, commercial wedding consultant. Commercial wedding consultants can be helpful to the couple, but are not resources for planning the wedding service nor are they to have any responsibility for the rehearsal or wedding day unless previously arranged with the St. Luke's wedding coordinator and clergy. Your wedding service preparation team is the St. Luke's wedding coordinator and your pastor.

The Christian Wedding Service

As Christians we believe that God has founded human community in families. When two people marry they are founding a new family. When they marry in a Christian church, they are asking God to bless their marriage, as well as asking the congregation for its prayerful support. It is a joyous, solemn experience to be surrounded by family and friends taking vows in the presence of God.

In worship everything we say and do carries meaning. We strive in Christian worship to understand the meaning of our actions as well as our words. The worship service that is the wedding service carries deep meaning. Striving to understand the depth of this worship experience will add to the meaning of marriage.

The Wedding Party in Procession

How do the bride and groom enter the church? It depends on what you're trying to express by your actions.

The Groom

Many times at St. Luke's the groom escorts his parents down the aisle. Being accompanied by his parents is a way of symbolizing this primary family relationship, which will change during the course of the wedding service. The groom says a symbolic thank you and farewell to his parents as they are seated, usually by way of a hug and kiss. He then takes his place to watch the remainder of the processional.

Attendants

The attendants process in next, usually as couples. This continues through the maid of honor and the best man. This may or may not include a flower girl and ring bearer. Care should be taken before a flower girl and ring bearer are chosen. Large crowds and "dress-up" clothing sometimes intimidate very young children. They may perform well at the rehearsal, but may be too frightened to process down the aisle at the wedding. If you decide to have a flower girl or ring bearer, make sure that the adults caring for the little ones are flexible. If the children are frightened, please don't threaten or coerce them to process down the aisle.



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The Bride

The bride is the last in the processional. The bride also has the option of entering with both parents, usually between her mother and father. When she reaches the end of the aisle, the bride says farewell and thank you to her parents, as the groom walks toward his bride. The bride and groom may present a single flower at this time to the mothers. Then they turn together and walk the last step up to the altar.

There are other good choices to make for the processional. Think through this opportunity and talk it over with the officiating pastor. Other processional options are possible and the wedding coordinator or the pastor who will conduct your wedding can offer other suggestions. The details of the processional should be noted on the wedding rehearsal worksheet.

Options for Wedding Service

Vows of Intention:

1. _____, will you have this woman/man to be your wedded wife/husband, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy estate of marriage? Will you love her/him, comfort her/him, honor and keep her/him in sickness and in health, and forsaking all others, keep you only unto her/him, so long as you both shall live?

Response: I will.

2. _____ and _____, if it is your intention to share with each other your joys and sorrows and all that the years will bring, with your promises bind yourselves to each other as husband and wife.

3. _____ will you have _____ for your wedded **wife, to live together in the joy of Christian marriage? Will** you love, honor and treasure her, in sickness and in health, for richer or for poorer, and forsaking all others, be faithful to her alone? (response) **I WILL!**

4. _____ will you have _____ for your wedded **husband, to live together in the joy of Christian marriage? Will** you love, honor and treasure him, in sickness and in health, for richer or for poorer, and forsaking all others, be faithful to him alone? (response) **I WILL!**



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Vows of Commitment:

1. 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
as long as we both shall live.
2. 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.
3. I, _____ take you, _____,
to be my wedded wife/husband,
to have and to hold from this day forward,
for better for worse, for richer for poorer,
in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish,
according to God's holy ordinance;
and thereto I promise you my faithfulness,
as long as we both shall live.
4. I _____ take you _____ to be my *wife* in love and happiness with God and
these friends as my witness. I promise to be true to you and provide for you, in good times and in
bad, through sickness and in health. I will love you and honor you for all the days of my life.
5. _____, I take you as my *husband* to love and to care for the rest of my life. I will
stand by your side at all times, good and bad. I give to you my love that grows deeper for you each
day, and will keep growing deeper our whole life long.

Please feel free to combine any of these options or write your own. Whatever you decide, you will not need to memorize them unless you desire to do so.





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Parental Blessing Options:

Option: You may choose to give your parents a single rose here.

