

*Many waters
cannot quench love;
rivers cannot wash
it away.*



Solomon 8:7

*Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Wedding Policies & Procedures
(Revised June 2009)*

Marriage

Marriage is the creation of a new relationship and the beginning of a new life together. When a marriage is founded on the Christian faith, it gains spiritual strength and God's presence.

We want you to remember the day of your wedding with joy. We will seek to get to know you as a couple. We will help to enrich your awareness of your relationship. We will strive to develop a friendship between you and Bethlehem Lutheran Church, or any other supportive Christian community.

We also will help you in the planning of your wedding. The main thing we ask you to remember is that a wedding in the church is a worship service conducted in the name of God. All plans and decisions should be made with this in mind, so that the Lord can fill your ceremony with joy.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

We Celebrate

- ♥ We celebrate God's gift of life through a variety of worship and song.

We Grow

- ♥ We are inspired by the Spirit to promote the Good News and to stimulate faith, fellowship, and spiritual growth.

We Serve

- ♥ We reach out to serve our community and world as Jesus did.

Wedding Preparation

Preparation for the wedding involves these steps, which can be typically covered in five sessions:

1. Initial meeting with the pastor to get acquainted and fill out initial information forms. Collect \$100 deposit for church if non-member. Fill out initial Fee Schedule if not using a Wedding Coordinator.
2. Take "Prepare 2000", a marriage enrichment used to give a profile of your relationship's strengths and work areas. Cost is \$35.
3. Take 2-3 sessions to discuss results of the "Prepare 2000".
4. Plan wedding service; themes, bible verses, music, bulletin, etc.
5. Initial meeting with Wedding Coordinator to sign Wedding Procedures and Policies Form and collect \$200 refundable damage deposit if non-member. Fill out initial Fee Schedule.

As you plan your wedding at Bethlehem Lutheran Church please consider these differences in perspective:

Secular	Christian
The focus of attention is on the bride and groom.	The focus of attention is on God.
The church is just one of several rented items for the occasion. Some couples ask to have the parameters changed if they don't like the color.	The church is seen as a house of worship. The church year is not interrupted and liturgical colors are not changed for a wedding.
The wedding date is often set without any thought to the church year.	Weddings are not scheduled during Holy Week, the most important observance of the church year.

Secular

It is the clergy person who marries the couple by pronouncing them husband and wife.

The wedding itself is seen as a type of theater. Ushers hand out programs to a passive audience.

Music is chosen on the preference of the couple and often tends to have lyrics of a romantic or sentimental nature. The focus of the music is on the love of the bride and groom for each other.

A wedding is a festive occasion that calls for a party.

Christian

It is the exchange of vows that constitutes the marriage. The pastor serves as the primary witness to this exchange, but it is the bride and groom who bind themselves together as husband and wife by their promises.

The wedding is a worship service. Ushers hand out bulletins to the congregation, who actively participate in the worship.

Music is chosen based on conversations between the couple and the pastor (and often the organist). The purpose of the music is to invoke God’s presence and blessing, to praise God, and to highlight Christ’s love for the church as a model for love and fidelity in marriage.

A wedding is a festive occasion that calls for thanksgiving to God and joy in Christ.

Setting the Date

In order to schedule the date of your wedding:

1. Establish the date. (Remember: Sunday and Holiday weekend weddings have higher fees. Also, all Saturday weddings need to be finished and guests leave the church by 4:30 because of Saturday night worship service at 5:00 pm.)

Call the church office (651) 439-3450 and ask for date availability of the facilities and pastor(s). The office will call the church’s Wedding Coordinator to ensure her availability and custodial availability. A return call to the bride or groom from the Wedding Coordinator finalizes the date.

2. Read and understand this planning booklet.
3. Have an initial meeting with the pastor.
4. Have an initial meeting with the Wedding Coordinator
5. For Non-Members – pay a deposit of \$100 to hold the wedding date and a separate check of \$200 damage deposit and then the remainder of the building rental fee (\$300) is to be paid at the night of rehearsal with all the other fees and honorariums.

Wedding Procedures and Policies

Please consider the following procedures and policies in making your wedding preparations:

- ♥ For church members, the pastor of Bethlehem Lutheran Church is the officiating pastor of your wedding. Other clergy may participate at the request of the couple and in consultation with the pastor.
- ♥ Couples that are renting the church building and are not members of the church must bring in their own clergy to conduct the wedding.
- ♥ There is no smoking allowed in the church or its adjoining buildings.
- ♥ No alcoholic beverages or drugs are to be brought onto the premises, including both inside and outside the buildings. It is inappropriate for the wedding group to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while present at the rehearsal or the wedding. The pastor will stop the wedding activities if this policy is violated.

- ♥ The throwing of rice or confetti is not permitted because of the potential mess and environmental impact. Couples should consider using birdseed and only on the outside of the church building.
- ♥ The wedding party at both the rehearsal and at the wedding service must wear clothing that is appropriate for a worshipful environment. Provocative or revealing clothing is not appropriate.

Wedding Rehearsal

The rehearsal (if desired by the couple) is usually held the evening before the wedding. It usually takes 45-60 minutes, provided everyone is prompt and attentive to the pastor's instructions. At the rehearsal, the wedding party becomes acquainted with their part in the wedding service. The ushers may meet with the Wedding Coordinator for further instruction. Those in attendance at the rehearsal should include:

- ♥ Bride and Groom
- ♥ Best Man and Maid of Honor
- ♥ Groomsmen and Bridesmaids
- ♥ Ushers
- ♥ Flower Girls and Ring Bearers
- ♥ Musicians, Readers, Vocalists
- ♥ Bridal Assistants
- ♥ Parents of the Bride and Groom
- ♥ Any other Bridal Escorts
- ♥ Organist/pianist (if hired)
- ♥ Sound technician

Handicap Information

The church and Fellowship Hall are handicapped accessible. An elevator is available; please notify your ushers of individuals who will need assistance.

Fees and Honorariums

1. There is no charge for use of the church or Fellowship Hall if the bride, groom or a parent is listed in our membership records as an active member (communed or contributed) during the past year. The fee for non-active or non-members is \$400. (A \$100 deposit must be made at the time of setting your wedding date to hold the church).
2. The minimum Wedding Coordinator fee is \$150 for non-members or \$250 for a Sunday or Holiday weekend wedding. Church members requesting Sunday or holiday weekend wedding ceremonies will be charged \$150. *The church's Wedding Coordinator must be involved in all non-member weddings. It is optional for members whose weddings expect less than 50 guests, but recommended in all member weddings having 50 or more guests in attendance.*
 - Bethlehem's Wedding Coordinator's Duties
 - Assists the pastor at the wedding rehearsal
 - On wedding day, coordinates all participants
 - Is contact person for ALL décor and building use issues
 - Contacting the Wedding Coordinator is to be done via email :
WeddingCoordinator@BethlehemStar.org
3. The Custodial fee is \$100 or \$150 for a Sunday or holiday wedding.
4. The current resident organist's fee is \$200. This includes an initial consultation (at a scheduled, mutually convenient, time) with the bride and groom to finalize the selection of music, and performance of the selected music at the ceremony. If the organist is asked to participate in the wedding rehearsal as well, the total fee is \$225.
5. In light of the time spent with the couple in counseling, planning and rehearsal as well as the wedding meditation and other preparations. the non-members' honorarium for the pastor is \$200; otherwise, it is at member's discretion. If this presents a financial hardship, please feel free to speak with him/her about a lesser amount.
5. The charge for 'Prepare 2000' is \$35.
(cont'd page 7)

6. The charge for using Bethlehem's aisle and altar candles is \$35.
7. If a sound technician is necessary to run the soundboard for mics & amplification needs, then a fee of \$50 for members or \$100 for non-members will be assessed. Only a trained Bethlehem AV Technician may run the sound.

In cases of financial hardship the pastor will be very willing to discuss changes in amounts for all the above.

Organist

Employing a Bethlehem church organist will need to be discussed with the Wedding Coordinator or the Pastor.

Soloist and/or other Musicians

The bride or groom will arrange for their services and acquaint them with the guidelines for wedding music.

Checklist

Three months before the Wedding:

1. Meet with the pastor.
2. Check rehearsal and wedding dates with the pastor. If not done previously, pay \$100 to hold church date.
3. The church secretary will confirm the date with the Wedding Coordinator and custodian.
4. Carefully read this booklet.
5. Write a \$35 check to "Prepare 2000" and give to the pastor at time of taking the "Prepare 2000".
6. Sign Wedding Rules and Regulations Document and pay \$200 damage deposit if non-member.

One Month Before Wedding

1. Give a copy of wedding bulletin to pastor for proof reading and approval of music *before the bulletin is printed.*
2. Choose scripture selections (Usually 3).
3. Meet with Wedding Coordinator.

During the Week of the Rehearsal and Wedding

1. Decide how many pews are to be reserved for close relations on bride's side (left) and groom's side (right).
2. Make out ONE check for facilities use, Wedding Coordinator, sound technician, custodian, pastor's fees and organist fees.
3. Bring marriage license to the church office.
4. Bring decorations the night before the wedding, but not before.

At the Rehearsal

1. Have copies of your wedding bulletin available.
2. Give the ONE check for all fees to the Wedding Coordinator.
3. Acquaint ushers and others with Bethlehem's policies on throwing rice, intoxicating beverages, etc. outlined in this book.
4. Any items left at the church will be kept for 30 days after the wedding day. After that time, they will be given away.

Flowers and Candles Checklist

Please go over this checklist and inform the Wedding Coordinator of your choices no later than two weeks before your wedding date.

1. _____ Are special altar bouquets to be furnished?
2. _____ If the wedding is on a Saturday, do you wish to use regular Sunday altar flowers?
3. _____ Is the Unity candle to be used?
4. _____ Are pew candelabra's being used?
5. _____ If so, will you be decorating them?
6. _____ Bows, etc. must be placed by the wedding party on the evening of the rehearsal or day of the wedding.
7. _____ A pair of altar candelabras is also available for use. Do you wish to use the candelabra?

Evangelical Lutheran Service – Service of Marriage (p. 286)

If you are planning to have a bulletin printed for your wedding, below is the order of service suggested with proper wording to be used. In brackets are additions that are sometimes used.

Prelude
Processional
Greeting
Declaration of Intention
Prayer of the Day
Music
Readings
Sermon
Hymn of the Day
Vows
Giving of Rings
Acclamation
Marriage Blessing
Music
Lighting of the Unity Candle (optional)
Prayers of Intercession
Lord's Prayer (sung or spoken)
Peace
Blessing
Dismissal
Recessional

Photographs at Bethlehem Lutheran Church Weddings

Because of their obvious intrusion and possible distraction, the church asks that no flash pictures be taken during the service. A designated photographer at the *rear of the church* may take a picture or two: as the bridal party enters the church at the procession and as they exit at the recession. With the emergence of video equipment, couples occasionally request the taping of their service. In order to preserve the sanctity of the marriage worship event, videotaping, using manned cameras, is allowed from the rear of the church only. An unmanned camera on a tripod is allowed at the front of the church. We gratefully appreciate your respect for our intentions in giving direction to these procedures. Posed wedding photographs are usually taken before the wedding ceremony. Arrangements should be made with the photographer when doing this so that all pictures are completed one-half hour before the start of the ceremony.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church – (651) 439-3450

Please cut out this page and present to your photographer.

Vows

The couple normally uses the vows printed in the Lutheran Book of Worship or the couple may use the vows written below. They may also write their own vows in consultation with the pastor

I take you, to be my wedded husband/wife
to have and to hold
from this day forward
for better, or worse
for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and in health,
to love and to cherish
till death us do part
according to God's holy ordinance
and to the end
I pledge you my faithfulness and love.

Bulletins

Bulletin covers are available through Augsburg Fortress Publishing, 426 S. 5th St. P.O. Box 1209, Minneapolis, MN 55440, (612) 330-3300 or other church supply stores.

The church office has a selection of sample copies. The ordering and printing of wedding bulletins are arranged for by the bride or groom. Bethlehem Lutheran Church does not provide this service. Before the bulletin is printed, it should be discussed with the pastor. Copies of the bulletin should be brought to the rehearsal.

Scripture Readings

The couple will choose two or three Bible readings. They may ask the pastor or someone else to read the portions. Frequently used passages include:

Psalms

Psalm 33	Psalm 128
Psalm 100	Psalm 136
Psalm 117	Psalm 150
Psalm 127	

Old Testament Readings

Genesis 1:26-31	Song of Solomon 8:7
Genesis 2:18-24	Isaiah 63:7-9
Song of Solomon 2:10-13	
Ecclesiastes 3:1-8	

Epistle Readings

Romans 12:1-2	Ephesians 5:21-33
I Corinthians 12:31-13:13	Galatians 5:22-26
Philippians 1:3-11	Philippians 4:4-9
Colossians 3:12-17	Hebrews 13:1-6
1 John 3:18-24	1 John 4:7-12

Gospel Readings

Matthew 19:4-6	John 15:9-12
Matthew 22:34-40	John 2:1-10

Copies of the texts, in printed form, are available from the pastor.

Music for Your Wedding

The music for your wedding service should not only be an expression of your love for each other, but it should also reflect your faith in God. Your music should be appropriate for Christian worship. Only sacred music, with specific references to Christ or God should be used with the main body of the service. Appropriate secular love songs may be used during the prelude or before the service begins.

Wedding Procedures and Policies

I/we, the undersigned, have read the following rules and regulations regarding the use of Bethlehem Lutheran Church for wedding and rehearsal ceremonies. By depositing a damage deposit of \$ 200.00 and signing below, ***we and our wedding party and all participants*** agree to adhere to the following:

1. **Smoking is not permitted in the church or its adjoining buildings or parking lots.** This includes the use of cigarettes, cigar, chewing tobacco and any other smoking devices.

2. **No alcoholic beverages or drugs are to be brought into the premises,** including both inside and outside of the buildings. It is inappropriate for the wedding group to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while present at the rehearsal or the wedding. The pastor will stop the wedding activities if this policy is violated.

3. **Please do not leave excessive garbage** is to remain after the rehearsal or wedding. While food is allowed, please deposit waste in receptacles after finished.

4. **Moving any furniture** in the sanctuary, Connection or Sunday School area without the express consent from the Wedding Coordinator, custodian or pastor is prohibited.

5. **Please do not make any additions or changes to the sound system** without express consent from the Wedding Coordinator. Approved changes can only be made prior to the actual wedding date. Additions to the existing sound system are highly discouraged because equipment compatibility issues may arise.

6. **Any changes to the sanctuary** including but not limited to changes in paraments, moving or disassembling of musical equipment must be approved by the Wedding Coordinator and pastor.

7. **The throwing of rice or confetti is not permitted** because of the potential mess and environmental impact. Couples should consider using birdseed and only on the outside of the church building.

8. **Clothing which is appropriate for a worshipful environment** must be worn by the wedding party at both the rehearsal and at the wedding service. Provocative or revealing clothing is not appropriate.

9. **Guest organists must schedule an orientation session** with Roy Henderson, Bethlehem Lutheran Church's Music Director, to ensure proper use of the pipe organ.

I/we understand that violation of any of the above will result in a portion or all of the damage deposit not being returned ten days after the wedding ceremony.

Signed _____ Date _____

Signed _____ Date _____

Address to return damage deposit:

Additional instructions:
