

## **WEDDING POLICY**

St. John Lutheran Church  
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## **MARRIAGE**

Marriage is a glad occasion overflowing with joy, and those who celebrate it rejoice in the gift of God---life, health, strength, sexuality, the family---all that the Creator declared from the beginning to be "very good."

To make a marriage service represent a "glad occasion," the following directives are offered for those considering marriage at St. John Lutheran Church.

## **WHO MAY BE MARRIED HERE?**

- The groom or bride must be a worshipping member of the congregation or be a member of a family that worships regularly here.
- If neither are members, one or both may take instruction and join the congregation. Such instruction and membership must take place before the wedding is scheduled.

## **THE WEDDING DATE**

- The date of the wedding should not be firmly set until it is confirmed by one of the pastors.
- Weddings are not allowed during Holy Week, on holidays, or when a rehearsal would have to be held on a holiday.

## **PASTORS**

- The pastors of St. John Lutheran Church desire to assist you with your wedding. If you have a preference for which pastor presides at your wedding, please state that at the time you request a date for the church. The pastors reserve the right to substitute for one another.

## **ASSISTING MINISTERS AND READERS**

- The wedding service allows for participation by an assisting minister and/or readers. These persons may be ordained or may be lay people. The presiding minister at the service is generally one of the pastors of the congregation.

## **THE MARRIAGE LICENSE**

- A valid marriage license must be obtained from a North Dakota county courthouse and presented to the church office ten days prior to the wedding.

## THE WEDDING SETTING

- USE AGREEMENT. A facility use agreement must be signed by the bride or groom when neither is a member of St. John.
- DECORATIONS such as flowers, are the responsibility of the wedding party.
- PEW BOWS and any attachments to the pews must not damage the pews.
- AISLE RUNNER. An aisle runner may be rented from the church.
- RICE or birdseed is not allowed to be thrown in the church or on the sidewalk in front of the church. If it does occur, the wedding party is responsible for cleaning the area up.
- BULLETINS. It is helpful to have printed bulletins to inform members of the congregation of the order of service and the names of participants in the wedding. Bulletin covers for the service are to be provided by the couple. They may be typed and printed in the church office for a fee. If you prepare and print your own bulletin, it must be approved by the pastor before printing
- CLEANUP. Areas used by the wedding party for dressing or snacks must be left as they were found. Food and drinks must be kept in the basement kitchen.

## CANDLES

- AISLE CANDLES, if desired, may be rented from a florist shop and must be covered by a glass protector. Aisle candles must be removed immediately after the wedding.
- UNITY CANDLE. Couples must use the congregation's **unity candle and tapers** due to previous problems with candle wax and some candles not lighting. You may still purchase your own unity candle to have after the wedding as a symbol of the church's unity candle.
- CANDELABRA may be rented from St. John. The fee for renting the two candelabra includes 14 beeswax candles and two plastic sheets to protect the carpet.

## THE REHEARSAL

- REHEARSAL TIME. The **rehearsal time is 5:00 p.m.** on the day before the wedding, unless circumstances dictate a different time or day.
- WHO COMES TO REHEARSAL? All members of the wedding party, including the ushers, are expected to attend the rehearsal. Where parents are involved in walking down the aisle, they are also expected to attend.
- ORGANIST. The bride and groom are expected to inform the organist of the rehearsal time. Soloists are not expected to attend the rehearsal unless they will be rehearsing with the organist.
- FOOD AND DRINKS. During the rehearsal and during pictures, no food or drink is allowed in the church proper or the narthex.

## THE WEDDING SERVICE

- WORSHIP. The wedding is a worship service conducted in the name of Christ and in his presence. You have chosen a Christian wedding, distinctly different from a civil wedding. It should in every respect be worshipful, inviting the presence of Christ himself, joyful, yet reverent.
- WEDDING PARTY. Large wedding parties (bridesmaids & groomsmen) are discouraged because of space limitation, the cost to those involved, and the tendency for the wedding to become a production rather than a worship service. One attendant for the bride and groom is sufficient. Three groomsmen and three bridesmaids are the most recommended. Where a ring bearer and/or flower girl are included, they may be no younger than five years old. Younger children tend to be unpredictable at the time of the wedding.
- COMMUNION. The service of Holy Communion may be included in the Marriage Service. The couple may wish to provide the bread and wine for the service and/or serve as ministers of communion.

