



## Wedding Guidelines

St. John's Lutheran Church  
100 Oak Street  
Prairie du Sac, WI 53578



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME	Page 3
ARRANGEMENTS	Pages 4 and 5
First Step	Page 4
Counseling	Page 4
Information	Page 4
Regarding the Date	Page 4
Multiple Wedding Services on Same Day	Page 4
Seating Capacity	Page 5
Pre-Marital Counseling	Page 5
Costs and Fees	Page 5
Alcohol Policy	Page 5
PLANNING THE WEDDING SERVICE	Pages 6 – 11
Liturgy	Page 6
Bulletins	Page 6
Scripture Lessons	Page 7
The Organist/Pianist/Musician	Page 7
Music	Pages 7 - 9
Decorations in the Sanctuary	Page 10
Candles	Page 10
Flowers	Page 10
Wedding Banner	Page 10
Aisle Runner	Page 11
Pew Decorations	Page 11
Photography	Page 11
THE REHEARSAL	Page 12
Who Needs to Be Present	Page 12
Starting on Time	Page 12
The Pastor Is in Charge	Page 12
Marriage License	Page 12
FOLLOWING THE WEDDING	Page 13
The Receiving Line	Page 13
The Throwing of Rice	Page 13
Clean Up	Page 13
Fellowship Hall/Kitchen	Page 13
A NOTE FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS OF ST. JOHN'S	Page 14

## WELCOME

Dear Friends,

*Marriage is a gift of God, intended for the joy and mutual strength of those who enter it and for the well-being of the whole human family. In creation God blessed humankind with mutual companionship, the capacity to love, and the care and nurture of children. Jesus affirmed the covenant of marriage and revealed God's own self-giving love on the cross. The Holy Spirit helps those who are united in marriage to be living signs of God's grace, love, and faithfulness.*  
—*Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

Welcome to the beginning of a life of partnership and blessing! We invite you to read through this booklet so that you might become aware of the various aspects related to weddings held at St. John's Lutheran Church. The guidelines in this booklet are designed to help you in the very important work of planning and creating a service that helps all celebrate both God's love and the promises you will make to one another. If you have any questions regarding this booklet or any aspect of your wedding that is not covered here, we would be happy to discuss them with you.

We look forward to working with you in preparation for your wedding ceremony and marriage!

Pastor Sally Williams

## ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE WEDDING SERVICE

### FIRST STEP

Please call Pastor Williams (here after referred to as pastor) nine to twelve months prior to the desired wedding day. If the date is approved the time of the wedding and rehearsal will be entered on the official church calendar. The director of music, custodian, and other church staff will be notified as necessary.

### INFORMATION

Once you have been informed which pastor will officiate at your wedding (from here on called the presiding pastor), information regarding the marriage ceremony, the marriage license, and other related questions should be discussed with that pastor as soon as possible.

### REGARDING THE DATE

Any day of the week may be selected for a wedding service, in consultation with the lead pastor. Days other than Saturday should be considered for weddings, especially during times of the year when weddings are numerous. It may not be possible to schedule a wedding on the bride and groom's first choice of date and/or time due to other pastoral commitments or because of the unavailability of the church.

### MULTIPLE WEDDING SERVICES ON THE SAME DAY

If more than one wedding is requested for the same day, the pastor will schedule them for appropriate times. The cooperation of brides, grooms, and their families is necessary to accommodate everyone. Compromise may be necessary for the benefit of everyone.

SEATING CAPACITY

The church sanctuary seats 300 people.

PRE-MARITAL COUNSELING

As part of the preparation for marriage, the couple will meet either with the pastor or with a counselor three times at the Samaritan Counseling Center discussing dimensions of marriage. This counseling occurs during the year prior to the wedding service. The pastor officiating at your wedding will also meet with you 2-3 times to discuss service details and other aspects included in marriage preparation.

COSTS AND FEES

Fees associated with a wedding service at St. John’s Lutheran Church are intended to compensate the pastor, director of music, custodians, and other staff for the additional work which is required at the time of a wedding service. The fees are payable a month prior to the wedding. The couple will pay the Samaritan Center directly.

Pastor	\$200
Organist for the Service	\$200
Additionally, Organist Accompanying Soloist	\$ 50
Custodian	\$100
Premarital Counseling at the Samaritan Center	\$255

ALCOHOL POLICY

Alcohol is not allowed on St. John’s property.

## PLANNING THE WEDDING SERVICE

### LITURGY

Wedding plans should be made in consultation with the pastor. The service normally follows the outline of our worship book, Evangelical Lutheran Worship. Below is the normal order of worship used for weddings at St. John's Lutheran Church (page 286, ELW).

#### The Wedding Worship Service

Prelude  
Announcements  
The Procession  
Greeting  
Prayer of the Day  
Hymn or Special Music (optional)  
Scripture Readings  
Sermon  
Hymn or Special Music (optional)  
Vows  
Giving of Rings  
Acclamation  
Marriage Blessing  
Lighting of the Marriage Candle (optional)  
Hymn or Special Music (optional)  
Prayers of Intercession  
The Lord's Prayer  
Communion (optional)  
Blessing and Benediction  
The Recession  
Postlude

### BULLETINS

St. John's is happy to print your wedding bulletins on our white paper. Various bulletin formats are possible. You can choose from a full text version bulletin or a simple one-page version. You can use pre-printed bulletin covers (which you would need to purchase) or create your own cover/bulletin. Speak to the pastor about possible options.

Bulletins need to be ready for final proofing 2 weeks prior to the service. If you plan on printing your own bulletin, please let the pastor see it prior to printing.

## SCRIPTURE LESSONS

The reading of Holy Scripture is a very important part of the wedding worship service. Bible readings should be selected by the bride and groom in consultation with the pastor. The following list of suggestions is intended to help the bride and groom begin the selection process. Other selections from the Holy Scriptures are permissible as well.

- Genesis 1:26-31
- Joshua 24:14-15
- Psalms 33:20-22
- Psalms 37:3-7
- Psalms 67
- Psalms 121
- Matthew 7:24-27
- Matthew 19:4-6
- John 2:1-11
- John 12:31-35
- 1 Corinthians 13:1-13
- Ephesians 4:14-21
- Ephesians 5:21-33
- Colossians 3:12-17

## THE ORGANIST/PIANIST/MUSICIAN

It is customary and highly recommended that one of St. John's organist/pianists play for any wedding held in the church. They are familiar with church procedures, with appropriate church music, and with church etiquette and protocol. Please discuss with the presiding pastor any special circumstances which may require other musicians.

## MUSIC

The planning of music is something which must be done early. The bride and groom are expected to contact and meet with the Director of Music (Ruellene Seymour, 608-588-3198) to select music for the wedding. All music which will be used at the wedding service must receive approval from the Director of Music and pastor. If the bride and groom select music which is unfamiliar to the Director of Music or pastor, they will be asked to provide a copy of the words prior to any decision regarding its appropriateness.



## MUSIC SUGGESTIONS

The following list illustrates appropriate music for a wedding at St. John's Lutheran Church. It is not a complete list, but it suggests what types of music can be used. Wedding music should be Christ-centered.

### PROCESSION AND/OR RECESSION

Bach:	Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring
Bach:	Wedding Processional and Air (arrangement by Leupold)
Beethoven:	Ode to Joy
Bull:	Rondo in G
Clarke:	Trumpet Tune in D Major
Franck:	Panis Angelicus
Handel:	Air from "Water Music"
Handel:	Hornpipe from "Water Music"
Mathias:	Fanfare
Pachelbel:	Canon in D
Purcell:	Trumpet Voluntary

### CONGREGATIONAL HYMNS

ELW 527	Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now
ELW 537	On Our Way Rejoicing
ELW 585	Hear Us Now, Our God and Father
ELW 596	My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less
ELW 631	Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
ELW 714	O God of Mercy, God of Light
ELW 838	Beautiful Savior
ELW 834	Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise
ELW 840	Now Thank We All Our God
ELW 859	Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
ELW 836	Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee
ELW 879	For the Beauty of the Earth
ELW 732	I Was There to Hear Your Borning Cry
ELW 793	Be Thou My Vision
ELW 787	You Who Dwell . . . (On Eagle's Wings)
ELW 880	O God Beyond All Praising

## VOCAL MUSIC (SOLO OR ENSEMBLES)

The following list contains suggested pieces for wedding vocalists. When choosing vocal wedding music, determine whether the lyrics speak of your life together in the context of your relationship to God. If the text only mentions the nature of your feelings for each other, the focus becomes your love, rather than God's. People attending a church wedding hear in scripture, sermon, and song that a Christian marriage is based on reliance on and trust in God through all that is to come.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Location and/or Composer</u>
Cherish the Treasure	Jon Mohr
Commitment Song	Robert Sterling and Chris Machen
The Gift of Love	Hal. H. Hopson
God Causes All Things to Grow	Steven Curtis Chapman and Steve Green
Grow Old with Me	John Lennon
Household of Faith	Brent Lamb and John Rosasco
How Beautiful	Twillla Paris
How Firm a Foundation	ELW 796
Lord, May Their Lives Love	J. Robert Carroll Bob Hartman
Love As You Love	David Carlin King
Love of the Lasting Kind	Claire Cloninger and Don Cason
Make Us One	Jeff Switzer
O Perfect Love	Joseph Barnby
Perfect Union	John Andrew Schreiner
Praise the Lord! O Heavens	ELW 823
There Is Hope	Bob Kauflin and Ed Nalle
Seekers of Your Heart	Melodie Tunney, Dick Tunney, Beverly Darnall
This Is the Day	Scott Wesley Brown
Your Love Is Extravagant	Casting Crowns

## DECORATIONS IN THE SANCTUARY

As you prepare for your wedding service you will be confronted with many ideas for decorations. No extra decorations are needed to make the wedding service beautiful and meaningful as the sanctuary has its own beauty and meaningful reverence.

