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WEDDING POLICY HANDBOOK

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Bethany Lutheran Church Wedding Policy

INTRODUCTION:

We are honored that you have chosen to be married at Bethany with a ceremony that reflects the beliefs of Bethany Lutheran Church. Marriage is a sacred commitment between two people with the pastor serving as a witness and asking God's blessing on you.

ARRANGEMENTS:

Please contact the church as soon as possible to request available dates. Once the date is set and the deposit is paid we will provide your information to our Wedding Coordinator, who will then make contact with you approximately 6 months prior to your wedding and assist you in planning for your special day.

PREMARITAL COUNSELING:

A wide variety of resources and approaches can be used in premarital counseling. The type and amount of counseling will be at the discretion of the pastor. Typically it is three sessions during the three months prior to the wedding. Arrangements can be made for out of town couples.

LICENSE:

The couple must obtain an IA Marriage License within 30 days of the wedding. The license must be delivered to the church office at least three days before the wedding.

FEES:

Members: \$400. Nonmembers: \$600. These fees include the premarital counseling supplies, up to 300 bulletins selected from Augsburgfortress.org, candles, organist, custodian, wedding coordinator and a contribution to the mission of the church. Additional fees may apply for wedding music and receptions. Refer to Wedding Music Guidelines and Wedding Reception Guidelines for more information.

POLICIES:

The following policies apply to all weddings:

- Alcohol and illicit drugs are strictly prohibited on church property with the exception of the wine used for Holy Communion as a part of the ceremony.
- No smoking is allowed in the church
- Rice is not allowed, however, birdseed is allowed outside of the church.

POLICIES (cont'd):

- The Wedding Coordinator or Pastor must approve the placement of decoration, candles, etc. The chancel furnishings and paraments may not be changed or moved. However, the wedding banner may be used. Decorating is to be done the day of the ceremony.
- Bethany is not responsible for the loss or breakage of wedding gifts.
- Bridal party is to designate persons to take down the decorations, clean up the dining room and bridal party dressing rooms and remove gifts.
- If you wish to have the ceremony video recorded or have photos taken, it must not interfere with the ceremony.
- Animals are not allowed in the church, unless service animals

Wedding Coordinator Duties

The Wedding Coordinator organizes and supervises the wedding process at Bethany, scheduling with other coordinators, supervising rehearsals & ceremonies in consultation with couples and in accordance with standards and guidelines provided by Bethany Lutheran Church. As the primary liaison between Bethany and wedding couples, the Wedding Coordinator works in the spirit of love, transformation and service and seeking to build positive relationships with the bride, groom and all people they encounter through their work with weddings at Bethany.

Following the booking of a wedding with the church, the Wedding Coordinator is contacted to schedule an initial meeting and visit. Listed below are duties of the coordinator:

- Initiate first contact with the couple six months in advance communicating Bethany's policies and church expectations.
- Explain charges to be paid prior to the wedding
- Answer questions related to church policies
- Show location of restrooms, bride, groom and bridal party dressing areas
- Show the kitchen and dining room and what is available for use
- Ask if the couple wishes to use wedding banner, candelabras and bulletins from Augsburg Fortress
- Assist to coordinate plans for the florists, caterers, photographers and musicians by communicating church guidelines.
- Explain the bridal party responsibilities
- Be present at rehearsal to provide direction on when/how things will take place

- Ensure that the church building is opened the day of the wedding for decorating and assist as needed with directing caterers, photographers, florists, etc.
- Communicate details with the church office and the pastor the week before the wedding

Assist with any emergencies that may arise— having a sewing kit, first aid kit and emergency phone numbers for police and ambulance.

Wedding Music Guidelines

“Marriage is a gift of God, intended for the joy and mutual strength of those who enter it and for the well-being of the whole human family.”-Evangelical Lutheran Worship (2006), Pg. 286

A wedding ceremony at Bethany Lutheran Church is a service of Christian worship. Musical selections, lyrics, and decorations for the ceremony must respect the sanctuary as a worship space, be in line with Lutheran theology and teaching, and be specifically conducive to worship of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Music will be provided for your wedding ceremony by Bethany’s Director of Music Ministry. If he/she is unavailable on your selected date, the church will find a substitute musician to play in his/her stead. If you wish to use an outside musician to play the wedding ceremony, you must obtain permission from the Director of Music Ministry; in this case musical selections will still be subject to the Director’s approval and your fee to the church will remain the same.

MUSICAL SELECTIONS:

The Director of Music can assist you in choosing music for the wedding ceremony. There are nearly limitless possibilities when it comes to musical selections, and since Bethany is a church that embraces blended worship, there are also nearly limitless possibilities in musical style and instrumentation. However, all music must be appropriate for Christian worship and is subject to approval by the Director of Music. Please note that secular music is not appropriate for a church wedding ceremony and will generally not be allowed in the service itself.

