

Wedding Information and Guidelines

First Lutheran Church

1005 Oxford Avenue

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www.First-Lutheran.org

Welcome!

We are delighted that you have chosen First Lutheran Church for the site of your wedding. The wedding celebration is one of the most joyous occasions that you and your spouse-to-be will share. It is an act of joyful worship. It is a service wherein we ask God's blessings on you and your union. It is a reflection of your relationship with the Lord of love.

The following information and guidelines are set forth by First Lutheran Church to help couples have an orderly, worshipful wedding and to help them prepare for a life-long relationship with each other.

As you prepare to become husband and wife, may God bless your preparations, your wedding, and the commitment you are making to one another.

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How to Schedule Your Wedding

1. First, contact the pastor. Those of non-Lutheran background, those remarrying, and those who are non-members are typically welcome to be married at First Lutheran Church. If you have special circumstances surrounding your impending marriage, please share this with the pastor. Final determination as to who may be married at First Lutheran is left to the discretion of the pastor.

2. If the pastor agrees to officiate and is available on the date you have chosen, contact the church secretary to schedule your wedding and rehearsal on the church calendar. No weddings will be scheduled during Holy Week or days which are national holidays. Reservations for wedding dates and times are on a first-come, first-served basis. Be aware that yours may not be the only wedding scheduled on the day you select. We attempt to have three hours between the starting times of weddings which are on the same day; in rare instances two hours between starting times may be necessary in order to accommodate as many couples as possible. When there are multiple weddings on a given day, it is expected that couples and photographers will cooperate with the pastor so that times and logistics unfold as smoothly as possible.

3. At the time you schedule your wedding and rehearsal on the church calendar, mail or deliver a \$100 non-refundable deposit to the church office. Checks should be payable to "First Lutheran Church." ***Your scheduled wedding date will not be considered "reserved" until the deposit is received by the church office.*** The balance of fees are due one week before the date of the wedding. [A complete listing of fees is included in this publication.]

4. In the midst of all of the preparatory details for a wedding, sometimes it is easy to forget two other important preparations -- living in a life-long relationship of marriage and living in a life-long relationship with the Lord Jesus and his church.

The officiating pastor will contact you three to four months prior to your wedding to schedule one or more appointments with you. If you need to speak with the pastor earlier than the appointment(s), feel free to contact the pastor at the church. Your time with the pastor will be spent not only talking about the specific details of the wedding service, but will also focus on your marriage relationship within the context of the Christian faith. You will explore what is distinctive about a marriage grounded in Jesus Christ, your personal relationship with the crucified and risen Lord, and your commitment to the community of faith, the church.

Those who have no congregational affiliation or who are First Lutheran inactive are welcome to be married at First Lutheran Church. Those non-members or inactive who attend a minimum of six Sunday morning worship services prior to the date of their wedding will have all non-member fees waived. This “discount” is offered not in order to save couples money, but to encourage couples to see what the worship life of our congregation has to offer. We trust that God comes to us in the gathered community of faith with a Word of grace and life and with Sacraments which nourish and strengthen. We believe God has something wonderful in store for you! If you are a non-member or inactive, we would like to invite you into an ongoing relationship with Jesus Christ and the church.

5. If the organ is to be used at your wedding, it is your responsibility to phone the organist well in advance of the wedding to arrange for the organist’s services and to set an appointment to review and select music. Call the church office for the name and number of the organist (832-8321).
6. A Wedding Coordinator is used for all weddings which require a rehearsal. The Wedding Coordinator will hold a pre-wedding conference with you to determine all logistics and details of the wedding service. In addition, the Wedding Coordinator will direct the rehearsal and assist you on the day of the wedding to make sure all logistics unfold smoothly. The Wedding Coordinator will call you approximately three months prior to the date of your wedding to schedule the pre-wedding conference.
7. Couples need to understand that because wedding dates are usually reserved far in advance of the actual ceremony, the regular pastor, organist, or Wedding Coordinator of the congregation may not be available due to vacations or other commitments. In such instances, the church is responsible for arranging substitutes. If this is a concern to you as a couple, it is your responsibility to be in conversation with the appropriate staff person(s) to discuss availability.

