



*A Guide to Your Wedding
At St. John's Lutheran Church*

St. John's Lutheran Church
2477 West Washington
Springfield, IL 62702

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Forward

Congratulations on your forthcoming wedding! We rejoice with you and are happy for this time in your life. Our hope is that it will be a time of joy and thanksgiving in these days leading up to and beyond your wedding day.

The guidelines in this booklet have been prepared to be of help to those planning and desiring to have their wedding take place at St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Springfield, Illinois. Everyone has questions about their wedding plans. Hopefully this booklet will help answer your questions on policies concerning weddings and receptions in our church.

Pastor Busboom

Pastor

Some Helpful Understandings

The Christian wedding service is an act of worship. It is a time in which Christians, particularly you as bride and groom, come together to offer thanks and praise and to ask God's blessing upon your lives together as husband and wife. It is also a time to ask God's strength, understanding, and care for you as you live out the years of your future.

As bride and groom, you have particular reason to give thanks and praise. It was God who brought you together and who will unite you as husband and wife. It is God who has given you an example of a complete relationship between Christ – God's Son – and the Church. And it is that fullness of relationship, which we seek in the relationship of husband and wife, modeled after the example of God's love in Jesus Christ.

The Christian congregation gathered with you on your wedding day also has reason to thank and praise God on your behalf. In our worship times following your wedding we shall uplift you in prayer. Here the congregation joins with you in thanks and in asking God's blessing upon this new family unit. For all gathered together for this event, *the Christian marriage service is first of all an act of worship.*

For your wedding, this means God should have first place and that attention be drawn to God. Important as you are, as bride and groom, you will want to be sure that nothing in your wedding detracts from giving God the place of greatest importance.

What to Do

The date needs to be cleared through the Church Office before any decisions are made regarding reception or signing of contracts. Because we have a heavy volume of weddings on an annual basis, the earlier you contact the Church, the better. There are times when there are several weddings on a particular date. We will give your arrangements first priority, if they are made before any other requests.

Please be aware that St. John's has a 5 p.m. Saturday worship service; therefore all weddings need to take place **no later than 2:30 p.m.** and all photography needs **to be completed by 4 p.m.** We will begin evening weddings **no earlier than 7 p.m.** on a Saturday if the ceremony is to take place at St. John's Church.

St. John's has two full-time Pastors. Because of the time of the year, the demands of the parish, or scheduling conflicts, your request for a specific Pastor may not always be able to be honored. We will of course, make every effort to accommodate. However, the Pastor who will preside at your wedding will meet in all preparation sessions with you.

While we are happy to have non-parish Pastors assist at your wedding, under no circumstances will a wedding be performed without either of St. John's Pastors or a Pastor of a sister ELCA congregation serving as Presiding Pastor.

No wedding will be scheduled between December 23-26 or during Holy Week of any year.

Who Does What/How to Contact Them

St. John's Lutheran Church is located at:

2477 West Washington, Springfield, IL. 62702.

Phone Number: (217) 793-3933

Fax Number: (217) 793-3926

Website: www.stjohns-springfield.org

Pastors:

Greg Busboom 793-3933 Ext. 201

Ladd Sonnenberg 793-3933 Ext. 202

Leland Uden 793-3933 Ext. 203

Church Administrator: Linda Toro 793-3933 Ext. 204
Director of Music/Organist: Jean Welch 793-3933 Ext. 208
Lead Custodian: Ken Barnes 793-3933 Ext. 312
Receptionist/Clerical Assistant: Nell VanSice 793-3933 Ext. 205

A Word About Fees

1. Damage Deposit (all couples) \$200

At the discretion of the Church, this deposit will be returned directly to the wedding party as soon as practical after the wedding service. Examples of damages that might cause the Church to hold the deposit include: a) the throwing of rice or bird seed in or around the facility; b) the littering of bottles, cans, and/or other unnecessary garbage strewn in or outside of the building; c) acts of sheer negligence or vandalism causing the destruction of Church property, and the like; d) the use of alcoholic beverages either in the building or on the property. This damage deposit is payable by check to St. John's Lutheran Church on the night of the rehearsal.

2. Organist (all couples) \$150

This is a direct payment from the wedding party to the Director of Music. The Director of Music will meet with the couple to help make determination of appropriate music to be played and/or sung at the wedding. The use of outside organists is discouraged. If an outside organist is strongly desired by the wedding party, they must be approved by the Director of Music. This fee is payable to the Director of Music by check no later than the night of the rehearsal.

Soloist fees are not included if provided by the church.

3. Custodian (all couples) \$75

This is a direct payment from the wedding party to the Custodian/Facilities Manager. This fee is payable to the Custodian or the Facility Manager by check no later than the night of the rehearsal.

4. Building Use (non-member and inactive member) \$400

This is a direct payment to St. John's Lutheran Church for the use of the facilities by non-members and inactive members. It will be used to offset costs for the facility during the rehearsal and wedding time. This fee is payable to St. John's Lutheran Church by check no later than the night of the rehearsal. If the couple desires to be in the building more than two hours prior to the wedding time there is an additional \$25 per hour or portion thereof.

5. Candles/Candelabra (non-members and inactive members) \$25
This is a direct payment to St. John's Lutheran Church for the use of the additional candles and candelabra, which include the pew candles and floor candelabra. This fee is payable to St. John's Lutheran Church by check no later than the night of the rehearsal.

6. Pastoral Fee (non-members and inactive members) \$__

7. Donation to St. John's (all couples)

A contribution to St. John's Lutheran Church is requested as an expression of thankfulness by the wedding couple.

A sheet identifying all these fees will be given to the couple

Pre-Marital Counseling

The guidelines of the Lutheran Church for the "Order of Marriage" state: *Before so solemnizing a marriage, the minister shall counsel with the persons about to be married, and shall diligently inquire: first, as to whether the union contemplated be in accordance with the Word of God; second, whether it is in accordance with the laws of the State. No marriage shall be solemnized unless the minister is convinced that God's blessing may properly be asked upon it. All arrangements for the marriage shall be made in consultation with the pastor. Due reverence shall be maintained in the preparation for, and celebration of, the marriage.*

To fulfill these obligations, one of our pastors will expect to meet with the couple. These meetings will be arranged so as to be mutually agreeable as to time and place and will be helpful for: a) establishing the date and time for the wedding and rehearsal; b) obtaining data for records; c) pastoral counseling; d) planning the wedding worship service. It is expected that all couples planning on being married at St. John's Lutheran Church will fulfill all the pre-marital counseling and preparation times. When the couple meets with one of the pastors, these expectations will be identified and common agreement and participation from both bride and groom will be expected. Out of State couples need to contact one of the pastors for more information about pre-marital counseling.

Church Relationship Expectations

In the event that neither of the couple is a member of St. John's Lutheran Church, they will be **expected to attend the New Disciple's Class** which is offered frequently during the year. The fees identify persons who are non-members. These refer to those who have no formal relationship with

St. John's Lutheran Church, or persons who are inactive members for whom there is no record of communion or contribution of record for the previous two years.

The Order for Worship

The Order for Worship involves Greeting, Prayer, Lessons, Message, Marriage Vows, Exchange of Rings, Blessing, Prayers, Lord's Prayer, and Benediction.

The Marriage Service also includes the opportunity for special music, hymns, and also provides for the celebration of Holy Communion. Should you desire Holy Communion all members of the congregation will be invited to receive since we practice an Open Table for Holy Communion.

Members of the wedding party, family members, or friends may be invited to read a Scripture lesson. Use of the Unity Candle provides the opportunity for parents to be involved.

There are a number of options, which the Presiding Pastor will be happy to discuss with you.

What About Vows

We believe your wedding should be special and reflect the investment and individuality of yourselves. It is also important to remember that since a wedding is a Christian Worship Service, **the vows need to be reflective of God's activity and love in our lives.** There are options available of vows from which couples can choose and in conjunction with the Presiding Pastor may develop their own models.

Sample Vows for Consideration

I take you, (N.) to be my (wife/husband) from this day forward, to join with you and to share all that is to come, and, with the help of God, I promise to be faithful to you as he gives us life together.

(N.) I take you to be my (wife/husband) from this time onward, to join with you and to share all that is to come, to give and to receive, to speak and to listen, to inspire and to respond, and in all circumstances of our life together to be loyal to you with my whole life and with all my being.
I take you (N.) to be my (wife/husband), I promise before God and these witnesses to be your faithful (husband/wife), to share with you in plenty

and in want, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, to forgive and strengthen you and to join with you so that together we may serve God and others as long as we both shall live.

I take you (N.) 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 share my life with you; I will forgive you as we have been forgiven; and I will try with you better to understand ourselves, the world, and God; through the best and the worst of what is to come as long as we live.

Scripture Readings

The following are possible and suggested Scripture readings and hymns from which selections may be made. Normally there are two or three Scripture readings, one of which is from a Gospel text. If the wedding party so chooses, one or two congregational hymns are appropriate.

Old Testament: Genesis 1: 26-31; Genesis 2:18-24; Song of Solomon 2:10-13; Song of Solomon 8: 7-13; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Isaiah 63: 7-9

Psalms: Psalm 8; Psalm 23; Psalm 34; Psalm 67; Psalm 100; Psalm 121; Psalm 145; Psalm 148, Psalm 150

New Testament Letters: Romans 12: 1-2; I Corinthians 13; I John 4:7-12

Gospel: Matthew 5: 1-10; Matthew 19:4-6; Matthew 22:35-40; Mark 10:6-9; John 2: 1-10; John 15:9-12; John 17: 20-23

A Marriage License

Please bring the marriage license and certificate from the **Sangamon County** (no other) Clerk's Office to the Church Office **at least one week prior to the wedding** so it can be filled in and completed. **No marriage can be performed without the license** issued from the **Sangamon County Clerk's Office**. Please call the County Clerk's Office for information about the cost and time requirements.

A Word About Photography

Since your wedding is a worship experience, all photographers (amateur and professional) are asked to show reverence for the ceremony and the place. Pictures are not to be taken during the ceremony, but may be taken

during the Processional and the Recessional. The photographer may take time exposures from the rear of the sanctuary. It is suggested that many pictures normally be taken prior to the ceremony. If the wedding is to be videotaped, it is important for the video photographer to remain in one place during the wedding. The video photographer is not to move in order to take videos from various places during the wedding. The Presiding Pastor can give clarification as to the most appropriate place for this to occur.

Other Helpful Information

Some other helpful information about the Sanctuary is listed below. Please share this information with your florist/photographer if they are not aware of it.

- A) The Sanctuary seats approximately 375.
- B) There are 17 rows of pews per side. In addition there are 10 pews on the far sides of the Sanctuary.
- C) The length of the aisle is 70 feet. Due to insurance liability issues, the Church **discourages the use of an aisle runner**.
- D) Candelabra are available for use at the Church. In addition, aisle candleholders are also available to use.
- E) A Unity Candleholder is available.
- F) Live flowers are required for decorating in the area of the altar.
- G) The Sanctuary is air-conditioned.
- H) The Parlor is available for the women to use as a dressing area. An area in the Parish Life Center is available for the men to use as a dressing area.

Other Considerations

- Worship bulletins are the responsibility of the couple to purchase. The format of the bulletin needs to be planned with the Presiding Pastor. **The Presiding Pastor must proof all copy.**
- All equipment not belonging to the Church, such as that from florists, photographers, etc. **should be removed immediately following the wedding.**
- There is to be No Smoking in any part of the building. We ask that those responsible for the use of the Church monitor others in the group.
- No alcoholic beverages are permitted in the building or on the grounds of the Church.
- **Rice and birdseed are not to be used**, as it becomes a liability hazard.
- It is the responsibility of the wedding party to arrange for the care of

their property before, during and after the wedding ceremony. Leave all valuable personal belongings and gifts in the care of parents, friends, or attendants during the service. The church cannot be responsible for lost or stolen articles.

- The rehearsal is important. It is important that it begin on time. The couple will be responsible to see that everyone is at the appointed place at the appointed time.
- The Presiding Pastor is the one who will have responsibility for the sequence and events of the rehearsal and wedding service. Wedding consultants do not have final responsibility or approval of the wedding service held at St. John's Lutheran Church.

A Matter of Courtesy

Members of the Staff enjoy sharing in wedding celebrations with active family members of St. John's. Often families assume that staff members will participate in rehearsal dinners and/or receptions. If you wish to have the Presiding Pastor, the Organist, the musicians, and their spouses/guests join you at the rehearsal dinner and/or the wedding reception, it is **best to issue their invitations well in advance**. They will not assume they are invited without one.

In Closing

It is the conviction of our Pastors that we are responsible before God and the Church to do our very best to help couples prepare for marriage. As we share in this time when by your vows you declare yourselves "husband and wife" we desire to have that inward confidence that this marriage will indeed carry God's blessings and that it is wonderfully prepared to meet all the responsibilities, demands and privileges that marriage offers.

If you do not have a church home, we would welcome you here at St. John's Lutheran Church. Our New Disciples' Classes are times for you to consider membership here in this congregation.

We are happy for you and rejoice with you in this time of joy and celebration. May God bless and keep you in God's love and grace.

The Wedding Guide was approved by the Congregation Council of St. John's Lutheran Church, Springfield, Illinois, on July 20, 1998.