

Your

# WEDDING

AT  
memorial  
lutheran  
church

Memorial Lutheran Church of afton  
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# **MARRIAGE AND THE CHURCH**

Congratulations! You are planning to be married, to enter into a relationship which God has created and wishes to bless. It is the church's prayer that this be a life-giving relationship filled with joy and love.

What is the relationship between marriage and the church? Marriage, as an institution, does not belong exclusively to the church, but to all humanity. It is a social contract, governed by the state, which people legally enter into, and, therefore, ought to carry out with sincerity and responsibility. Because Christian people have always understood that God desires sacredness and wholeness in this relationship, the church has taught that marriage is:

-a life-giving relationship, based on the promises and commitment between two people

-rooted in the love of God, which is both a source of strength and a model for how we love one another

-both a place of great happiness, where human beings enjoy companionship and security, as well as a place of potential sadness, as broken and imperfect human beings fail to live-up to their hopes, dreams and promises. In all this, God is lovingly present to bring blessing and redemption.

To be married in the church is to recognize that marriage, while an institution of the state, also involves God's promises, intentions, and judgments. The pastor is the person who legally witnesses your commitment (as a representative of the state), and the one who facilitates premarital counseling. Although there is great room for flexibility in the ceremony, the format used will be that found in the *Evangelical Lutheran Worship Hymnbook (ELW)*. This booklet is intended to offer helpful-as you plan your wedding at Memorial Lutheran Church.

## **THE DATE**

It is important to set a date and time for your wedding, as soon as possible. Contact the church office to check building and pastoral availability before making any other plans.

## **THE PREPARATION SESSIONS**

Premarital sessions are needed to adequately prepare for the wedding and marriage. Each couple will take a PREPARE and ENRICH inventory (cost of \$45) which will be used to guide conversations with the pastor. The number of sessions will be mutually agreed upon by couples and pastor. Each sessions includes premarital conversation and actual wedding planning.

## **THE LICENSE**

In the State of Minnesota a wedding license must be obtained at least five days prior to the wedding (and not more than six months.) Check with the county license bureau for information and costs, as these vary from time to time and place to place. The license should be brought to the rehearsal.

## **THE CHURCH MUSICIAN and VOCALISTS**

As soon as a date and time have been set, plan to meet with the church music minister to begin thinking about the musical aspects of your wedding. By scheduling a meeting with the church musician, type of music, soloists, and any special arrangements can be discussed. While flexibility and creativity is encouraged, the music minister does have the final say as to the appropriateness of the music. We ask that you be respectful of his/her professional integrity and work cooperatively with him/her.

We recommend using Memorial's musicians whenever possible as they are familiar with the order of service, sound equipment and other details specific to Memorial.

## **WEDDING COORDINATOR**

Each couple will meet with the wedding coordinator and cover the following; building access times, take a tour of the building, review the building usage policy, choose which rooms will serve the wedding party best, ask any logistical questions.

The role of the wedding coordinator is to open and close the building, assist in the coordination of the wedding ceremony, troubleshoot when possible (within reason) and help guide you through the use of the building as respectfully as possible. The wedding coordinator is not a custodian, babysitter or on-call staff member. Thank you for respecting this important role!

## **THE WEDDING REHEARSAL**

Usually a rehearsal is held the evening prior to the wedding to walk through the ceremony and insure that everything is in order. Ushers are encouraged to be present and learn about their responsibilities; parents and family, can benefit by being present and learning their parts. The rehearsal lasts approximately 30 minutes and ought to be scheduled to accommodate as many wedding participants as possible. Each wedding party can have access to the church building for a maximum of 90 minutes on the evening before the wedding (including rehearsal). Any other events (such as additional photos, gift opening, dinners) that you may like to hold to in conjunction with the wedding rehearsal at the church must be approved by pastor and the wedding coordinator.

**Reminder:** Bring the wedding license and your printed program (if you have one) to the rehearsal.

## **PHOTOGRAPHERS and VIDEOGRAPHERS**

All photographers and videographers must be approved by pastor. This discussion is meant to allow the celebration to be documented while not interfering with the worship service. Photographers and videographers must adhere to the following:

- Pastor and wedding couple will use Memorial sound equipment only.
- No photographers or videographers will be allowed in the front of the sanctuary during the ceremony. They may quietly move throughout the rear of the sanctuary.
- No camera noises will be tolerated during the sermon or any prayers.
- Photographers will reduce camera noises and personal movement whenever possible and not fill the entire worship service with noise.
- Photographers will not stand in front of any seated guests.

## **PRINTED PROGRAMS**

Many couples decide to have the order of service and participants printed in a program, to be distributed to those in attendance at the wedding. You should plan to have such a program printed well in advance of the wedding day, thus avoiding any last minute stress due to changes or printing problems. The church is unable to print wedding programs. The pastor will discuss with each couple the exact order of the service, as well as proof the copy before it goes to press.

## **FACILITY USAGE**

The following guidelines pertain to any time you are in Memorial's building:

- All arrival and departure times will be mutually agreed upon between the wedding party and the wedding coordinator. Building may be used for 90 minutes for a wedding rehearsal and the building is generally opened four hours before the ceremony on the day of a wedding.
- There is not a custodian on site during the wedding day, any messes must be cleaned up by the wedding party/family prior to the ceremony beginning.
- No smoking or alcohol in the church building. No exceptions.
- No alcohol is to be consumed in the parking lot.
- All children must be supervised. We have many child friendly spaces in our church, if you need a child friendly space please arrange with the wedding coordinator to have access to a Sunday School room or nursery. Please do not allow your children to run throughout the church building without supervision. Most of our rooms will be used Sunday morning and need to be ready.
- Use of the kitchen must be approved by the wedding coordinator.

## SUMMARY OF CHARGES

All fees are to be paid prior to or at the wedding rehearsal.

\*Member is defined by any current member, child or grandchild of a current member.

	MEMBER	NON-MEMBER	Payment Made to
<b>Facility</b>	\$200	\$600	Memorial Lutheran
Wedding Coordinator	\$300	\$300	Wedding Coordinator
Pre-Marital Evaluation	\$45		Prepare and Enrich
Music Minister	\$200 *consultation fee of \$75 if applicable	\$200 *consultation fee of \$75 if applicable	Music Minister
Clergy	\$350	\$350	Clergy
Other Musicians	TBD	TBD	

Planning your worship ceremony is an important part of creating a meaningful celebration of your marriage. All planning will be done in collaboration with pastor. The following is simply an outline. Pastor will provide each couple with a full planning document tool including liturgy format (with language options for vows, exchange of rings), scripture and music ideas.

### ORDER OF SERVICE

Prelude  
Processional  
Invocation-Prayer  
Scripture Readings

\*Placement of music in the service depends on the number of pieces sung/played and the wedding couples preference.

\*(Musical selection)

Sermon  
\*(Musical selection)  
Exchange of Vows  
Exchange of Rings  
Blessing  
Lord's Prayer (congregation)  
Benediction  
Introduction of Couple  
Postlude

Other Worship Elements to Consider: Holy Communion and Unity Ritual