The Wedding Service

A wedding is, first and foremost, worship of the God who calls a man and woman together in marriage. Recognizing this as you plan your ceremony will give you a clearer vision of what your wedding service should be. Because your wedding is worship, only those actions appropriate to worship are permitted. The pastor will assist you to determine what is acceptable and what is not.

Location

The service should be held in the church or the chapel. It is much clearer to all involved that the ceremony is worship if it is held in a sanctuary, rather than in a home or yard. Exceptions will be permitted only by the pastor’s permission. The church will be open two hours prior to the appointed time of the wedding service. The sanctuary of First Lutheran Church seats over 800 worshipers.

For smaller weddings, you might prefer holding your wedding in the chapel. The chapel is a beautiful, intimate worship space which comfortably seats 100 worshipers. A piano or electronic keyboard can accompany the wedding service held in the chapel.

The Order of Worship

The pastor will provide the liturgy that will be used for the service. If you have ideas for changes or modifications in the service, feel free to discuss them with the pastor. If the suggestion meets with the approval of the pastor, it will be incorporated into the service.

Vows and Scripture Lessons

Usually the vows provided by the pastor will be used in the service; alternative vows will be acceptable with the consent of the pastor. You may select up to three Scripture passages for use in the service, otherwise, the pastor will select appropriate wedding texts. Appendix I provides possible Scripture texts. Non-biblical readings are not permitted.

Music

The Christian wedding is a service of worship. Choose music that will point people to God and show evidence of your Christian commitment. There is room for personal taste and variety of music styles, of course, but all music should lend itself to the criteria of appropriateness for worship--music should reflect a distinctively Christian content.

The criteria of what is appropriate for worship is sometimes difficult to define precisely. It is helpful if you ask whether or not the music and words honor the God in whose name we gather. Popular, secular music is usually not appropriate for worship; we suggest such music be played at the reception. If you have suggestions of music to be played or sung at your wedding, we welcome your suggestions and would be happy to review it with you to determine its appropriateness for Christian worship. While the final decision is at the discretion of the pastor, please know that your suggestions will be taken seriously. The organist will acquaint you with various music selections. Feel free to share your ideas or suggestions with the organist or pastor.

The singing of hymns is encouraged and allows for the assembled congregation to actively participate in the service. Appendix II lists hymn selections from the *Lutheran Book of Worship* which you might want to consider.

Should additional microphones or amplifiers be needed in addition to the house system, the contemporary

worship system may be requested. No contemporary sound equipment may be used without First Lutheran's sound technician present.

Organist

It is your responsibility to contact the organist for an appointment to review and select music for your wedding. Call the church office for the name and number of the organist. Call the organist well in advance of your wedding.

The organist or assistant organist of First Lutheran Church or a substitute arranged for by the church must be used at all weddings where the organ is employed. The organist will help you choose music for the service. Should vocalists or instrumentalists be requested, the organist can secure the additional musicians. You may secure vocalists or instrumentalists provided they have the musical ability to enhance a worship service.

Flowers

Flower arrangements are limited to two bouquets placed on stands near the ends of the altar. You will need to make arrangements with a florist for the selection, purchase, and delivery of flowers to the church. Flowers should be delivered to the church a minimum of one hour prior to the appointed time of the wedding. Please have the florist place the arrangements on the flower stands near the ends of the altar.

You may wish to have the flowers used at the wedding remain at the church for use at the Sunday morning worship. If so, please notify the church secretary no later than the Wednesday prior to the wedding so that your gift of flowers for the Sunday worship can be acknowledged in the bulletin.

Candles

Candles certainly beautify the sanctuary. We are delighted to provide three options for you to choose from concerning the use of candles. 1. Two candelabra can be placed in the sanctuary; each has seven individual candles. 2. A Unity Candle may be lighted as part of the service. Two small candles are used by the bride and groom to light a larger Unity Candle. This liturgical action represents the biblical description of "two becoming one." 3. For evening candlelight weddings, pew-fastened aisle candles may be used. Altar candles are used for all worship services.

All candles used in the sanctuary will be provided by the church.

