

The Wedding Manual



for

College Hill Lutheran Church

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THE WEDDING MANUAL

The members of College Hill Lutheran Church of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod - Iowa District East, desire to preserve and emphasize the nature of the Christian Wedding as worship, a divine service in which the Triune God is the object and center of worship and in which His Word and prayer retain their proper place. It is our hope that the policies contained in this manual will be of assistance in planning a worshipful wedding service. Any exceptions to these policies will be considered by the pastor and the Board of Lay Ministry of College Hill Lutheran Church.

The Wedding As Worship

The Christian wedding is an act of worship. It is one of the occasional liturgies of the church. The object of our worship is the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He, alone, is worthy of our worship and adoration. As we worship, our attention is to be drawn toward Him and anything which hinders that worship is inappropriate.

All elements of any service of worship will praise, honor, and glorify God. What this means for the bride and groom is that the wedding liturgy is never theirs alone. It is a public act (even though may be performed privately) which belongs to the worship life of the entire church. As such, the wedding service should reflect a distinctively Christian content so that everyone present will be enriched and edified in Christ. The guidelines that follow are intended to aid in the planning of a Christ centered wedding service.

The Role of the Pastor in a Christian Wedding

The pastor is the called shepherd of the local congregation. As such, he has a deep concern for the spiritual wellbeing of the people under his care. The pastor will want to spend time with the couple talking about marriage from a Biblical perspective. The pastor is also responsible for the proper conduct of the worship services at his church. The couple will want to listen carefully to him and his recommendations for the wedding liturgy so that everything may be done "properly and in an orderly manner" (1 Cor. 14:40)

Who May Be Married in our Church

Statement of Marriage Policy

The marriage policy of College Hill 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." 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.

Church Membership:

In the interest of effective pastoral care, the bride and /or groom should be a member of a LCMS congregation. Exceptions to this practice may be directed to the pastor and the Board of Lay Ministry. If the bride and groom wish, they are welcome to receive catechesis and pursue church membership in a LCMS congregation.

Living Together:

A man and a woman who are living together will-also-need to counsel with pastor-on the basis of Holy Scripture regarding the issues involved. Cohabitation outside of marriage is a sin which must be challenged and the couple led to repentance. At the same time, the church wants to encourage the couple to develop a healthy and legitimate relationship in marriage. After counseling, the couple may be required to move apart or to marry immediately, with a public affirmation of marriage in a worship service at a later date. A man and a woman who desire to remain living together in sin will not be able to be married by our pastor.

Previous Marriages:

Previous marriages and pregnancies outside of marriage will require a frank discussion with the pastor regarding the circumstances of the situation. The church will remarry divorced persons, if certain Biblical criteria have been satisfied.

When to Contact the Pastor

Contact the pastor as soon as a preferred date has been decided upon. The church calendar is to be regarded when setting dates and times for weddings. Preferably, weddings are not held during the penitential seasons of Advent and Lent, but exceptions may be made in certain circumstances. No wedding will be held during Holy Week.

Pre-Marriage Visits with the Pastor

Marriage is to be highly regarded as a gift of God, and one of life's most important steps. In order to assure the bride and groom are prepared for this step, the pastor will visit with the couple on several occasions to explore marriage as God designed it to be. The discussions will also explore joys and problems common to married life. The intent is to help the couple understand strengths and stresses in their relationship, build on the strengths and come to grips with the stresses. In this way the marriage can be strengthened. For this reason, pre-marriage visits are required, and to be arranged at a mutually agreed time.

Wedding Service Particulars

Clergy Participants:

The pastor of the church where the wedding is held will be in charge of all wedding plans. Clergymen of church bodies in official fellowship with the LCMS may be invited to participate with him. These invitations will be extended by the pastor at the request of the couple.

Organist and Soloist:

An organist and /or soloist may be provided within the congregation. The organist and/or soloist will use the order of service and music selected by the bride and groom as discussed with the pastor.

Attendants:

Attendants are invited to witness the couple's vows and to worship with them. A minimum of two witnesses are required by the State of Iowa.

Candles:

The congregation will furnish the candles used in the sanctuary. If rented holders are used, candles should be furnished by the bride and groom.

Unity Candle or Sand:

A Unity Candle or Sand is generally not encouraged because the theological symbolism is vague.

Altar Paraments:

The colored hangings on the altar, lectern and pulpit will not be changed specifically for the wedding service. Their color is determined by the season of the church year.

Aisle Runners:

This is popular at outdoor weddings and was used in the days of dirt and rough board floors churches. Its purpose is to protect the bride's gown. Since the aisle of most churches is carpeted, an aisle runner is not always necessary. If one is to be used, it may be rented.

Flowers:

In all worship services, the altar and the cross are to remain the focal points of the church. Therefore, floral arrangements are to compliment the altar and not overpower or detract from it.

Photography:

Pictures may be taken before or after the wedding service. In order to preserve the true nature of the worship, only the official photographer may take pictures during the service. He or she is permitted to take flash pictures during the processional and recessional only, and may take existing light pictures during the service (no flash). Video and audio recordings of the service are permitted, but the pastor should be consulted regarding placement of such equipment.

Wedding License:

The pastor will inform the bride and groom when he needs the wedding license to be given to him.

Rice Throwing: Rice is not to be used. Bird seed or bubbles are common alternatives to send off the couple.

Alcohol: The use of alcohol is prohibited in the church and its fellowship hall at any time.

Bulletins: Our church secretary can type and print bulletins. Check with the pastor to find out where to purchase bulletins and the deadline for providing information for bulletins.

The Rehearsal

A wedding rehearsal will be held for all participants, including ushers and candle lighters. The participants will walk through their respected positions at the time of rehearsal so they will be well aware of the procedure to follow at the wedding.

The Wedding Liturgy

PRELUDE

Seating of Parents

PROCESSIONAL

INVOCATION

*Hymn or Vocal Selection

SCRIPTURE READINGS

WEDDING SERMON

*Hymn or Vocal Selection

WEDDING CEREMONY

Exchange of Vows

Before the Altar

Exchange of Promises

Exchange of Rings

Marriage Announcement

*Hymn or Vocal Selection

BLESSING AND THE PRAYERS

BENEDICTION

RECESSIONAL

*Hymn or vocal selection at these designated points may be selected, but are optional at all points. Three selections are not required.

Music for the Wedding Service

All music in the service should reflect a distinctly Christian message. In order that the hearts of the worshipers may be moved to adore, thank, and praise the Lord, Christian themes and moods are to prevail in the music chosen for the wedding service. The pastor and the church organist can offer help in choosing music appropriate to the worship service. The hymns are always appropriate, and the hymnal contains wedding hymns as well as seasonal hymns and hymns of praise. A congregational hymn allows all worshipers to participate in the service.

A Recommended List of Wedding Music

Processionals

Water Music Suite - Handel

Jesus, Joy of Man's Desiring - Bach

Rigaudon Arioso - Handel

Aria - Handel

Processional in A - Lien

Sheep May Safely Graze

Trumpet Voluntary - Purcell

Trumpet Tune in D Major - Purcell

Largo - Purcell

Recessionals

Now Thank We All Our God - Cor Kee, Karg-Elert, and others

Prelude in Classical Style - Young
Joyful We Adore Thee - Beethoven
Trumpet Tuni in D Major - Purcell
Trumpet Voluntary - Purcell
Psalm XIX - Marcello
Ten Small Preludes and Giges - Bach
Allegro Maestoso - Handel
Praise to the Lord (congregational Hymn)
Trumpet Voluntary - John Stanley
God of Grace and God of Glory (congregational hymn)

Appropriate for Both Processionals and Recessionals

Agincourt Hymn - Dunstable
Tocatta in E Minor Fantasia - Pachelbel
If Thou But Suffer God to Guide Thee - Bach
Jesus, Priceless Treasure - Bach
Solemn Processional - Handel
Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord - Armsdorf
Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus - Buszin
We Thank Thee, Jesus Dearest Friend - Buxtehude

Congregational Hymns

Let All Together Praise Our God (LSB #389)
O Father All Creating (LSB #858)
Now Thank We All Our God (LSB #895)
We Praise You, O God (LSB #941)*
O Perfect Love (LSB #452)*
Alleluia, Let Praises Ring (LSB #822)
All Glory Be to God on High (LSB #947)

Come Holy Ghost, God and Lord (LSB #497)
Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now (LSB #902)
O Holy Spirit Enter In (LSB #913)
Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer (LSB #918)
Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus (LSB #685)
Blest Be the Tie that Binds (LSB #649)
Praise To the Lord, the Almighty (LSB #790)
Abide With Us, Our Savior (LSB #919)
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling (LSB #700)
Oh, Blest the House (LSB #862)
Sing Praise to God, the Highest Good (LSB #819)
In Thee is Gladness (LSB #818)
Oh, That I Had a Thousand Voices (LSB #811)
Forth in the Peace of Christ (LSB #920)
Lord, When You Came as Welcome Guest (LSB #859)
Gracious Savior, Grant Your Blessing (LSB #860)

Vocal Music

Entreat Me Not to Leave Thee - Young, Gounod, Gore and others
A Wedding Song - Erik Routley
Come Lord Jesus to This Place - Donald Busarow
Wedding Hymn (Ptolemy) - G.F. Handel
O God of Love – Austin Lovelace
The Greatest of These is Love - Daniel Moe
In His Care - Leland Sateren
A Wedding Blessing - Walter Pelz
Wedding Processional and Air - Bach: Leuphold
The Lord's Prayer - Malotte, Johnson, Peters

My Heart Ever Faithful - Bach
Wedding Prayer - Fern Glasgow Dunlap
Sabbath Prayer - Fred Bock
God, A Woman and a Man - Lilly Green
Wedding Song (There is Love) - Paul Stookey
Psalm 128 - Robert Wetzler
O Perfect Love - H. Williams
A Wedding Prayer - Diggle
The King of Love My Shepherd Is - Holler
Wither Thou Goest - Sassmannshausen
Brother James' Air - G. Jacob
God is my Shepherd - A. Dvorak
Wedding Blessings - A Collection of vocal music by Paul Bunjes

Decorating the Church

In keeping with the understanding of the wedding liturgy and the focus upon Jesus Christ, decoration in the church will be kept to a minimum. Local customs (i.e. pew ribbons and flowers) will determine the extent of decorations in the chancel and the nave.

Receptions

Please check with the church secretary to reserve the fellowship hall if the reception is to be held here. See www.college-hill.org for the facility reservation policy.

Compensation and Usage Fees

A bride and groom are expected to pay for services rendered through College Hill Lutheran Church relating to the use of the church and fellowship hall facilities. Also, payment of services provided by the church pastor and church members are expected. Contact the church secretary for usage fees.

This document is used with permission of the Iowa District East for this congregation.

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Approved by the Board of Directors on _____
Month / Day / Year

Signature of Executive Director _____