Suggested Processionals:

- “Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring” -Bach
- “Jesus Shepherd Walk Beside Us” -Bach
- “Beautiful Savior” -arr. Christiansen
- “Trumpet Tune in D Major” -Purcell
- “Trumpet Voluntary in D Major” -Purcell
- “Air” -Bach
- “Canon in D” –Pachelbel

Suggestions for unity candle/sand:

"The Peace May Be Exchanged" - Locklair

Suggestions for Recessional:

"Wedding March" -Mendelssohn

"Trumpet Tune in D Major" -Purcell

"Trumpet Voluntary in D Major" -Purcell

"Tocatta in F Major" –Buxtehude

"Tocatta" – Widor

"The people respond - Amen!" - Locklair

"On our Way Rejoicing" #537

"O Happy Day When We Shall Stand" #441

"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee" #836

Suggestions for Congregational Songs:

"Beloved, God's chosen" #648

"Come, my way, my truth, my life" #816

"O Morning Star, how fair and bright" #308

"Lord Jesus Christ Be Present Now" #527

"O Christ Our Hope, Our Heart's Desire" #604

"Love Divine All Loves Excelling #631

"O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts" #658

"The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want" #778

"The King of Love My Shepherd Is" #502

"O Holy Spirit, Enter In" #786

"Children of the Heavenly Father" #781

"Savior Like a Shepherd Lead Us" #789

"Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus" #802

"Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound" #779

"Give to Our God Immortal Praise" #848

"All Creatures of Our God and King" #835

"Now Thank We All Our God" #839/#840

"Praise to the Lord, the Almighty" #858

"Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee" #836

"Let All Things Now Living" #881

"Praise God From Whom All Blessings" #884/#885

"I Was There To Hear Your Borning Cry" #732

"Jesus, Come! For We Invite You" #312

"Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us With Your Love" #708

SOLOISTS/INSTRUMENTALISTS:

If you have a friend or family member who wishes to sing a solo or play an instrument at your ceremony, arrangements must be made for them to rehearse with Bethany's Director of Music prior to the ceremony and an additional fee may apply. If you would like the Director of Music to find a soloist or instrumentalist for you, you must provide advance notice and an additional pre-negotiated fee will apply.

ADDITIONAL MUSICAL SERVICES:

Almost anything can be negotiated with enough advance notice. Special ensembles such as a brass band, string quartet, praise band, or even the church's choir and/or bell choir can perform for weddings subject to availability and additional fees. If you like, you can even commission a composer to write or arrange an original composition for your wedding ceremony. The Director of Music can assist you in negotiating these requests or in planning a more creative service.

The Wedding Service

PATTERN FOR WORSHIP – Marriage

The following pattern for worship, as taken from the Life Passages section of Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, is used as a guide for marriages at Bethany:

GATHERING

The Holy Spirit gathers us in worship as we witness the marriage.

Gathered by the Holy Spirit and greeted in the name of the triune God, the assembly joins in worship. Those to be married state their intention; the assembly promises support. All are gathered into prayer.

Entrance
Greeting
Declaration of Intention
Prayer of the Day

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching and song.

Scripture readings, preaching, and song witness to the gift and vocation of marriage, bringing God's word of law and promise into this context of human life.

Readings
Sermon
Hymn of the Day

MARRIAGE

As two become one by their promises, God blesses them.

The two pledge their love and faithfulness; the giving of rings is a symbol of this promise. The minister announces the marriage, and the assembly acclaims it. The prayers ask God's blessing upon this marriage and remember the needs of the whole world.

Vows
Acclamation
Marriage Blessing
Prayers of Intercession
Lord's Prayer

COMMUNION

God sets out a marriage feast for all those joined to Christ.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

Together with the newly married, we go out into the world with God's peace and blessing.

Peace
Blessing

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WEDDING VOWS:

The following are examples of wedding vows:

I take you, _____, to be my wife/husband, and these things I promise you: I will be faithful to you and honest with you; I will love, 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 worst of what is to come until death parts us.

I take you, _____ 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 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 until death parts us.

SCRIPTURE:

There are many scriptures that are appropriate for weddings. A wedding is an opportunity to proclaim the Gospel – the Good News of Jesus Christ and not just an opportunity to celebrate the American ideal of romantic love. A marriage is built on the foundation of self-sacrifice and loving service to your marriage partner. Our greatest example of self-sacrificing love is, of course, our savior, Jesus Christ.

Please select one Old Testament Reading and one New Testament Reading that speaks to you. The Pastor will select a Gospel Reading especially for you.

Old Testament Readings

Genesis 1:26-31 – *the creation of man and woman*

Genesis 2:18-24 or just 2:24 “...they become one flesh.”

Joshua 24:15 “...as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.”

Ruth 1:16-17

Psalms 23

Psalms 33:12, 18, 20-22

Psalms 34:2-9

Psalms 45 *A marriage psalm for the king of Israel.*

Psalms 67

Psalms 100

Psalms 103:1-2, 8, 13, 17-18

Psalms 112:1-9

Psalms 117

Psalms 121

Psalms 127

Psalms 128:1-5

Psalms 136

Psalms 145:8-10, 15, 17-18

Psalms 148:1-4, 9-14

Psalms 150

Song of Solomon 2:8-14, 16a

Song of Solomon 8:6-7 “... love is as strong as death, its jealousy unyielding as the grave. It burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame. 7 Many waters cannot quench love. . . ”

Ecclesiastes 4: 9-12 “two are better than one – if one falls, one will lift up the other ...”

Isaiah 54:5-8 *the love of God.*

Jeremiah 31:31-34 *the new covenant of the people of God.*

Jeremiah 32:39-41 “They shall be my people and I shall be their God.”

Hosea 2:16-23 *the betrothal of God and Israel.*

New Testament Readings

Romans 8:31-39 *the love of Christ.*

Romans 12:1-2, 9-18 *the life of a Christian.*

I Corinthians 6:13-20 *your members are temples of the Holy Spirit.*

1 Corinthians 12:22-26 “ . . . that there may be unity among husband and wife just as in the body of Christ.”

1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13 *the Love of God never ends – God’s love is forever patient, kind, bearing all things, hoping and enduring all things – we merely try to reflect that love in marriage.*

Ephesians 3:14-21 *the love of Christ.*

Ephesians 5:21-26 *love in marriage is more than romantic or friendship love, but love is agape – self-sacrificing, love that has the other’s interest in mind.*

Philippians 2:5-8 *Jesus loves us with self-sacrifice, humbling himself – agape love yields its own rights in order to show love to the other in marriage as well.*

Philippians 4:4-7

Colossians 3:12-17 *proclaims new life in Christ – and that whatever you do ... “including marriage” in word or in deed, do in the name of the Lord, Jesus.*

I Peter 3:1-9 *peace and harmony in the family.*

I John 3:18-24 *love is real and active.*

I John 4:7-16 *God is love.*

Revelation 19:1, 5-9 *the wedding feast of the Lamb.*

SAMPLE ORDER OF WORSHIP

The following is a typical order of worship for the marriage ceremony:

Prelude

Procession

Invocation

Song

Scripture

The Message

Exchange of Vows

Exchange of Rings

Lighting of the Unity Candle OR Unity Sand

Song

Prayer of the Church

Lord’s Prayer

Benediction

Presentation of the Couple

Recession

Postlude

Wedding Reception Guidelines

The following guidelines apply for wedding receptions at Bethany:

Reservations must be made three weeks prior to the wedding through the Church Office for the use the kitchen, dining room, or parlor. A representative shall be called, by the bride or the bride's mother, to discuss details of the wedding reception, as follows:

- Offer advice or suggestions to the bride and answer questions about the reception arrangements
- Explain charges for the reception which are to be paid to the Church Office
- Explain the bridal party's responsibilities
- Inform the bride where all dishes, silverware, coffee pots, punch bowl, trays, coffee services needed for the reception are located
- The reception consultants do not set up for the reception, nor do they serve on the day of the wedding

The Bridal Party's Responsibilities for receptions are:

- Decide on the food to be arranged and served and the purchase and delivery of all food and beverage to the church. No alcoholic beverages are permitted in the church nor on the grounds
- Set out dishes, silverware and items to be used at the reception.
- The bride may ask a Circle if they would want to serve

Additional fees for the reception, which would include the coverage of the cost for use of the kitchen, dining room or parlor, are payable to Bethany Lutheran Church, as follows:

100 guests -----	\$50
100 – 150 guests-----	\$75
150 – 200 guests-----	\$100

If you would like a circle to serve, the cost is a minimum of \$100 or \$1.00 per guest. This would be payable to the Women of Bethany. If church linens or tablecloths are used you will be responsible for payment of professional cleaning.

CHECKLIST: STEPS FOR YOUR WEDDING

- _____ Initial contact with the church office (712) 262-2327 to determine if the date desired is available
- _____ Pay wedding deposit fee to reserve church and calendar date
- _____ Contact the Wedding Coordinator to arrange an initial meeting and visit
- _____ Coordinate with the Director of Music regarding your wedding music
- _____ Contact the Pastor at least three months prior to your wedding to arrange pre-marital counseling sessions.
- _____ Provide information to the church office for the wedding approval at least two weeks in advance. Also, let the office know who will be doing the printing.
- _____ One week before the wedding remit the balance due for wedding fees.

NOTES