The interior of the sanctuary and chancel are not to be rearranged or changed in any way. The color of the altar paraments is determined by the church liturgical calendar. The furnishings in the chancel area (candles, books, vases, altar cloths, and so on) serve a purpose in the worship service.

## CANDLES

The two candelabras on either side of the altar, each of which has seven candles, may be used.

If a Marriage Candle or Unity Candle is desired for a wedding service, the Wedding Candelabra belonging to St. John's Lutheran Church can be used. One candle measuring 3 ¼ inches in diameter and two candles measuring ¾ inches in diameter must be furnished by the bride and groom.

## FLOWERS

Flowers may be used to add to the beauty of the wedding service. Flowers may be placed on flower pedestals which are available at the church. Flowers cannot be placed on the credence tables or on the altar. The church has flower liners for the two vases which are part of the altar furnishings. These liners may be taken to the florist a day or two before the wedding if you wish to have different colored flowers for the wedding. Check with the church office about this.

If you plan to leave the flowers from the wedding service for use during a later worship service, please notify the church office.

## WEDDING BANNER

A quilted wedding banner is available for your use upon request prior to the wedding day.

## AISLE RUNNER

Aisle runners are optional, but if one is desired a cloth runner is preferred over plastic or paper.

## PEW DECORATIONS

This kind of decoration must be discussed with, and receive the approval of, the pastor. Pew decorations may not be attached with tape, pins, tacks, nails, or screws. It is suggested that ribbon or over the door plastic hangers be used to attach decorations to the pews.

## PHOTOGRAPHY

It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to inform the photographer that he/she must speak with the pastor to discuss taking pictures.

We encourage taking pictures of the bride and groom, as well as group pictures and family pictures, prior to the wedding service. Doing so enables the bride and groom to leave for the reception soon after the conclusion of the wedding service. Photographs may also look better when they are taken prior to the wedding service since clothes are not wrinkled and dresses, hair, and make-up are “picture perfect.”

The photographing or videotaping of a wedding service is a privilege extended to those who are married at St. John's Lutheran Church. However, no flash pictures are permitted during the wedding service. Flash photos can only be taken before or after the service.

Several time exposures by a professional photographer and video taping are permissible during the wedding service if done from the balcony.

In summary, the wedding service is intended to be a worship service. Photographers, cameras, and video cameras can disturb the worship atmosphere and therefore, restrictions on their use must be observed. The pastor will take appropriate action if these instructions are not followed.

## THE REHEARSAL

### WHO NEEDS TO BE PRESENT?

Those who should attend the rehearsal are the bridesmaids, groomsmen, readers, ushers and parents. Soloists may be present but their attendance is not required.

The pastor will instruct the wedding party regarding the details of the wedding service. The ushers should be instructed by the bride and groom, prior to the rehearsal, regarding special seating arrangements.

### STARTING ON TIME

The rehearsal normally takes 30-45 minutes if everyone is present. Remind everyone to be on time.

### THE PASTOR IS IN CHARGE OF THE REHEARSAL

The pastor is in charge of the rehearsal and will carry out the plans which have been made with the wedding couple during the counseling and planning process.

All participants are asked to cooperate fully with the directions of the presiding pastor so that the rehearsal will be a productive time. Appropriate behavior is expected by all in attendance.

### MARRIAGE LICENSE

The marriage license should be given to the church office secretary as soon as it is obtained. Sometimes the County Clerk mails the license directly to the church. In either case, the license is kept in the church safe until the day of the wedding. No wedding rehearsal will begin until the license has been received by the church office.

Wisconsin law requires couples to get a license from the county of their residence. Please contact your county courthouse well in advance so you are clear on procedures.

## FOLLOWING THE WEDDING

### THE RECEIVING LINE

If you desire to have a receiving line following the wedding service, you may do so in the gathering area. If the weather is nice, you may have a receiving line outdoors.

### THE THROWING OF RICE

The throwing of rice, confetti, grass seed, and bird seed is not permitted anywhere inside or outside the church building.

### CLEAN UP

Please assign someone the task of picking up all items that you brought for your wedding (flower arrangements, guest book, change of clothes, make-up, food, etc). Have them also look for things that wedding guests may have left behind (purses, cameras, coats, etc).

### FELLOWSHIP HALL/KITCHEN

Use of the fellowship hall and/or kitchen during and prior to the wedding is permissible, with the use of your own supplies (food). Clean-up is necessary prior to leaving. The kitchen and the fellowship hall must be returned to their previous condition. Please keep all food in the fellowship hall and kitchen area.

### A NOTE FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT MEMBERS OF ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Either the bride or the groom should be an active, worshipping member of the congregation in order for a wedding service to be held at St. John's Lutheran Church. In some circumstances, the lead pastor may consider making an exception to this policy.

Revised: 3/3/25







