

A CHRISTIAN WEDDING

In planning the service, most brides and grooms think, “It is my wedding, isn’t it?” In a very narrow sense the answer is yes. You are the ones being married. But in a more important and deeper sense, the answer is no.

While you have control over many “secular” things regarding your wedding day, the wedding service is the responsibility of the church. The Christian church’s worship practices are determined by God, based on Scripture, and tested over more than 2,000 years of the history of God’s people. God clearly asserts ownership over this wedding service.

Here are 4 fundamental and very important understandings about a Christian wedding service, which the church considers primary.

1. A CHRISTIAN WEDDING SERVICE IS A SERVICE OF WORSHIP

A Christian worship service always insists that God be placed in the center of worship. Anything, or anyone, that shifts the focus from God and our worship of Him – or that hints at an acceptance of things which He does not accept – violates this principle and cannot be a part of the service. Everything in the Christian wedding service must give evidence that we are at worship, bringing our willing commitment before the Lord for His blessing.

2. A CHRISTIAN WEDDING SERVICE IS A PUBLIC SERVICE

The word “public” means that the service belongs to all the people of God, not to one or two people. Any service held in church is a service of worship that allows the entire congregation to express its faith. Knowing this will give you reason to treasure what has been carefully preserved by the church, often at great cost, and will make you sensitive to including only accepted Christian expressions.

3. A CHRISTIAN WEDDING SERVICE IS A CORPORATE SERVICE

“Corporate” means that all the Christians present are linking spiritual hands and uniting in one great act of worship! Everyone has an important part in the worship process, whether they listen, speak, sing, or pray silently. All present are to worship. All are to witness. All are to pray. All are to acknowledge that marriage is God’s idea and that in this wedding the bride and groom are accepting God’s plan, originated by Him and protected and supported by His Word.

4. A CHRISTIAN WEDDING SERVICE IS A TIME OF CLEAR PROCLAMATION

The Christian wedding service expresses some very important things about Christ: His love, forgiveness and God’s plan for marriage. All the elements of your wedding service (the music, the vows, the readings) should contribute in proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ.

THE SERVICE

Pre-Wedding Requirements

We require you to have four pre-wedding counseling sessions before your wedding date. The first three will be approximately 1 hour long and will be taught by a husband and wife counseling team who are members of St. Matthew. The final session will be held with Pastor Lambart. The first three classes may involve other engaged couples. Times and dates will be arranged. In addition to other information, the book titled "Things I wish I'd known before We Got Married" by Gary Chapman will be used and some reading is required.

Six things absolutely necessary to have a Christian wedding service:

1. The Invocation
2. The Scripture (sharing the Word)
3. The Proclamation of the Word (Sermon)
4. The Vows
5. The Prayer
6. The Blessing

With these points in mind, the traditional wedding service at St. Matthew is outlined as such:

The Processional

- The Invocation

The Presentation of the Bride

- The Scripture Lesson (s)
- The Wedding Sermon

The Solo(s) optional

- The Marriage Pledge
- The Marriage Vows

The Ring Ceremony

- The Marriage Declaration
- The Wedding Blessing

The Wedding Candle Ceremony (optional)

The Solo (optional)

- The Wedding Prayer
- The Lord's Prayer
- The Benediction

The Kissing of the Bride

The Rose Ceremony (optional)

The Recessional

- These Items are all parts of the six necessities listed above and are considered essential to the service. While the others are not essential, they are usually included to enhance the wedding. Details concerning the service are worked out by the couple and the Pastor in marriage preparation. Music and songs (whether solos or congregational hymns) are chosen by the couple and the Director of Music.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

WEDDING BULLETINS:

You may wish to have wedding bulletins printed for your service. The church secretary will be happy to help you pick a bulletin cover and order them. This is where you place the participants in your wedding—Maid/Matron of Honor, Bridesmaids, Best Man, Groomsmen, Ring Bearer, Flower Girl, Parents and Grandparents of the couple.

CANDLELIGHT SERVICE:

Candlelight is a beautiful addition to any service. The wedding couple may choose to have a candlelight service with candles down the center aisle.

FLOWERS:

Flowers are the responsibility of the wedding couple. Chancel flowers are to be placed either in the chancel floor vases or on the chancel metal pedestals not on the altar itself. The wedding coordinator will assist with the placement of flowers. Arrange with a member of your wedding party to take the flowers after the ceremony. If you wish to leave flowers to the church, they may be placed elsewhere in the chancel area, if others have already sponsored altar flowers for the Sunday worship services.

AISLE RUNNER:

This is also the responsibility of the wedding couple. Aisle runners are usually available through a florist. The aisle runner should be 100 ft. long.

WEDDING REHEARSAL:

The Pastor, along with the wedding couple, will set a time and date for the wedding rehearsal. All the members of the wedding party should be present at the rehearsal.

THE CHURCH IS OPEN 1 HOUR before the wedding is scheduled to begin. Inform your florist and members of the wedding party of this fact.

CHURCH POLICIES

Wedding photographers and guests are not allowed to take flash pictures in the Church from the invocation to the benediction. Pictures and videos must be taken with the available light.

After the service and the receiving line (if any) there will be a thirty (30) minute period when pictures and videos of the wedding party may be taken up front with flash and additional lighting. Any part of the ceremony may be re-enacted.

PEOPLE INVOLVED

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC:

It is up to the couple to contact the Director of Music, Paul Lehman, (734-326-3442) and schedule an appointment with him. He will assist the couple with all the musical aspects of the service.

WEDDING COORDINATOR:

The wedding coordinator is provided by the church to aid in last minute preparations on the day of the wedding. She is the “coordinator” who prepares the church, places the flowers on the altar, sets up candles down the aisle, assists the wedding party and insures that all enter the church on cue.

ELDER:

A member of the church’s Board of Elders is also on hand to assists the pastor, check the ventilation, unlock the church an hour before, light the candles, and secure the church afterwards He will be glad to answer any last minute questions.

Please remember that weddings are worship services and that all music used in a wedding must be appropriate for worship. As the Director of Music, Mr. Lehman is the final authority in deciding what is or is not acceptable.

THE WEDDING FEES

SPECIAL NOTE:

All fees are to be paid to the church office one week before the wedding. It is to be paid in cash in separate envelopes labeled: pastor, organist, custodian, etc. If you have any problems or concerns with the fees, discuss them with the Pastor before they are due.

All fees are subject to change and this booklet may not contain the most recent figures. Please confirm these amounts with the Church office.

DEPOSIT:

There is a \$100.00 member and \$150.00 non-member deposit due when you reserve the Church. This deposit will count toward the Church usage fee. This deposit is fully refundable up to sixty days prior to the wedding date. If you cancel your wedding without giving the Church sixty days notice, your deposit will not be refunded.

WEDDING CEREMONIAL FEES

The names in bold print are to be placed in individual envelopes (in cash) with their function listed on the outside of it: Elder, Wedding Coordinator, Custodian, Pastor, Organist, Bulletin Order/Printing, and Soloist (if applicable)

	<u>Member</u>	<u>Non-Member</u>
Use of church	\$100.00	\$150.00
Pastor	gratuity	\$250.00
Wedding Coordinator	\$ 75.00	\$ 75.00
Elder	\$ 30.00	\$ 30.00
Custodian	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00

Possible additional expenses for wedding couple:

Organist	\$150.00	\$150.00
*Meeting with organist for music selection	\$25.00	\$ 25.00
*Organist rehearsal with outside soloist	\$25.00	\$ 25.00
**Soloist	\$75.00	\$ 75.00
Candles Down Aisle	\$20.00	\$ 20.00
Wedding Bulletins (per 100)	\$12.00	
Printing of programs	\$15.00	

*The fees for the music selection and rehearsal with an outside soloist can be placed in the envelope labeled: Organist

**The soloist fee is paid if you use our soloist.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES FOR WEDDING SERVICES

-(Ruth 1:16-17 NIV) But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. (17) Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me."

-(Josh 24:15 NIV) But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."

-(Gen2:18-24 NIV) The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." (22) Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. (23) The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." (24) For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

-(Matt 28:18-20 NIV) Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. (19) Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (20) and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

-(Psalm 23 NIV) A psalm of David. The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. (2) He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, (3) he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. (4) Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. (6) Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

-(Num 6:24-26 NIV) "The LORD bless you and keep you; (25) the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you: (26) the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace."

-(Psa 106:1 NIV) Praise the LORD. Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.

-(Matt 7:24-27 NIV) "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. (25) The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. (26) But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. (27) The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a crash."

-(John 2:1-2 NIV) On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, (2) and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding.

-(John 3:27-30 NIV) To this John replied, "A man can receive only what is given him from heaven. (28) You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Christ but am sent ahead of him'. (29) The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. (30) He must become greater; I must become less.

-(Rom 15:5-6 NIV) May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, (6) so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

-(1 Cor 13:1-7 NIV) If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding going or a clanging cymbal. (2) If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. (3) If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. (4) Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. (5) It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. (6) Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. (7) It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

-(1 Cor 13:13 NIV) And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

-(1 Cor 7:7 NIV) I wish that all men were as I am. But each man has his own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that.

-(Mat 6:9-13 NIV) "This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, (10) your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. (11) Give us today our daily bread> (12) Forgive us our debtors. (13) And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."

-(Eph 5:21 NIV) Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

-(Col 3:12-17 NIV) Therefore, as God's chosen People, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. (13) Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. (14) And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

-(Rom 8:28 NIV) And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Wedding Music

PROCESSIONALS FOR BRIDEMAIDS & BRIDE:

1. Bridegroom of our Souls with Chimes
2. Abide With Me – with Chimes
3. Take Thou My Hands and Lead Me – with Chimes
4. Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring – Bach
5. Sheep May Safely Graze – Bach
6. Water Music – Handel
7. Jesus Lead Thou On – Paul Manz
8. Cantelena
9. Canon in "D" – Pachelbel

SOLO MUSIC:

Possible placement: pre-processional, after sermon, after candle ceremony, or wedding prayer.

1. Because You are God's Chosen Ones
2. Whither Thou Goest
3. And On This Day
4. O Perfect Love
5. One Hand, One Heart
6. The Sabbath Prayer
7. Sometimes (rose ceremony)
8. Wedding Song
9. Walk Hand in Hand with Me
10. Bless This House
11. The Gift of Love
12. Walk Along beside Us, O My Lord
13. Wedding Prayer
14. The Lord's Prayer
15. Forever in His Love – P. Lehman
16. Family Prayer – P. Lehman
17. The Lamps That Light Our Wedding Day
18. Love is the Sunlight
19. They Days of the Summer
20. Now with Thanksgiving
21. When God Created Creation
22. Within the Arc of Grace

HYMNS FOR SOLO or CONGREGATIONAL SINGING

1. Amazing Grace
2. Lord, Lead us Still
3. Hear Us Now, Our God and Father
4. Ode to Joy
5. Love Divine, All Love Excelling
6. Heavenly Father, Hear Or Prayer
7. As They Walk Down Life's Pathway, Lord (Hymn #200)
8. Wedding Hymn
9. Ye Watchers & Ye Holy Ones (Hymn #475)

RECESSIONALS:

1. Psalm 19 – Marcello
2. Trumpet Voluntary – Purcell
3. Now Thank We All Our God – Manz
4. God of Grace – Manz
5. Jigue Fugue – Buxtehude
6. Toccata in F Major – Buxtehude
7. Chromatic Fugue – Pachelbel
8. Ode to Joy – Beethoven
9. Any of the 8 Little Prellude & Fugues of Bach
10. All Creatures of Our God and King – of Each Gordon Young
11. Prelude in Classic Style – Gordon Young
12. Allegro Moderate – Handel
13. Allegro Maestoso – Handel (from Water Music)
14. Trumpet Voluntary – John Stanley
15. Now Thank We All Our God – Karg Elert
16. Trumpet Tune – Henry Purcell
17. Prelude on “For the Beauty of the Earth” – Gordon Young
18. Gavotte – G. F. Handel
19. Gavotte – William Boyce

The Vows

For the man:

_____, will you have this woman to be your wife, to live with her in holy marriage according to the word of God? Will you love her, comfort her, honor her, and keep her in sickness and in health and, forsaking all others, be husband to her as long as you both shall live?

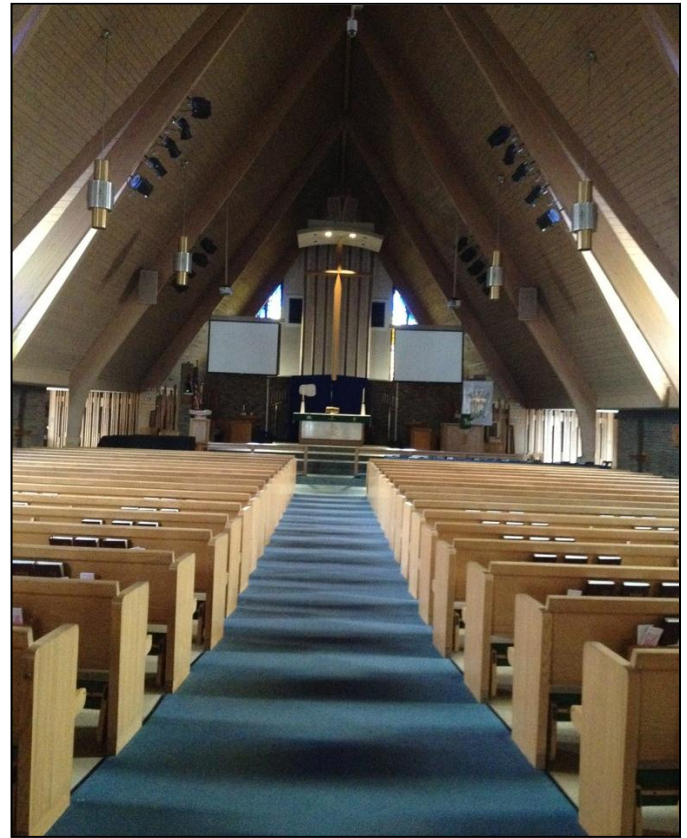
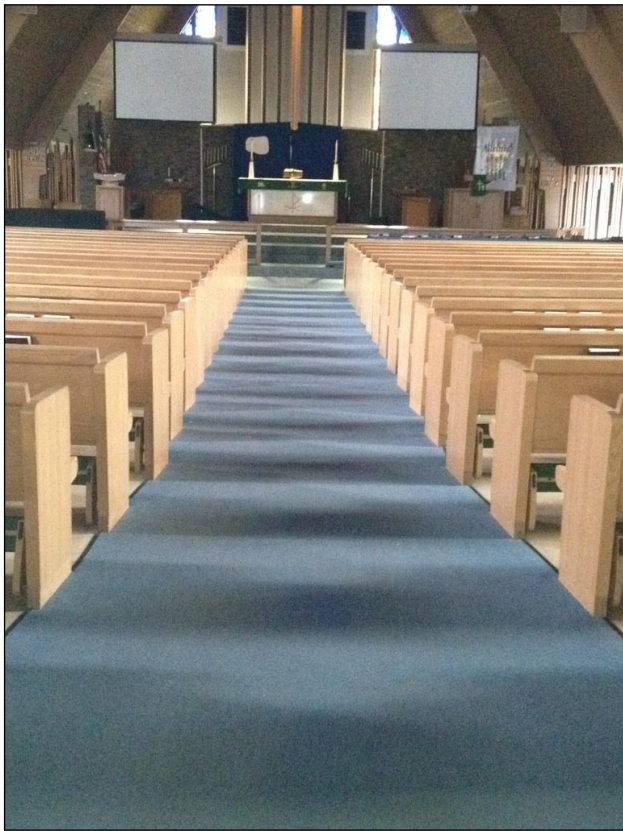
For the woman:

_____, will you have this man to be your husband, to live with him in holy marriage according to the word of God? Will you love him, comfort him, honor him, obey him, and keep him in sickness and in health and, forsaking all others, be wife to him as long as you both shall live?

The vows printed above are the standard vow used in Lutheran wedding services and are taken entirely from scripture. The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod acknowledges the Bible to be the inspired and inerrant Word of God which means these vows reflect God’s will for Christian husbands and wives. However, because the wife’s vow “to obey” is so often misunderstood by wedding couples and guests, we will omit this vow upon the request of either the bride or the groom.

What about Obey?

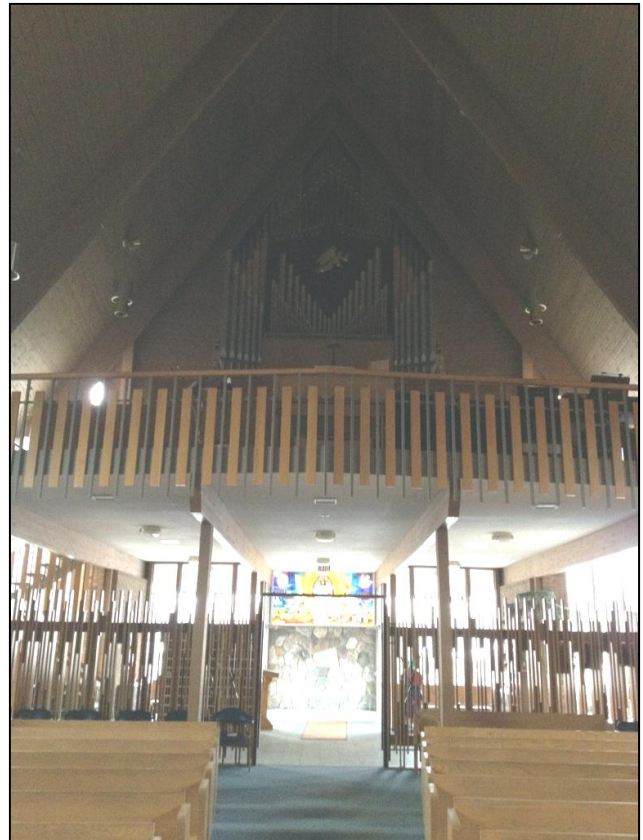
The question asked most often about the vows concerns the wife’s vow “to Obey.” Because this vow is easily misunderstood it deserves a special paragraph of explanation. In the Bible there are three words in the original Greek used for the word love: *Filia*, *Eros*, and *Agape*. *Filia* is the love between family members or close friends. *Eros* is the love between a man and a woman (physical love). *Agape* is the love that God has for us – it is boundless and unconditional. It is a love that is selfless, forgiving and intense. It is also a love that is given even though it is not returned. God loves us selflessly and unconditionally, even though we don’t love him that way. The verse in the Bible where the vow “obey” comes from is Ephesians 5:22, “Wives submit to your husbands as to the Lord.” The first thing that needs to be understood is that the word “submit” is to respect, build-up and support. It **does not** mean, in any sense, that the wife is weaker or inferior. In fact, Ephesians 5:21 states, “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.” This means that both partners are to respect, build-up and support each other. Secondly, it is important to understand that husbands are commanded to “love your wives just as Christ loved the Church” (Ephesians 5:25). The Greek word used for love in this passage is *Agape* – the unconditional love that Christ has for the Church. Husbands are to love their wives with the same selfless and unconditional love that Christ has for us – even if that love is not returned. It is in the context of being showered with this selfless, unconditional love that wives are suppose to “submit” to their husband and obey them as the spiritual head of the household. The Bible is quite clear in communicating God’s intent that the man is the spiritual head of the family. It is the husband’s responsibility to see that worship, Bible Study, and prayer are an integral part of the family’s life.



Rear of church, down center aisle. The large white screens will be rolled up during the wedding. Bridal party/bride will process up this aisle.



Altar area of the church. Bride/Groom will be standing in this area.



Looking at the rear of church, upstairs to choir loft and pipe organ.