

Wedding Planning at Peace Lutheran Church

INTRODUCTION

This Marriage Planner is intended to answer frequently asked questions about weddings at Peace Lutheran Church.

It is important to remember that a wedding service is a worship service in which baptized believers in the Lord Jesus Christ make their vows before God and before the congregation, according to principles laid out in the Word of God. These guidelines have been approved by the Board of Lay Ministry of Peace Lutheran Church.

Your wedding day is a very important day for you and for your families. The pastors are glad to have an opportunity to share this special occasion with you! We stand ready to work with you in order to make your wedding an event you will remember with pleasure and fondness.

In a wedding worship service, the Bride and Groom are the special guests. The goal of the wedding service as with any service at Peace is to glorify God. God's blessing is sought. The joining of Bride and Groom is done with dignity and in accord with the laws of the Province of Manitoba.

PRE-WEDDING ARRANGMENTS

Weddings at Peace are arranged after a personal interview with one of our pastors. The pastor will explain what a Christian marriage is, what's all involved and generally how things are done at Peace.

The health of your marriage relationship is what is of utmost importance to us as a Church. A loving couple makes a loving family, and a loving family makes a healthy community, and a healthy community makes a healthy society, and a healthy society makes a healthy world. You get the idea. Marriage is very

important. It is the foundational relationship from which all other relationships stem. Therefore we offer pre-marriage counselling to all who seek to get married by one of the pastors of Peace.

PRE-MARRIAGE COUNSELLING

Pre-marriage classes take generally about 8 hours and involve such topics as the Purpose and Plan of marriage, threats to marriage, communication, and conflict resolving. They can be done individually or as a group.

After you have chosen a tentative date and time for your wedding, it is important that you contact one of our pastors for an initial appointment. It is best not to make any plans until you have determined the availability of the church and a pastor and you have agreed with the requirements laid out by the pastor.

In later meetings, details of your wedding will be discussed, so that you may proceed with plans involving invitations, flowers, music, reception, attendants, photography, and the like. If you would like other Lutheran Church-Canada clergy to participate in your wedding, the invitation should be extended by Peace Lutheran Church. You should inform your pastor of your wishes in this area at your first meeting.

Who Can Get Married at Peace?

MEMBERS

If you are a member of Peace, or a sister Lutheran Church - Canada [LCC] congregation, that's great, it is expected you will get married by one of the pastors.

NON-MEMBERS

If you are not members of Peace, or of a sister LCC congregation, we would still be happy to meet with you and talk about your wedding, your marriage, and your

plans and how we can help you reach your goal of a happy and healthy marriage. We believe that a healthy family starts with a healthy marriage, and a healthy marriage starts with the key Christian values of unconditional love and forgiveness.

COUPLES LIVING OUT OF TOWN

If you are living out of town, and are unable to attend pre-marriage classes you might be able to make arrangements for classes with a sister congregation and their clergy, or technologies such as Skype may be used.

What does the Government Require?

MARRIAGE LICENCE

In the Province of Manitoba, couples seeking marriage require a marriage license. Marriage licenses may be purchased from marriage license issuers. Jewelry stores, wedding stores, or city/town administrators generally provide this service. You can visit Vital Statistics website: <http://vitalstats.gov.mb.ca/GettingMarried.html>
The license is valid for 90 days after it is issued.

If you have been married before and are presently divorced the government requires proof that you are in an unmarried state. Presenting a copy of a certificate of divorce to the officiating clergy will meet this requirement.

Can we decorate the church?

FACILITY USE

Weddings are normally held at Peace, on church premises. Outdoor weddings or offsite weddings may be arranged, in consultation with one of our pastors.

Decorating the facility is allowed, of course, within reason. The facilities have been dedicated to the glory of God and as such we want to reflect that. The

Fellowship Hall in the basement is available for a reception. Some restrictions apply.

Who can participate in the ceremony?

PARTICIPANTS IN THE CEREMONY

The Wedding Ceremony is a public worship service of Peace Lutheran Church. It is a celebration of a faith family member or members finding love and celebrating that love with their family and their faith family. Often members of the Church attend the wedding ceremonies of their brothers and sisters in the faith and pray for them.

Family and friends may participate in the worship service, as musicians, Scripture readers, candle-lighters, ushers and the like. There is only one officiant at the wedding ceremony and as with any service of Peace that will be one of the pastors of Peace Lutheran Church.

How much does a church wedding cost?

WEDDING COSTS

It is expected that members of Peace give regularly and generously to support the ongoing ministry and mission of the congregation through their regular offerings. The Wedding preparation and ceremony are part of that ministry. Couples often consider the amount of time the pastor spends with them in preparation and give an honorarium to him. They also consider the use of the facility and give an extra donation to the ministry of Peace.

What about photos & video?

PHOTOS & VIDEOS

In order to keep the service orderly and dignified, there will be a minimum of distractions due to photography and other such movement. Flash pictures are permitted as the wedding party enters and leaves the church and from the balcony. They are also permitted during the signing of the register. Photo opportunities, such as re-enactments, may be arranged before or after the service. Please ask your photographer and video person to meet with the pastor at the wedding rehearsal or before the service to ask any Church protocol questions.

Who plans the service?

SERVICE PLANNING

The wedding service will lead you and your guests in worship, giving glory to God and asking for His blessings on your life together. During the planning process, the pastor will offer suggestions for your service and for music to accompany it, and will coordinate the various parts of the wedding service. We will help you plan a service that avoids mess ups and will be a service you will remember with happiness and contentment in future years.

Since the music in a wedding service is intended to glorify God, it should contribute to the respectful spirit of worship. Appropriate music is available for organ, piano, guitar, vocal and instrumental selections and should be cleared with the pastor during the service planning process.

If the couple wishes, they can make arrangements with one of the accompanists within the congregation to play at their wedding. The pastors can provide some names of accompanists. Costs are negotiated with them.

Worship folders for the wedding service can be prepared and printed by the office staff of Peace. Couples are asked to purchase their own bulletin covers from a local Christian book store and provide the content to the office.

Generally a wedding ceremony lasts about a half hour in its simplest form. The addition of special music and other traditions will add to the length.

REHEARSAL

The pastor will arrange a date and time for a wedding rehearsal and direct the activities at the rehearsal so that it will go smoothly in as brief a time as possible. Please ask all members of the wedding party, as well as family members, to be on time for the rehearsal. The rehearsal lasts about an hour.

The pastor will be able to offer suggestions for the work of the ushers at your wedding so that they will be informed as to their duties and be ready to anticipate any unexpected eventualities.

CONCLUSION

We hope that this answers some of your questions as you begin to plan your life together as husband and wife. As a Church we support and encourage couples in their love for each other by providing a Christ-centered understanding of marriage and community. May God bless the important plans you are making at this time!