



# St. John Lutheran Church

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## Wedding Policy

*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 AT ST. JOHN?**

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

## **SETTING 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 NO LATER THAN ten days prior to the wedding.

## **INTERFAITH MARRIAGES**

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

### **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."

## DECORATIONS

Decorating the wedding space is allowed, and is the responsibility of the wedding party. Pew bows and any attachments to the pews are allowed, however they must not damage the pews.

## AISLE RUNNER

If you wish to have an aisle runner, you may rent one from St. John (*see applicable fees*).

## CANDLES

### AISLE CANDLES

If aisle candles are desired, they 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.

### CANDELABRAS

If you wish to have candelabras, they may be rented from St. John (*see applicable fees*).

## CLEAN UP

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.

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.

## 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 (*see applicable fees*). If you prepare and print your own bulletin, it must be approved by the pastor prior to being professionally printed.

## THE REHEARSAL

### REHEARSAL TIME

Rehearsals are scheduled at **5:00 p.m.** 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. 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 pictures, no food/drink are allowed in the church proper or the narthex.



# 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. Three groomsmen and three bridesmaids are the most recommended.

## COMMUNION

The service of Holy Communion may be included in the Marriage Service.

## MUSIC

### HYMNS & SONGS

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.

At least one hymn from the Evangelical Lutheran Worship hymnal is recommended to be sung during the service. Some hymns to consider are:

### EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN WORSHIP

- |     |                                     |
|-----|-------------------------------------|
| 585 | Hear Us Now, Our God and Father     |
| 586 | This Is a Day, Lord, Gladly Awaited |
| 656 | Blest Be the Tie That Binds         |
| 732 | I Was There to Hear Your Boring Cry |
| 836 | Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee        |
| 840 | Now Thank We All Our God            |

### ORGANIST

It is required that the organist be approved by St. John Lutheran Church. It is the couple's responsibility to contact the Organist. If utilizing an Organist from St. John (*a list is available upon request*), payment is made directly to the musician NO LATER THAN 10 days before the wedding date. A check written out to the organist may be dropped off at the church office (*see applicable fees*).

### SOLOISTS

Soloists must be contacted and paid by the couple. When requested, a list of soloists will be provided by the pastor.

Your wedding vows are a promise to each other before God and witnesses of your lifelong commitment. They are personal and should reflect the personality of the couple. Below are some common wedding vows. You may elect to write your own vows with a pastor's approval.

**COMMON WEDDING VOWS**

\_\_\_\_\_ 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.*

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# 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.

## FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT ~ (SELECT ONE)

### Choice

- 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: \_\_\_\_\_

## FROM THE PSALMS ~ (SELECT ONE)

### Choice

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

FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT ~ (SELECT ONE)

Choice

- \_\_\_ 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: \_\_\_\_\_

FROM THE GOSPELS ~ (SELECT ONE)

Choice

- \_\_\_ 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: \_\_\_\_\_





At St. John, a wedding is a worship service. In honor of our Lord and for the sake of worshipers, the following guidelines are offered so that you might assist the pastors and congregation in maintaining a worshipful setting for our weddings. *(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. The church is always available for pictures at least two hours before the ceremony begins. If additional time is needed, arrangements must be made with the pastor to ensure there are no scheduling conflicts.

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.

**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.

**REFRESHMENTS**

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.

*For clarification on these guidelines, please consult the pastor who is presiding at the wedding.*

**THE RECEPTION**

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