



St. Luke Lutheran Church

"Living in Faith...Linking Hearts and Hands"

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WEDDING INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS

Congratulations!! You are making a wonderful step in your relationship together. Your love for each other has brought you to this point where you wish to join yourselves to each other in Holy Matrimony, in which the two of you will become one. God's Word reminds us of this unity we have in marriage.

From the beginning of creation, God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate. (Mark 10:6-9)

Your decision to conduct your wedding within a service of worship of God, and by a minister of the Church of Jesus Christ, will ground your marriage in firm ground as you seek to grow together in your love for each other. The continual maintaining of your relationship with God (through regular worship, reading and studying of the Holy Scriptures, prayer, and service to others) will be the critical factor in maintaining and growing in your love for each other. Jesus reminds us also of the commandments of God, and of their value in our lives.

A lawyer, asked Jesus a question to test him. "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" He said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. (Matthew 22:35-40)

God is the foundation of our lives, and so is the foundation of marriage and the family. It is critical for us to remain connected to God, so that we can continue to grow in our faith and our love for God. In the same way your marriage will remain strong only as you continue to grow together. The promises you will make to each other will bind you together, so that your lives from that point on will be intimately connected. I ask you to discuss this together, seriously, understanding the great impact this will have on your lives. I also ask you to realize the incredible joy had in a marriage of faith, trust, and fidelity to each other and towards God.

Let marriage be held in honor by all. (Hebrews 13:4)

God honors marriage. God loves the two of you and wants for you the best of all in your life together.

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. (John 3:16)

It is expected that either the Bride or the Groom be a member in good standing (meaning active participation in the life of the church community) of **St. Luke Lutheran Church**, or in other circumstances at least a member of another Christian church in which you are a regular active member. The only valid reason to be married in the church is to place yourselves and your marriage in God's hands, and receive His blessing.

Jesus tells us, "I will show you what someone is like who comes to me, hears my words, and acts on them. That one is like a man building a house, who dug deeply and laid the foundation on rock; when a flood arose, the river burst against that house but could not shake it, because it had been well built." (Luke 6:47-48)

For Christians it is essential that we hear God's Word, and lead our lives according to Jesus words, acting on our beliefs. We do not claim to be perfect in doing so, actually we claim to be failures in this regard, and so need continually to return to God asking for forgiveness. This is what repentance is all about, and is to be the focus of our life as Christians, continually turning back to God.

Non-Christians are given the opportunity to be married in our society through the Justice of the Peace. To go about this you will need to contact the courthouse and inquire of what to do.

General Information

Although many people think of weddings as social events, a church wedding is primarily a worship service. Those who attend are participants, not spectators. At St. Luke Lutheran Church, we do our best to respect the wishes of the bridal couple for their wedding. We do emphasize that a church wedding is worship and the chief focus, therefore, is on God, His love for us, and that love shared by the bride and groom.

If your fiancé is a member of another church, she/he is responsible for notifying her/his pastor of the marriage plans and should comply with the rules and expectations of that church. The Pastor(s) will work together with the other minister in order to ensure your wedding is faithful to both traditions. The Pastor(s) may contact those pastors in preparation for the marriage service. Clergy of other denominations may assist at the wedding; details and levels of participation will vary according to the denomination and its relationship to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

The Pastors at St. Luke Church have the right to accept or refuse to officiate at weddings. This right is to be considered as an act of confidentiality and will be supported and upheld by the Congregation Council.

Pre-Marital Counseling

It is expected that you will participate in pre-marital counseling with the pastor. This will involve several sessions for the pastor to get to know you, and help you in your relationship together. You may be asked to take a personal inventory in which you will answer questions about yourself, and your relationship. This inventory is used by the pastor in helping your relationship to grow, and for you to continue discussing your lives with each other. It is critical to this counseling and your relationship that you be open and honest in these sessions with the pastor. During these sessions pastor will also begin planning the wedding service, discussing marriage and other aspects of the faith involving marriage. You will be given a list of Scripture lessons to begin considering, as well as vows, and other aspects of the worship service to begin considering.

