

“AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH”

Mark 10:8a ESV



**A Manual for Engaged Couples Who Desire to be Wed
at Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church**

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A Member Congregation of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

www.lcms.org

Introduction

Dear Engaged Couple,

Congratulations on your forthcoming marriage!

We know that this wedding will mean many hours of planning and preparation and will continue to involve many more hours of work on your part. Please take time to carefully read through and understand these guidelines. They are intended to help with the preparation and planning of your worship service in the Church.

May the Lord bless your preparation time, as you seek to do His will in all aspects of your life.

Who May be Married at Christ Lutheran

All services and ceremonies at Christ Lutheran must be reviewed in advance for form and content by our pastors to confirm that they are in accordance with Holy Scripture and the confessions and doctrinal positions of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. The use of our facilities is reserved for regular members of this congregation, another LC-MS congregation or those actively seeking to become regular members of this congregation. It is ultimately at the discretion of the pastors of Christ Lutheran whether or not a wedding will take place in our church.

Premarital Preparation

The pastor should be contacted as soon as the engaged couple knows the date they desire to be married, to check on his availability and that of the church. It is not unusual that this occurs 6 to 12 months before the wedding. Marriage enrichment sessions with the pastor should be set up at this time. Such enrichment may take 4 to 6 sessions. Pre-marital sessions should be completed one month before the wedding.

The Wedding Service as Worship

What makes a Christian wedding service different from any other wedding service? It is in the Christian wedding service where Christians, particularly you as bride and groom, come together to offer special thanks and praise to God and to ask God's blessing as you begin your life together as husband and wife. The

people who come to your wedding ceremony are also offering special thanks and praise to God for bringing you together in marriage and to pray His continued blessing on your married life.

The Christian wedding is an act of worship, similar to any other worship service in the church. So the center of the Christian wedding is the center of all Christian worship, namely God. God is our creator, and it is by His grace that we are even allowed to come into His presence to worship Him. So it is important for you, the bride and groom, to help see to it that nothing in your wedding service detracts from giving God the greatest importance. The Rite of Holy Matrimony found on pg. 275 of *Lutheran Service Book* will generally be the foundation of all wedding services held at Christ Lutheran.

In a secular wedding the bride and groom are the object and center. In a Christian wedding, the object is God, and the center is Jesus Christ. Jesus said, “I and the Father are one.” John 10:30 ESV “No man comes to the Father except through me.” John 14:6 ESV It is only through Christ – the Mediator sent by God – that we are able to approach God in our worship. Worship directed to God must always, therefore, be centered in Christ. As worship should always be centered in Christ, so should your life be centered in Christ. And to help keep that focus on Christ, it is important that you take the time for worship at the beginning of your married life so that worship becomes a pattern for your entire life together under God’s care. The Church, the body of Christ, will pray for you the week before and the Sunday after your marriage vows. We will thank God for bringing the two of you together in marriage and will ask His blessing upon you.

Wedding Guidelines and Issues to Consider

Officiant — Services are generally conducted by one of our pastors who are called to be the worship leaders. If you would like any other Lutheran Pastor to be involved in your wedding service, please inform our pastors of your desires before you invite someone else to participate in your wedding. No service or ceremony may be conducted unless it is officiated by ordained members of the LC-MS or a Lutheran Church body with whom the LC-MS is in full Altar and Pulpit fellowship.

Service Time — Saturday Weddings will begin no earlier than 10:00 am and no later than 3:30 pm. Due to a 5:30 pm worship service on Saturday we ask that

you be finished vacating the sanctuary no later than 5:00 pm.

Wedding License — Licenses for marriage in McLean County become valid the day after they are issued and remain valid for 60 days. Please remember this time frame when applying for a license. You are strongly encouraged to bring the license to the rehearsal and turn it over to the pastor to ensure its presence on the day of the service.

Wedding Coordinator — The Wedding Coordinator of Christ Lutheran will be on site to unlock doors, turn on lights and assist the couple during the rehearsal and ceremony.

Decorations — Any decorations (flowers, etc.) should be placed in the church on the day of the wedding. Any decorations that the church has should remain in place (except banners may be taken down and/or replaced with wedding banners.) No arch or any other structure shall be placed in front of the altar. Only one bouquet of floral piece may be placed on the altar. Unity candles may be placed on the altar, but you must furnish your own. Nothing shall be draped around the chancel/altar railing. Please be very careful with our church furniture, floors, and carpet when you add decorations for your wedding. Nothing may be taped or tacked to the church furniture. If extra candles are used, please have a cloth or plastic liner underneath them to avoid wax drippings on the furniture or floor. The two single communion candles on the Altar are not lit for the service. The paraments (altar, pulpit, and lectern frontals) signify the time of the church year, and shall remain the color of the time of year they signify.

Bulletins — Bulletins provide a meaningful outline of the service and serve as a reminder of your wedding. Bulletin covers can be purchased at a religious supply store or through the mail. Please consult with the Pastor before printing for one final proof reading. We can run your original copy on our photocopier.

Wedding Music — An important part of the wedding is the music. It sets the tone and enhances the atmosphere of worship. As in all church services, the words, thoughts, and ideas conveyed are to be directed toward God or flow from the words of Holy Scripture. By following this simple rule, devotional music will accent the religious nature of the service. You will want to choose carefully the music which will praise God for this happy occasion, inspire worship for your guests, and will add to the joy and beauty of the service. There is a great wealth

of appropriate music for your special occasion, music with character, dignity, and joy. This day you will cherish for a long time. Consult with our organist as you choose the various selections of music. No secular music closely associated with secular themes should be used. Please note that all music must be approved by the pastor.