Pastor will invite the parents to stand. They will respond to a simple statement by the pastor to add their blessing to this marriage.

Response will be: We will.

Lord's Prayer Options:

Please print in your program the words of the Lord's Prayer that you choose:

1. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen
2. Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and forever. Amen.



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Biblical Texts

There will be biblical texts at your wedding; you may use as many as you like, but there must be at least one scripture reading. We have included some suggestions for texts below. However, the Bible is the story of God's love for us, and there aren't many texts that specifically refer to the love shared between a husband and a wife. Therefore, it is a good practice to select Biblical texts that have meant something to you over the years and that have been foundational for your faith. When you have selected your texts, indicate them on the rehearsal worksheet.

Reading the Biblical texts is a great way to include other people in your wedding. You may have two people read: one can read the first lesson, and the other can read the second lesson. Please have your lectors attend the wedding rehearsal so they may practice. The wedding coordinator or the pastor officiating at your wedding will assist them in finding and marking the lessons. Please have your lectors practice with a *New Revised Standard Version Bible*, as that is the version of the pulpit Bible. However, you may use other biblical translations.

Old Testament	New Testament	Gospel
Genesis 1:26-31	Romans 12:1-2	Matthew 7:24-29
Genesis 2:18-24	1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13	Matthew 19:4-6
Ruth 1:16	(or 13:4 - 8a, 13)	John 2:1-10
Psalms 33,100,117, 127,136,150	Ephesians 4:1-6	John 13:34-35
Psalms 103:1-5	Philippians 4:4-7	John 15:9-12
Psalms 115:1	Colossians 3:12-17	
Ecclesiastes 4:9-12	Hebrews 13:1-6	
Song of Solomon 2:10-13	1 Peter 3:3-4	
Song of Solomon 8:7	1 John 4:7 - 12, 15-19	
Isaiah 63:7-9		

Feel free to use Scriptures other than those listed above. Poetry is also an option to be read. It must be approved by the officiating pastor. You may choose 1, 2 or 3 readings.



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Wedding Music

Your wedding is taking place within the context of a Christian congregation and worship service. You have requested to be married at St. Luke's because of your Christian faith. This faith has supported and sustained you in life, and will continue to support and sustain you in your married life. There are opportunities to reflect your faith in the wedding service. Music is one of them. Your music selections must be approved by the Director of Music.

Vocal Music Selection

Any vocal wedding music will represent God's love for both of you and guests. This means that the vocal music includes thanks and praise to God, as well as reflecting the love the couple has for each other. Musical taste isn't the issue, rather the context for your wedding, within a Christian Church, is the issue. Sacred music is written in a variety of styles. Instrumental musical choices need only reflect the good taste needed for the sanctuary and a wedding. Our organist or the Director of Music can assist you in choosing hymns or songs appropriate for a Christian wedding. Please note that the St. Luke's organist/pianist will be the one who will play for your wedding.

Make Sure Your Vocalists and Instrumentalists Know How to Sing or Play

It may sound strange for us to include this notation in thinking about your wedding service, but just because your good friend had the lead in the high school musical doesn't necessarily mean that they "really" know how to sing. If you desire additional musical or vocal accompaniment at your wedding our Director of Music will be happy to assist you in arranging for someone to fill this role. Note that there will be an additional fee for soloists or musicians we must hire for your wedding.



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Wedding License

It is your responsibility to obtain your marriage license. Please call the Dane County Register of Deeds at (608) 266-4452 for information. Please be aware of the need to bring CASH ONLY as well as both Bride and Groom need to be present with notarized birth certificates.

There is a five-day waiting period and the license is only valid for 30 days, so planning when you will get this is crucial.

Their Address: 210 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, Room 210

Web site: www.co.dane.wi.us/regdeeds

Please bring the license (and final payment) into the St. Luke's office no later than one week before your wedding.

General Notes

No Alcohol Policy

There is no alcohol permitted in the buildings or on and grounds of St. Luke's Lutheran Church except for communion wine. The most difficult problems with weddings arise when a member of the wedding party is inebriated and may, in fact, be grounds for the pastor refusing to proceed with the wedding service. Please make sure your attendants understand the no-alcohol policy. There will be no exceptions to this policy.