Aisle Runner

The use of an aisle runner is discouraged because of the difficulty of securely fastening the runner to the front of the church and because one can easily trip on folds in the runner. However, if an aisle runner is used, it is your responsibility to rent one from a florist or bridal shop and have it placed in the sanctuary at least one hour prior to the appointed time of the wedding. Plastic aisle runners are not recommended; cloth is preferred. The aisle length of First Lutheran is 90 feet.

Special Decorations

Bows may be placed on the ends of every third pew in the sanctuary. Bows are available through bridal and floral shops; you should make arrangements for them to affix the bows to the pews at least thirty minutes prior to the starting time of the wedding. Arches, additional candles, etc. are not permitted. The color of the pastor's stole, paraments, and liturgical banners will be the liturgical color of the day of your wedding. "Theme weddings" are not allowed.

Ring Bearers, Flower Girls, Junior Bridesmaids

We are delighted to include children as members of the wedding party. However, we suggest you consider the special "challenge" for those children who are very young. The service seems very long to little ones, so we ask you to keep this in mind when selecting youngsters for a role in the wedding.

Participation of Other Clergy

We welcome the inclusion of clergypersons from other denominations. The pastor of First Lutheran will preside; the invited clergy will assist. If possible, it is recommended that the assisting clergyperson be present for the rehearsal.

Readers

You are welcome to have lay persons read the Scripture Lessons during the service. Because it is important that everyone be able to hear God's Word, readers should be able to project vocally and speak distinctly. They need to be present at the wedding rehearsal to receive instructions from the pastor.

Additional Information

Rehearsals

Rehearsals are usually held the evening prior to the day of the wedding. The rehearsal normally takes between 30 and 45 minutes. *All* persons involved in the wedding should be present and on time. Ushers should be present to learn of their special responsibilities. Parents should also attend so they know escorting procedures and seating placement.

All arrangements for the wedding service must be made with the pastor and Wedding Coordinator prior to the rehearsal; rehearsals are not the time for last minute changes in the service. The Wedding Coordinator will guide

participants through details, responsibilities, and movement in the wedding.

Receptions

You may choose to hold your reception in the church assembly or a small reception in the church lounge. Receptions are scheduled through the church office and are subject to space and time availability. A Kitchen Supervisor provided by the church is required for all receptions which utilize silver service, table cloths, or kitchen equipment or utensils; the Kitchen Supervisor assists in locating utensils and operating kitchen equipment, but does not make arrangements for the reception, the serving or the clean-up. When caterers are used, the caterer is subject to the supervision of the Kitchen Supervisor. The women of First Lutheran are not available to serve at wedding receptions.

Couples are responsible for providing all food and drink, coffee, paper products, decorations, servers and clean-up.

Out of consideration to our custodial personnel, we ask that receptions at the church conclude at a reasonable hour. Remember, most weddings are on Saturdays and the custodian must prepare the church facilities for Sunday morning use. We do not wish to rush you, but ask only for sensitivity to the needs of the church and its custodial staff.

Marriage License

A valid marriage license must be obtained from the office of the Register of Deeds at the Eau Claire County Courthouse (721 Oxford Avenue). Call 839-4745 for current fees and specific requirements. The license must be received by the church office no later than one week prior to the date of the wedding. This is an important detail, so be sure to obtain the marriage license well in advance of your wedding date.

Photography

You are welcome to have the wedding photographed or video-taped within the “Standards for Photography and Video at Weddings.” It is important not to mar the worship with distractions, therefore limits have been established to make sure nothing detracts from our worship. All photographers and videographers are required to closely follow the established guidelines. You are to give a copy of the “Standards for Photography and Video at Weddings” to the photographer and/or videographer prior to the wedding. [The “Standards” are included near the end of this publication.]

You are encouraged to have pictures taken prior to the wedding service if time permits in the sanctuary schedule. This avoids the rush of taking pictures after the service and can be a courtesy to the guests who might otherwise have an extended wait at the reception.

Bulletins

You are welcome to arrange for the printing of a wedding bulletin. Although the church does not provide this service, the pastor or Wedding Coordinator will be happy to provide you with an outline of the Order of Service and assist you with the content of the publication.