Ordinarily the church music director/organist shall play for weddings. She has been engaged by the congregation and is familiar with the organ, with the facilities, and the musical preferences of our congregation. To direct the music of a worship service requires professional qualifications and a familiarity of the musical heritage of our church. Our organist will help you select the music for your wedding.

The music director/organist should be contacted to make arrangements for scheduling her services or to let her know if other arrangements, including other musicians, are to be made as soon as a date has been set.

Photography & Videography — Because of the nature of a worship service, it is improper to have it marred by the movement of photographers, flashes of cameras, and home video recorders. Professional photographers usually are very courteous and careful. Only the photographer is to take pictures during the worship service, must not use a flash, and must be as unobtrusive as possible. Video recording is fine if shot appropriately.

All people should be informed of any pictures which involve them. Proper behavior in the Altar area should be observed at all times. The church furnishings are not to be moved for the sake of a better, more creative picture. All candles except the Altar/Communion candles may be lit or remain lit during the taking of pictures.

Miscellaneous — Rice, bird seed, confetti, etc. may not be thrown at the bride and groom as they leave.

All concerns or special requests must be discussed with the pastor at least six weeks prior to the wedding date. The pastor has the final decision regarding all special requests.

Rehearsal — Rehearsals are ordinarily scheduled on the previous day; however, other arrangements may be made. All members of the wedding party should be

present for the rehearsal. PLEASE BE PROMPT. One hour is scheduled for your rehearsal.

The pastor and/or the wedding coordinator are in charge and will direct the rehearsal according to the usages of the church. Those attending the rehearsal are expected to conduct themselves with proper decorum and respect for the sanctuary.

Wedding Reception — You may choose to have your reception in our Fellowship Hall. Please contact the church office to get in touch with the wedding reception coordinator who will assist you in the use of the Fellowship Hall.

Financial Guidelines – There are no fees for the use of the sanctuary for active (attending) members of our church. It is expected that an honorarium would be given to the Pastor.

The Wedding Coordinator has a fee of \$75. Please give the fee to the Coordinator the night of the rehearsal.

Organist Fees are as follows: \$100 without special music such as vocal solos, \$150 with special music that requires rehearsal times. Please give the fees to the organist on the night of the wedding rehearsal.

It is customary for a donation to be received from the couple if the reception is to be held in the Fellowship Hall.

Pastor: Jonathan Huehn

Music Director: Patty Downey

Wedding Coordinator: Jeanie Wager

Wedding Reception Coordinator: Sharon Quiram

Statement on Homosexual Unions

The marriage policy of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church, a member congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, is and always has been consistent with the Synod's beliefs on marriage. We believe that marriage is a sacred union of one man and one woman (Gen. 2:24-25), and that God gave marriage as a picture of the relationship between Christ and His bride the Church

(Eph. 5:32). The official position of The Lutheran Church— Missouri Synod, as set forth in 1998 Res. 3-21 (“To Affirm the Sanctity of Marriage and to Reject Same-Sex Unions”), is that homosexual unions come under categorical prohibition in the Old and New Testaments (Lev. 18:22, 24; 20:13; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 1 Tim. 1:9-10) as contrary to the Creator’s design (Rom. 1:26-27). These positions and beliefs can be found on the LCMS website, along with other statements, papers and reports on the subject of homosexuality and same-sex civil unions and “marriage.” Pursuant to its rights under the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, this Congregation will reject any and all political or civil mandates to perform ceremonies that are not in agreement with our aforementioned beliefs. Our pastors will not officiate over any marriages inconsistent with these beliefs, and our church property may not be used for any marriage ceremony, reception or other activity that would be inconsistent with our beliefs and this policy.

Updated August 25, 2015

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Pertinent information about our facilities

- Permanent sanctuary pews comfortably seat 370 with additional space for 10 wheelchairs throughout the sanctuary. There are a limited number of moveable pew sections located in the back of the sanctuary and in the narthex should you need to accommodate more guests.
- The center aisle of the sanctuary runs approximately 65’ from the door frame to the first step of the chancel and is approximately 5’ wide at it’s narrowest.
- There are 14 rows of pews each side of the center aisle in two sections front and back.
 - The 6 rows in the front section are continuous
 - The 8 rows in the back section are separated by an additional aisle splitting the center of the rows.
- The groom and his attendants may dress in the Choir Room
- The bride and her attendants may dress in the Kindergarten Sunday School Room
- No food should be consumed in the dressing areas. Please use the fellowship hall.
- The fellowship hall has a seating capacity of approximately 200

FOR THE CHURCH RECORD

THE BRIDE

Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Place of Birth: _____

Religious Affiliation: _____

Home Congregation: _____

Present Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Alternate Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Occupation: _____

Father's Name: _____

Mother's Name: _____

Parent's Address: _____

Married Before?: _____ Yes _____ No

THE GROOM

Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Place of Birth: _____

Religious Affiliation: _____

Home Congregation: _____

Present Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Alternate Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Occupation: _____

Father's Name: _____

Mother's Name: _____

Parent's Address: _____

Married Before?: Yes No

Couple's Address After Wedding: _____

Marriage Counseling Dates:
