

Wedding Handbook

**Resurrection Lutheran Church
St. Joseph, Minnesota**

320-363-4232



Church Wedding or a Civil Ceremony?

Couples for whom faith commitments are not a significant part of their lives are encouraged to spend some time thinking about whether they desire a civil ceremony performed by a judge, or whether they would like to commit to a period of regular participation in the life of the church in advance of their church wedding.

The Church Wedding Service is a Christian worship service celebrating God's love for and commitment to the couple, the love and commitment God has given them for each other, and the love God has for the entire world.

While many options are available to the couple to make the service rich with meaningful symbols and experiences, a few essential elements mark a wedding as a Christian wedding:

- Gathering in the name of God the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit;
- One or more readings from the Bible;
- A sermon proclaiming God's love and grace;
- Vows the couple make to each other;
- Blessing of the couple;
- Prayers for the church, the world, and all those in need;
- Benediction (i.e., words of blessing at the end of the service).

Many other elements may be part of the wedding service in a variety of ways, and are not strictly defined by the church. Such details, including any of the following, should be discussed with the pastor in advance, as to set clear expectations as to what the service will look like. Such details include: how the wedding party, family members, and couple enters and exits the church; on which side of the church the families sit; other symbols or rituals of marriage that might be used (such as the giving of rings, use of a unity candle, etc.)

We ask that you consider these five guidelines in planning your wedding service:

- The Christian wedding service is a service of worship.
- The Christian wedding service is a public service; it belongs to all the people.
- The Christian wedding service is corporate worship; everyone is involved in the worship of God.
- The Christian wedding service proclaims God's Good News.
- The Christian wedding service celebrates God's goodness and grace.

Lutherans acknowledge that marriage is a "Holy Estate" ordained by God. It is solemnized at the altar of our Lord, placing the marriage relationship under the blessing and commandment of God. The marriage service is a worship service of the church. Therefore, anything that is not appropriate for a Sunday morning worship service is not appropriate for the wedding service.

The basic order of the wedding service is found on page 286 in the Evangelical Lutheran Worship hymnal (ELW). Scripture lessons, hymns, psalms and solos can be added to that basic service.

Please note: In the worship service, we worship neither member of the wedding couple, but the God of Love who has created us all and who promises to abide with those who seek Him. Hymns are sung, scripture is read, and a brief sermon is preached. The purpose of the wedding sermon is not to be last minute instructions to the couple. The Word of God is the word that teaches us about Christian marriage. Exhortations from God's word are brought to the couple, a challenge is made to them, and the blessing of the Lord of the Church is bestowed upon them. All should be done in good taste and in the spirit of worship.

Congratulations on your upcoming marriage and your choice to celebrate at
Resurrection Lutheran Church!

To assist you in the planning and preparation for your wedding, this booklet seeks to answer questions about how we do weddings at Resurrection Lutheran Church (RLC). If you have questions or concerns which are not covered in this material, please check with the pastor(s).

Arranging the date

Once you become engaged and have begun preparation for your wedding, one of the first calls you make should be to the pastor(s). The pastor(s) can inform you of the availability of the church as well as his or her own schedule concerning the dates on which you are considering celebrating your wedding. Putting your date on the church's calendar gives you a starting point as you make contact with photographers, caterers, florists, etc. To firmly reserve a wedding date at RLC, half of your deposit is due.

The pastor

A pastor of Resurrection Lutheran Church will officiate all weddings at RLC. Other clergy may also be invited to participate at the request of the couple. Please discuss this with the Resurrection pastor whom is presiding. Two to three meetings with the officiating pastor are required, at which the couple will discuss Christian marriage, plan aspects of the worship service, and make any other necessary arrangements. If it is your intent to have the pastor attend any wedding meals (i.e. rehearsal or reception), a formal invitation must be sent. However, this invitation is not required.

The worship service

The Worship and Music Coordinator will work with you to develop a service that is most meaningful for you. As you make your plans, please keep in mind that your wedding is a service of worship. That may be helpful as you think about what is appropriate.

The starting point in planning will be the marriage service in our worship book: Evangelical Lutheran Worship. Please note that the pastor officiating the wedding worship has the final word in the appropriateness of music, readings or other additions to the wedding service.

Holy Communion can be an appropriate part of your wedding worship. If you would like to include this in your service, please speak with the pastor. If communion is a part of your wedding, the couple will be responsible for serving or for providing two communion servers.

Scripture Readings

While the gospel is always read by the pastor, the earlier readings can be read by others from the congregation. Often couples choose family members or close friends to proclaim the first and second readings. Select readers with care; not everyone feels comfortable reading aloud before others, nor is everyone able to proclaim loudly and clearly. Because we believe that God is present in the proclamation of this Word, you will want it to be easily heard and understood. Be sure to give your readers copies of the passages well before the wedding so they can prepare. The readers will be given time during the rehearsal for them to practice at the lectern into the microphone that will be used during your wedding.