## SCRIPTURE READINGS

Readings should be chosen by the couple in consultation with the pastor. You may select one reading from each category. Ideally, psalms are sung. The liturgy requires **at least one scripture reading** besides the **gospel reading**. The following are suggestions, but many other texts are appropriate.

### Choice

#### **From the Old Testament:**

_____	Genesis 1:26-31	Woman and man created in the image of God
_____	Genesis 2:18-24	Companionship rather than loneliness
_____	Proverbs 3:3-6	Loyalty and faithfulness written on the heart
_____	Song of Solomon 2:10-13	The voice of the beloved
_____	Song of Solomon 8:6-7	Many waters cannot quench love
_____	Isaiah 63: 7-9	God's steadfast love lifts up the people
_____	Jeremiah 31:31-34	The new covenant of the people of God
_____	Jeremiah 32:38-41	The faithfulness of God
_____	Ecclesiastes 3:1-8	Everything has its time
_____	Other: _____	

### Choice

#### **From the Psalms**

_____	Psalms 67	May God be merciful to us and bless us
_____	Psalms 100	We are God's people and the sheep of God's pasture
_____	Psalms 117	The steadfast love of the Lord
_____	Psalms 121	The Lord keeps watch over you
_____	Psalms 127	Unless the Lord builds the house
_____	Psalms 128	Blessed are those who walk in the Lord's ways.
_____	Psalms 150	Let everything that breathes praise the Lord
_____	Other: _____	

### Choice

#### **From the New Testament:**

_____	Rom. 8:31-35, 37-39	If God is for us, who is against us
_____	I Cor. 12:31-13:13	The greatest gift is love
_____	Galatians 5:22-26	The fruits of the Spirit
_____	Philippians 1:3-11	Paul's prayer
_____	Philippians 4:4-9	Rejoice in the Lord always
_____	Ephesians 3:14-19	The breadth, length, height and depth of Christ's love
_____	Colossians 3:12-17	Clothed in compassion, kindness, meekness and patience
_____	I John 3:18-24	Let us love in truth and action
_____	I John 4:7-16	Let us love one another for love is of God
_____	Hebrews 13:1-6	Let mutual love continue
_____	Other: _____	

### Choice

#### **From the Gospels:**

_____	Matthew 5:1-10	Blessed are you
_____	Matthew 5:14-16	You are the light; let your light shine
_____	Matthew 7:21, 24-29	A wise person builds upon the rock
_____	Matthew 19:3-6	What God has united must not be divided
_____	Matthew 22:34-40	Love, the greatest commandment
_____	John 2:1-11	The wedding at Cana
_____	John 15:9-12	Love one another as I have loved you
_____	Other: _____	

## WEDDING VOWS

### Choice

- \_\_\_\_\_ I take you, name, 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, name, take you, name, 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.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I take you, name, 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 forgive you as we have been forgiven; and I will share my life with you as long as we both shall live.
- \_\_\_\_\_ I name, give myself to you, name. By the grace of God, I promise to support and care for you. In the love of Christ, I promise to love and cherish you. With the Spirit's help, I promise to be faithful to you as long as we both shall live.
- \_\_\_\_\_ You may wish to write your own promises or provide them from another resource. They should be consistent with the biblical understanding of marriage, and should make clear that the promises are a lifelong commitment. The pastor must approve the wording you choose since it is the pastor who, as a representative of the Church, must certify that a marriage has taken place.

## WEDDING MUSIC

- **ORGANIST.** It is required that the organist be approved by St. John Lutheran Church. The organist is to be contacted by the couple. The organist is to be paid by check which should be made out to the organist and given to the church office at least ten days before the wedding.
- **PAYMENT.** The couple should make payment for the organist to the church office at least 10 days prior to the wedding. See the final section on **WEDDING FEES**.
- **ST. JOHN ORGANISTS are:**

Barb Arneson	225-8881
Cheryl Hewson	483-5302
Carrie Mitzel	227-4543
Margaret Marcusen	227-0116
- **SOLOISTS** must be contacted and paid by the couple. When requested, a list of soloists will be provided by the pastor.
- **HYMNS.** At least one hymn from the *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* hymnal is recommended to be sung during the service. Some hymns to consider are:

<i>Evangelical Lutheran Worship</i>	585	<i>Hear Us Now, Our God and Father</i>
	586	<i>This Is a Day, Lord, Gladly Awaited</i>
	656	<i>Blest Be the Tie That Binds</i>
	732	<i>I Was There to Hear Your Borne Cry</i>
	836	<i>Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee</i>
	840	<i>Now Thank We All Our God</i>
- **MUSIC.** A maximum of three songs may be sung during the service unless it includes Holy Communion. Since the wedding is a worship service, the music must be chosen carefully and should reflect the praise and presence of God, and the love of Christ for his church.

## THE RECEPTION

Written invitations should be issued whenever the presence of a pastor or organist is desired at the wedding reception.

## INTERFAITH MARRIAGES

When one of the parties is a member of the Roman Catholic Church, be aware of the following issues.

- **PERMISSION.** If permission for the marriage is not granted by the Roman Catholic Church to the Roman Catholic party, that person will be excommunicated for marrying "outside of the church."
- **PRIESTS AND DEACONS.** If the presence of a priest or deacon is requested for the service, the Roman Catholic party should make contact with the priest or deacon and invite him. The roles of the priests and deacons in the service may be those of the assisting minister or reader.
- **DISPENSATION.** For a priest or deacon to participate in a wedding outside of the Roman Catholic Church, the bishop must provide him with a dispensation. For the priest or deacon to receive that dispensation, the Roman Catholic party in the marriage will be asked to sign a statement saying that he/she will "do all in my power to share the faith I have received with our children by having them baptized and educated as Catholics."

## **PICTURES AND VIDEOS** (Please copy this section and provide it for your photographer and videographer).

- **BEFORE THE WEDDING.** Out of respect for guests who expect to greet the wedding party at the reception, it is usually preferred that pictures be taken before the wedding ceremony.
- **TWO OR THREE HOURS.** The church is always available for pictures two hours before the ceremony begins, and because we rarely have two weddings in a day, pictures can usually begin three hours before the ceremony.
- **DRINKS.** We request that there be no pop or bottled water in the church proper, the narthex or chancel areas during pictures. Those refreshments should be left in the Commons Area or in the basement.
- **COMPLETING PICTURE TAKING.** All picture taking in the nave and chancel area must be completed **at least 30 minutes before the wedding** ceremony begins. Additionally, the communion rails and aisle runner (if moved for pictures) must be restored to place at least 30 minutes before the wedding.
- **REMOVING EQUIPMENT.** At least **30 minutes before the wedding begins**, all **photography equipment** must be removed from the nave, the narthex, and the back pews. Please use the balcony or the Commons Area hallway for equipment after photography work is complete in the nave.
- **WORSHIP DECORUM.** No flash pictures may be taken in the church proper or chancel area once the procession begins. Photographers and videographers may not be in a pew, standing on a pew, nor in the aisle during the procession.
- **CLARIFICATION.** For clarification on these guidelines, please consult the pastor who is presiding at the wedding.

<b>WEDDING FEES</b> (A check for fees must be returned to the church office with this form at least ten days prior to the wedding.)	FEES		AMOUNT DUE
1. WEDDING* A. Aisle runner (optional) . . . B. Candelabra (optional) . . . C. Bulletin printing (optional) . . .  2. OTHER* (please specify) A. Custodial services (required) B. _____	\$ 35.00 \$ 10.00 \$ 20.00  \$ 25.00		_____ _____ _____  _____ <u>  \$25.00  </u> _____
<b>AMOUNT DUE TO ST. JOHN</b>		<b>LUTHERAN CHURCH</b>	
3. ST. JOHN'S ORGANIST FEES** A. Wedding service, the wedding rehearsal, and a rehearsal with the vocalist(s). B. Additional practices with vocalist(s).	\$100.00 \$ 15.00		_____ <u>  \$100.00  </u> _____
<b>AMOUNT DUE TO THE ORGANIST</b>			

\* Make a check payable to St. John Lutheran Church.

\*\* Make a check payable to the organist by name.