Food and Drink

No food or drink of any kind is allowed in the Sanctuary. Please respect this as a place of worship.

Wedding Request Form

In order to reserve the date you desire for your wedding, it is imperative that you return the "Wedding Request" form to the church office. Dates are secured according to the date this form is received.

A non-refundable \$100 down-payment must accompany the wedding information form. The \$100 will be deducted from your total wedding fees. When the wedding information form and down-payment is received, the day and time of your wedding is now scheduled.





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Selection of Officiating Pastor

You are free to select any pastor on the staff of St. Luke's Lutheran Church to officiate at your wedding, and, in most instances, this will be the pastor officiating at your wedding. Because weddings are often scheduled many months into the future we do, however, reserve the right to substitute another St. Luke's pastor should the pastor you selected be unavailable on the date you selected.

Time of your Wedding

When determining the time of your wedding you are pretty much free to pick the starting time for your ceremony. This would, of course, be done in consultation with the officiating pastor. In the case of more than one wedding taking place on the same day we would require that there be a three (3) hour time between the beginning of the first wedding and the start of the second.

For example: If wedding couple "A" chooses a 1:00 p.m. wedding then wedding couple "B" would have the choice of either starting their wedding at 10:00 a.m. or 4:00 p.m.

Another consideration in determining the time for your wedding is when you would like your reception to begin.

Time of rehearsal needs to be discussed with the pastor.

Additional Room Use

If you are planning to bring food or drink to the church to consume prior to your wedding, i.e., during dressing or pictures, please indicate this on the Rehearsal Worksheet. Please be mindful of items that might stain. We request that any room used by your wedding party be left in the same condition you found it. Kitchen use increases the work and time requirements of the custodian.



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Wedding Photography

Photos of your wedding are an important part of the day. Again, understanding that your wedding is a worship service will help you understand the guidance we give to photographers.

Photographers will work with available light during the worship. This means no strobe lights, or flashes are allowed. All professional photographers will be comfortable working within these parameters. Photos are allowed behind the brass circles in the aisle. Your pastor is willing to arrange posed pictures before or immediately following the worship service if requested.

Pictures may well be the most challenging part of your wedding day. Serious thought should be given to having all pictures taken before the worship begins. This enables you to be able to be with your guests immediately after the wedding. For example, if you are going to have the receiving line at the reception hall or at the church. You can have a limo or car ready to take you right from the church to the reception area, and everyone can exit the church together. Remember, birdseed, not rice!

Scheduling the time for pictures is important, and you should indicate this on the Rehearsal Worksheet. Depending on the schedule of other weddings that day, you may have some constraints on availability. Scheduling this time on your Rehearsal Worksheet as soon as possible is important.

Please make sure your photographer and videographer are aware of St. Luke's guidelines.

Sanctuary Banners

The paraments on the altar; the banners on the wood screen; and the flags that decorate our sanctuary are seasonal. These items are part of the worship life of St. Luke's, and, they will remain in place during your wedding. At different times during the church year these paraments (or hangings) will display different colors. During Pentecost they are green. During Advent they are blue. In the season of Lent they are purple. On Reformation and Pentecost Sundays as well as the day of Confirmation they are red. The color for the season of Easter is white. If you are attempting to coordinate such things as bridesmaids dresses with the color that will be designated for the sanctuary paraments please speak to the St. Luke's wedding coordinator who will be happy to let you know what color will be on display for the day of your wedding. We can, if you so desire, remove the four (4) center flags just above the altar for your wedding. No further removals will be permitted. Also, if your wedding party is quite large, it is possible to remove the altar rail. No other changes to the worship space will be made.



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Flowers / Decorations

Bouquets of flowers may be placed on the screen or on stands on either side of the altar. If you choose to place them on either side of the altar please be aware that they cannot be seen by the congregation when the attendants are in place. No flowers may be placed on the altar. Although nothing can be attached to the chairs, 16 small wooden stands with hooks are available to hold ribbons or a small floral bouquet/wreath at the ends of chair rows.

Unity Candle

A brass unity candle holder is available (please see fees). You can provide both the drip-less tapers as well as the center pillar candle or just the pillar.