Throwing Rice or Bird Seed, Releasing Balloons

Throwing rice or bird seed at the church is strongly discouraged for janitorial reasons. Due to sensitivity to the environment and birds and animals, releasing balloons after the wedding is discouraged. Please inform guests of this request.

Alcoholic Beverages and Smoking

Mood-altering substances and smoking are not permitted at the church.

Security

While theft is a very rare occurrence, you should not leave purses or other valuables unattended in the church during the wedding. Further, unless the wedding reception is held in the Assembly of the church, wedding gifts should not be brought to the church. If the reception is held at the church, gifts brought by guests should not be left unattended.

Fees

In preparing for a wedding, there are certain fees, professional and otherwise. At the time you reserve the wedding and rehearsal dates on the church calendar, a \$100 non-refundable deposit is required. The balance of all applicable fees is due one week before the date of the wedding. Checks are made payable to “First Lutheran Church.” Soloist and instrumental remuneration are paid directly to the individual(s).

As established by this congregation, fees for services provided are as follows:

USE OF THE CHURCH (non-members only)

Main Sanctuary	\$200
Chapel	\$ 75
Reception Area (Assembly/Kitchen)	\$ 75
Reception Area (Lounge/Kitchen)	\$ 50
There are no facility fees for active members	

PASTOR (members)	<i>Discretionary</i>	
(non-members)		\$100
WEDDING COORDINATOR		
(For all weddings requiring a rehearsal)		\$ 75
ORGANIST (includes one rehearsal with soloist)		\$100
If more than one rehearsal is needed, \$25 additional per rehearsal		
SOLOIST OR INSTRUMENTALIST	As per individual charge	
	<i>You are to pay soloists or instrumentalists directly.</i>	
SOUND SYSTEM TECHNICIAN (if needed)		\$ 50
CANDLE FEE (for cost of candles)		\$ 25
KITCHEN SUPERVISOR (Required for all receptions which use silver service, table cloths or kitchen equipment or utensils)		\$40
TABLE CLOTHS		
Two lace clothes available for serving tables		\$20 each
Round table clothes (\$10 is the total cost for any number used)		\$10
CUSTODIAN (complete set-up and clean-up)		
Main sanctuary		\$ 35
Chapel		\$ 15
Additional custodial fees for receptions:		
Reception concluding by 7:00 p.m.		\$ 50
Reception after 7:00 p.m.		\$ 65

Note: In determining fees, “non-member” refers to those who do not have an membership affiliation with First Lutheran Church and those who are former members but have been apart from the active life of the congregation.

Standards for Photography and Video at Weddings

First Lutheran Church

1005 Oxford Avenue, Eau Claire Wisconsin 54703-5394 (715) 832-8321

In order to ensure dignity and respect for weddings within the context of Christian worship, all photographers and videographers are required to abide by the following guidelines as established by First Lutheran Church.

Arrival Time Photographers are to be at the church no later than 30 minutes preceding the appointed time of the wedding. Videographers should have equipment completely in place no later than 30 minutes prior to the starting time of the wedding. All photographers and videographers are to speak with the officiating pastor or Wedding Coordinator well in advance of the starting time of the service.

Dress As is befitting the dignity and beauty of a worship service and wedding, all photographers and videographers shall wear attire which is professional and formal.

Limits At no time during the service is the photographer permitted any further than the tenth row of pews on the main floor of the sanctuary. This will allow ample room for taking pictures as guests and wedding party enter and leave the sanctuary. Pictures may also be taken from the balcony.

All photos taken during the wedding service (excluding the processional and recessional) must be taken with available light. No flashes are allowed during the wedding service.

Following the service, photographers are welcome to pose any portion of the wedding rite. The pastor will be

available for such posing, if desired. Pictures including the pastor should be taken before group photos of the wedding party and families.

If the schedule at the church permits, and the couple agrees, pictures can be taken prior to the wedding service but must be concluded at least 30 minutes prior to the starting time of the wedding.