Music and Musicians

Musicians other than the church's organist must be approved by the presiding pastor of St. Luke Lutheran Church. When using St. Luke's musician a fee will be requested to include the wedding rehearsal and the wedding itself. Soloists must be in contact with the church musician, in order for planning to go well. The musician may charge additional fees for extra rehearsals with a soloist, or extra planning times with the wedding couple.

The church musician is in charge of musical arrangements and will make suitable suggestions for music during the wedding. There is a difference between music that is appropriate at the church and that which may be appropriate at the reception. At the church, the center of attention is God and music should glorify our Lord Jesus. The Organist's judgment is to be respected as the Minister of Music in this Church.

Rehearsal

Except under unusual circumstances, a rehearsal is required; it is usually held on the evening preceding the wedding at a time mutually determined. Persons who should attend the Rehearsal are the Bride and Groom, Maid (Matron) of Honor, Best Man, ALL attendants and groomsmen, anyone in the procession, including the person escorting the Bride. Anyone needing special instructions for the Wedding Day. The rehearsal is to relieve anxiety for the wedding couple, in order to focus on the meaning of the day.

Pictures and Photographers

A professional photographer is permitted to take pictures during the entrance and closing processions. Pictures during the wedding ceremony are not permitted because it disturbs the worship atmosphere. Please communicate to your guests that they should not expect to take pictures during the wedding. Pictures may be taken after the wedding. One videotape recorder may be used and placed in the choir loft to record the wedding. It must remain stationary. Someone may remain with it, if that is necessary, in order to operate the recorder.

Rice

The throwing of rice, birdseed or other fine projectiles after a wedding is not permitted. It is difficult to clean up and people sometimes slip on it, especially if the pavement is wet, thus exposing the church and the wedding couple to possible liability. In its place, some have the blowing of bubbles in celebration.

Other Items

It is expected that the wedding will begin on time. Unreasonable delays (more than 15 minutes) may result in additional fees to compensate for the additional time of organist, pastor, etc. Delays may, also, cut into the planned events of the congregation which need to be considered. It is important for the wedding couple and guests to realize the church will be used for worship the very next day. Keeping the church as clean as possible would be a great help to us.

The wedding license must be given to the Pastor no later than the day prior to the wedding, but may be given to the church office as soon as it is received. By Pennsylvania law a license is required, and the pastor is subject to penalty if the license is not returned within 10 days of the ceremony.

If you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to the Pastor as soon as possible.

Fees

It is not the purpose of the church to make money from weddings. Most couples spend large sums of money on flowers, dresses, dinners, trips, etc. It is not unreasonable to expect a modest reimbursement to the church for time and expenses, wear and tear, etc. Because many people do not realize all that is involved in a church wedding, the following fees have been established. These fees may be modified according to particular circumstances. For example, if music is not anticipated, there will be a corresponding reduction in fees, etc. In case of financial hardship, arrangements may be made for a reduction in fees or for payments over a period of time.

If you have financial problems, speak to the Pastor about your situation.

No one is refused a wedding solely for financial reasons.

Basic Fees for Members: \$225.00* (includes, musician, custodial services, sound board operator, wedding consultant etc.) If you wish you may provide an additional honorarium to the pastor.

All fees must be paid by the time of the rehearsal unless other arrangements have been made.

Basic Fees for Non-Members: \$500.00* (includes pastor, musician, custodial services, sound board operator, wedding consultant etc.)

* Note: fees will be appropriately adjusted if not all services are used.

A deposit of at least \$150.00 is requested one month in advance. In case of cancellation, \$75.00 will be returned if notified at least two weeks in advance of the wedding date. After that time, no fees are returned.

All fees must be paid by the time of the rehearsal unless other arrangements have been made.

Rev. 04/05

For Church Records Only

Members

Pastor:

Organist: \$100

Janitor: \$50

Wedding Consultant: \$50

Sound Board Operator: \$25

Sub-total: \$225

Non-Members

Pastor: \$175

Organist: \$100

Janitor: \$ 50

Wedding Consultant: \$50

Sound Board Operator: \$25

Church Facility: \$100

Sub-total: \$500