Scripture Readings (choose 2-3 readings)			
Old Testament	Genesis 1:26-28, 31	Genesis 2:18-24	Ruth 1:16-17
	Song of Solomon 2:8-10, 14	Songs of Solomon 8:6-7	Jeremiah 31:31-32a, 33-34a
Psalms	89	100	112
	117	136	150
New Testament	Romans 12:1-2, 9-18	1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13	Romans 8:31-35, 37-39
	Philippians 1:27-2:5	Colossians 3:12-17	Colossians 2:6-7
Gospel	Matthew 5:13-16	Matthew 22:34-40	John 2:1-11
	John 1:1-5	John 15:9-17	Mark 10:6-9

Music Selections

Music for your wedding should be chosen with the understanding that this is first and foremost a worship service. Therefore all music selected should reflect that fact and be Christian in nature. When considering a vocal piece, the question to ask is "*Who or what is the focus?*" God and God's faithfulness is the central focus of Christian worship. Because of this, secular music is not appropriate. If you have questions about what is appropriate please consult the Worship and Music Coordinator.

A cantor and pianist will be provided to you (if you so choose). They will be responsible for rehearsing all selected music and required to attend the rehearsal and wedding.

If any guest musicians are requested, that musician will be required to contact the Worship and Music Coordinator about selecting appropriate music, scheduling rehearsal time with an accompanist, and testing out sound equipment. Solos are appropriate at certain points in the service. Speak to the Worship and Music Coordinator for more details.

Suggested music options from the ELW hymnal		
	Song Title	Hymn Number
Hymn of the Day	Come Thou Almighty King	408
	A Mighty Fortress Is Our God	504
	You Are Holy	525
	God Is Here!	526
	Here I Am, Lord	574
	We All Are One in Mission	576
	You Are Mine	581
	Love Divine, All Loves Excelling	631
	Shine, Jesus, Shine	671

Suggested music options from the ELW hymnal		
	Song Title	Hymn Number
Hymn of the Day	For the Fruit of All Creation	679
	Christ, Be Our Light	715
	We Are Called	720
	Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise	834
	Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee	836
	Now Thank We All Our God	840
	Lord, I Lift Your Name on High	857
	Praise to the Lord, the Almighty	858
	O God beyond All Praising	880
	Let All Things Now Living	881
	All People That on Earth Do Dwell	883
*Communion Songs	All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly	461
	Bread of Life, Our Host and Meal	464
	You Satisfy the Hungry Heart	484
	Taste and See	493
	One Bread, One Body	496
	Blest Are They	728

Music for other areas of the service, especially that which is instrumental, will be chosen in a consultation with the Worship and Music Coordinator, Accompanist, and the couple. Suggestions for other music selections not listed above are, of course, welcome.

Wedding Vows

In the Church's understanding, it is the declaration of consent of the couple, witnessed by a pastor in a church that makes a couple married. This is therefore the highpoint of the celebration. Whether you choose one of the options below or write your own vows, these promises should reflect God's love for and commitment to the couple, the love and commitment God has given them for each other, and the love God has for the entire world. If you choose to write your own vows, they must be approved by the pastor at least one week before the wedding. If the vows are memorized, they will need to be done so by the wedding rehearsal.

Wedding Vow Options	
I take you, _____, to be my <i>wife/husband</i> from this day forward, to join with you and share all that is to come, and I promise to be faithful to you until death parts us.	In the presence of God and this community, I, _____, take you, _____, to be my <i>wife/husband</i> ; to have and to hold from this day forward, in joy and in sorrow, in plenty and in want, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, as long as we both shall live. This is my solemn vow.

If you have other ideas for scripture readings, music selections or wedding vows, please discuss them with the pastor.

Marriage license

Your marriage license must be given to the pastor the day before the wedding. The Best Man and Matron/Maid of Honor (or other trusted man and woman) must sign the documents after the wedding, before they leave the church. The pastor will send the official copy to the courthouse. Later, you will receive a certified copy of your marriage certificate the mail.

No weddings will be performed without a marriage license.

Wedding rehearsal

The wedding rehearsal is generally held the evening prior to the wedding and lasts approximately an hour. The purpose of the rehearsal is to familiarize all participants with the order of the service. The entire wedding party is to be in attendance: wedding party (i.e. bridesmaids and groomsmen), flower girl, ring bearer, parents of both partners, visiting clergy, ushers, musicians, sound system technician, photographer, videographer, and any other participants. Persons serving as lay readers should be prepared at the rehearsal to read the portion of scripture assigned to them. Musicians should expect to rehearse during the wedding rehearsal.

The wedding party

Ushers: The selection of mature ushers is important. They have the task of moving people, lighting candles and greeting your guests. Out of respect for the guests, the service must begin at the scheduled time, and it is the responsibility of the ushers to make sure all guests are seated at the appointed time.

The wedding party: One man and one woman are required by law to be witnesses to your wedding. They sign the marriage license immediately after the ceremony. These are usually the Best Man and Maid/Matron of Honor. The total number in the wedding party is the choice of the wedding couple.

Others in the service: You may choose to have readers or others participate in your wedding. Please have them listed in the bulletin and invite all participants to the wedding rehearsal.

Alcohol and tobacco

No cigarette or tobacco use is permitted in the church building. In addition, no alcohol use is permitted on church grounds, including the parking lot. Please be sure those involved in your wedding are aware of these rules.

Members of the wedding party (including the couple) must not consume alcohol before the wedding. If alcohol is detected, that person will not participate in the wedding.

Personal Items

Resurrection Lutheran Church cannot be responsible for personal items left at the church before, during or after the wedding service. For your protection, please be sure to remove all gifts, cards, clothing and other personal items from the church when you leave.

Nursery

While pictures are being taken before the ceremony and during the wedding itself, the church nursery is available for young children. We ask that children in the nursery have adult supervision and that the nursery and, its contents be cleaned after the wedding.

Photography

Wedding photograph may be taken either before or after the service. No flash photographs are to be taken during the service. Because your wedding is a worship service, please do not have your photographer or guests take flash pictures during the wedding. They may be taken during the processional and recessional. It is helpful if you communicate this to your photographer and place an announcement in your wedding program. You may wish to make a video recording of your wedding service. The person doing the taping should be at a stationary location in the back of the church and should not interfere with the worship.

Wedding Programs

Couples often choose to have wedding programs or bulletins prepared by a printer. You may also choose to have your bulletins printed here at the church. To do this, you would purchase blank wedding bulletins at a Bible Book Store or Church Supply business and we would print your wedding information and order of worship on them. If you choose this option, the cost is \$60 per hundred bulletins. We would need your bulletin information at least two weeks before your wedding.

Décor

You are welcome to use the 2 candelabra stands from Resurrection Lutheran Church. They are brass with holders for 3 candles on each stand (total of 6 candles). Please let the Worship and Music Coordinator know ahead of time if your plan is to use these so they may be reserved for your wedding.

Flower arrangements may be placed on the altar and/or on the wood platform in front of the altar. No flowers or plants are to be placed on the piano.

The paraments (the altar cloths) are always the color of the liturgical season of the church year. Check with the Worship and Music Coordinator for details.

There are small brass hooks on the center top of each window where bows, greens, or flowers may be hung.

Bows may be placed on the end of the rows of chairs. Because we have chairs and not pews, these are difficult to keep in place once people are seated.

You are to arrange for all decorations to be removed from the church building immediately following the wedding service. Plants and flowers may be left for RLC to enjoy if you so choose.

Couples often choose to have a symbol of marriage (such as a Unity Candle or Sand Ceremony) as a part of their wedding. If this is your choice, you will need to purchase and prepare all needed materials.

The throwing of rice, bird seed, bubbles, glitter, or other confetti is not allowed on church property. It is not environmentally friendly and difficult to clean up.



Fees

Wedding fees are determined based on church involvement as listed below:

1. Active members (**AM**) are those who have been received as members at least one year prior to beginning their wedding planning.
2. Connected persons (**CP**) are those whose immediate (parents, children and siblings) family are active members of Resurrection Lutheran Church.
3. Non-members (**NM**) have no current relationship with Resurrection Lutheran Church.

Half of the wedding fee is due to book the date of your wedding. No dates can be confirmed or reserved until this payment is made. The remaining amount is due two weeks prior to the wedding date.

Checks should be made payable to Resurrection Lutheran Church.

		Active Member	Connected Person	Non-Member
Wedding Fee	Use of Sanctuary	\$0	\$250	\$500
	Custodial Fee	\$100	\$150	\$200
Pastor's Honorarium <i>Make check payable to Pastor</i>		\$250	\$300	\$350
Worship & Music Coordinator and Musicians <i>Make check payable to W&M Coor.</i>		\$250	\$300	\$350
TOTAL:		\$600	\$1,000	\$1,400

All Fees are subject to change and in special situations Pastor may adjust fees.

If you are interested in renting out the Fellowship Hall and Kitchen, please ask Pastor or Worship and Music Coordinator for the RLC Facility Use Policy.

If you have any further questions, please contact the Pastor and/or Worship and Music Coordinator.
Thank you.

Wedding Program Outline

If you are going to create a printed bulletin to help your guests follow the order of worship, please put it in the following format. This bulletin should be approved by the Pastor and/or Worship and Music Coordinator.

Prelude

Music title *Composer*

Procession

Music title *Composer*

Welcome and Greeting

*All respond: **And also with you.***

Declaration of Intention

Prayer of the Day

Scripture Readings

*After each reading, all respond: **Thanks be to God.***

“Book”, “Chapter and verses” Reader name

“Book”, “Chapter and verses” Reader name

Gospel of “_____”, “Chapter and verses” Pastor name

Sermon

Hymn of the Day

Music title *ELW p. #*

Vows

Giving of Rings

Acclamation

Symbol of Marriage

Music title *Composer*

Marriage Blessing

Prayers of Intercession

*After each petition, all respond: **Hear our prayer.***

The following page will continue the order of worship depending on whether or not you choose to have Communion.
Follow the appropriate column for your service choices:

A service with communion

Peace

Offering

Music title Composer

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Holy, Holy

ELW p. #

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy name,

thy kingdom come,

thy will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

and the power, and the glory,

forever and ever. Amen.

Communion

Come to the banquet, for all is ready.

All are welcome at the table of Christ.

Lamb of God

ELW p. #

Communion Songs

Music title ELW p. #

Blessing

A service without communion

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy name,

thy kingdom come,

thy will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

and the power, and the glory,

forever and ever. Amen.

Peace

*All may greet each other with a gesture of peace such as: **Peace be with you.***

Blessing

Both service types conclude as such:

Presentation of the Couple

Recession

Music title Composer

Dismissal

Go in peace.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Music title Composer

Wedding Party/ Rehearsal Information

Wedding – Date: _____ Time: _____
Rehearsal – Date: _____ Time: _____

Order of Entrance

Persons entering during Prelude music (often grandparents, extended family, etc.)

Name: _____	Escorted by: _____

Prelude music beginning at: _____

Persons entering during Processional music (parents of couple, wedding party, couple)

Name: _____	Name: _____

****Remember to include the Pastor in the Procession****

Processional music beginning at: _____

Wedding Readings and Music Selections

Readings:

Reading #1: _____ Reader: _____

Reading #2: _____ Reader: _____

Reading #3: _____ Reader: _____

Music:

Prelude: _____ Composer: _____

Prelude: _____ Composer: _____

Prelude: _____ Composer: _____

Processional: _____ Composer: _____

Processional: _____ Composer: _____

Hymn of the Day: _____ ELW # _____

*Symbol of Marriage: _____ Composer: _____

*Holy, Holy: _____ ELW # _____

*Lamb of God: _____ ELW # _____

*Communion Songs: _____ ELW # _____

*Communion Songs: _____ ELW # _____

Recessional: _____ Composer: _____

Postlude: _____ Composer: _____

Postlude: _____ Composer: _____

Other details:

Are there any attendants / ushers? Where and how will they enter?

Symbol of Marriage? Who is responsible for preparing it?

How will the guests be dismissed?

Will there be a receiving line? When and where?

Copy for RLC

Couple's Contact Information

Partner #1			
Name	Address	Phone Number	Email

Partner #2			
Name	Address	Phone Number	Email

Wedding Party/ Rehearsal Information

Wedding – Date: _____ Time: _____

Rehearsal – Date: _____ Time: _____

of persons entering during Prelude music (often grandparents, extended family, etc.) _____

Prelude music beginning at: _____

of persons/couples entering during Processional music (parents of couple, wedding party, etc.) _____

****Remember to include the Pastor in the Procession****

Processional music beginning at: _____

Copy for RLC

Wedding Readings and Music Selections

Readings:

Reading #1: _____	Reader: _____
Reading #2: _____	Reader: _____
Reading #3: _____	Reader: _____

Music:

Prelude: _____	Composer: _____
Prelude: _____	Composer: _____
Prelude: _____	Composer: _____
Processional: _____	Composer: _____
Processional: _____	Composer: _____
Hymn of the Day: _____	ELW # _____
*Symbol of Marriage: _____	Composer: _____
*Holy, Holy: _____	ELW # _____
*Lamb of God: _____	ELW # _____
*Communion Songs: _____	ELW # _____
*Communion Songs: _____	ELW # _____
Recessional: _____	Composer: _____
Postlude: _____	Composer: _____
Postlude: _____	Composer: _____

<u>RLC Office Use Only</u>				
	Pay to the Order of:	Amount Paid	Date	Check Number
First half – Wedding Fee				
Second Half – Wedding Fee				
Pastor’s Honorarium				
W&M Coor. and Musicians				