Video equipment will be set-up in a location as directed by the pastor or Wedding Coordinator. No artificial light is permitted. All video cameras are to be placed on a tripod. Moving about the sanctuary is not permitted under any circumstance.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix I

Scripture Passages for Weddings

You are welcome to make suggestions to the pastor concerning the selection of Scripture passages for the wedding service. Normally, three texts are read.

The following are some options for you to consider. You are welcome to recommend passages not included below to the pastor. Your selections will be read in the wedding service with the pastor's consent.

Old Testament Texts

Genesis 1:26-31	Psalm 33:1-5, 20-22
Genesis 2:18-24	Psalm 100
Genesis 24:48-51, 58-67	Psalm 128
Jeremiah 31:31-34	Psalm 134
Ruth 1:1-18	Psalm 136:1-9
Song of Solomon 2:8-10, 14, 16; 8:6-7	Psalm 150

Epistle Texts

Romans 8:31-39
Romans 12:1-2, 9-18
1 Corinthians 13:1-7, 13
Philippians 4:4-7
Ephesians 5:21-33
Colossians 3:12-17
1 Peter 3:8-9
1 John 4:7-12
Revelation 19:1, 5-9

Gospel Texts

Matthew 19:4-6
Matthew 22:35-40
Mark 10:6-9
John 2:1-11
John 15:9-12

Appendix II

Hymns for Congregational Singing

From the Lutheran Book of Worship

No. 287 O Perfect Love
No. 288 Hear Us Now, Our God and Father
No. 289 Heavenly Father, Hear Our Prayer
No. 315 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
No. 354 Eternal God, Before Your Throne
No. 357 Our Father, by Whose Name
No. 456 The King of Love My Shepherd Is
No. 513 Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life
No. 527 All Creatures of Our God and King
No. 534 Now Thank We All Our God
No. 543 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
No. 549 Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven
No. 551 Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee
No. 557 Let All Things Now Living
No. 358 Glories of Your Name are Spoken

If you have other suggestions for music, feel free to share your ideas with the organist or pastor.

Remember, music which gives glory to God is the criteria as to which musical selections are appropriate for worship. Couples who have favorite music which is not appropriate in a setting of worship might consider having such selections played at their reception.

Checklist

As you plan your wedding at First Lutheran Church, there are various decisions to be made and options for you to consider. Use the following checklist for your own purpose to guide you in those areas where you have decisions and options.

- ☐ Have we made date/time reservations for both the wedding and the rehearsal?
- ☐ Have we given our \$100 non-refundable deposit to the church?
- ☐ Have we called the organist to set an appointment for music selection?
- ☐ Do we want to propose Scripture Lessons to the pastor? Which ones?
- ☐ Will we select one or more readers or will the pastor read the Scripture Lessons?
- ☐ Have we reviewed the suggested hymn selections before meeting with the organist?
- ☐ Do we want soloists or instrumentalists in our wedding?
- ☐ Have we made arrangements with a florist for flowers?
- ☐ Have we notified the church office if we want to leave flowers for Sunday morning?
- ☐ Will we have extra candles: candelabra, candlelight service candles, Unity Candle?
- ☐ Do we want bows on the ends of the pews?
- ☐ Will we have a greeting or receiving line at the church? At the reception?
- ☐ Have we made photography and/or video arrangements?
- ☐ Have we sent "Standards" guidelines to photographer and/or videographer?
- ☐ Have we decided if pictures will be taken before or after the wedding service?
- ☐ Will the reception be at the church? If so, have we notified the church?
- ☐ Have we made contact with the County Courthouse regarding the marriage license?
- ☐ Will the bride be "given away?" If so, by whom?
- ☐ Will both bride and groom exchange a ring (double ring)?
- ☐ Do we know precisely who the wedding attendants are?
- ☐ Have we selected ushers? Will groomsmen double as ushers?

The marriage is so much more important than the wedding. We encourage you to keep your plans simple, to concentrate on the religious significance of the worship, and avoid getting carried away with exterior trappings. This is not a show. Relax and enjoy!

Thank you for choosing First Lutheran Church for your wedding. Should you have any questions regarding these policies or any other areas of concern, please call. We want to work with you to make your day all that you want it to be. May God bless you as you plan for your wedding and begin a new life as husband and wife!