

PREPARING
FOR
MARRIAGE



at
Mount Calvary Lutheran Church
Holdrege, Nebraska

Congratulations!

So you are getting married! We are excited for you. This manual has been prepared for those couples seeking God's blessing upon their wedding and marriage. Its purpose is to provide you with specific information about marriage customs and practices at Mount Calvary Lutheran Church so that you can adequately prepare and plan your wedding.

May God bless you as you prepare for your wedding and for your marriage.

Our expectations

Here at Mt. Calvary we want the very best for you and your married life. We believe God is the creator of marriage and it's our desire for you to grow in your relationship with Him. Therefore we expect you to:

Be faithful in Worship each week

Attend Marriage God's Way Retreat

Attend New Beginnings Classes

How to Start Planning

- Please read through this entire booklet before you start planning.
- Contact the church office at 308-995-2208 about dates and then fill out the form on our website to reserve the church for your wedding.
- Schedule an appointment with Pastor to plan the ceremony and premarital education.
- Schedule an appointment with Eileen for a tour and information about what the church offers.
- Schedule an appointment with Linda when planning the music for the service. She will work with you, Pastor and your musicians to make sure it is appropriate for the worship service.

Marriage Policy

The marriage policy of Mount Calvary Lutheran Church of Holdrege, Nebraska, a member congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, is and always has been consistent with the Synod's belief on marriage. We believe that marriage is a sacred union of one man and one woman (Gen. 2:24-25), and that God gave marriage as a picture of the relationship between Christ and His bride the Church (Eph. 5:32). The official position of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, as set forth in 1998 (Res. 3-21 ("To Affirm the Sanctity of Marriage and to Reject Same-Sex Unions")), is that homosexual unions come under categorical prohibition in the Old and New Testament (Lev. 18:22; 20:13; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 1 Tim. 1:9-10) as contrary to the Creator's design (Rom 1:26-27). These positions and beliefs can be found on the LCMS website, along with other statements, papers and reports on the subject of homosexuality and same-sex civil unions and "marriage." Our pastors will not officiate over any marriages inconsistent with these beliefs, and our church property may not be used for any marriage ceremony, reception or other activity that would be inconsistent with our beliefs and this policy.

The Wedding Service

In all services at Mount Calvary Lutheran Church, God is at the center. In a wedding service the bride and groom receive God's blessing on their marriage. The following order of worship contains the principal elements of a Christian wedding ceremony.

- The Pre-Service Music
- The Lighting of the Candles (optional)
- The Seating of Grandparents and Parents
- The Procession
- The Brides Procession
- The Invocation and Prayer
- Confession and Absolution
- The First Lesson
- Solo (optional)
- The Second Lesson (optional)
- The Message or Wedding Sermon
- The Rite of Marriage
 - The Promise
 - The Vows
 - The Exchange of Rings
 - The Pronouncement of Marriage
- The Unity Ceremony (optional)
- The Prayers
- The Lord's Prayer
- The Benediction
- The Recessional

Unity Ceremony

The unity ceremony is an optional part of the service. If you choose to include the unity ceremony, please let us know. You will need to provide and set up your own candle, cross or other unity item you wish to use.

Wedding Party

The church office will need a list of the wedding party including parents, grandparents and attendants one week prior to the wedding.

Scripture Readings

You are encouraged to select your own Bible readings using the following as a place to start. Enjoy!

Genesis 2:18-24; 1:31a

Psalms 20:4

Psalms 36:5-10a

Psalms 37:3-7a

Psalms 100

Psalms 118:1, 14, 24, 29

Proverbs 3:3

Proverbs 31:10-31

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Song of Songs 4:9-10a

Isaiah 40:28-31

Jeremiah 31:3, 10, 33b

Hosea 2:19-20

Matthew 7:24-25

Matthew 19:3-6

Mark 10:1-9

Luke 6:46-49

John 2:1-11

John 15:9-12

John 15:12-13, 16-17

Romans 8:35, 38-39

Romans 12:9-18

1 Corinthians 13:1-13

1 Corinthians 16:13-4

Galatians 5:22-25

Ephesians 3:16-19

Ephesians 4:2

Ephesians 4:15-16.

Ephesians 5:1-2

Ephesians 5:25-33

Ephesians 5:25, 28-31, 33

Philippians 1:9,

Philippians 4:5-9

Colossians 3:12-17

1 Thessalonians 3:12

2 Thessalonians 3:5

1 Timothy 1:5

Hebrews 13:4a, 5b, 6, 8

James 3:17-18; 4:7-8a

1 Peter 1:22

1 Peter 3:1-7

1 Peter 4:8-11

1 John 4:7

The Music

Since a Christian marriage service is a wonderful celebration and an opportunity to give witness to our Christian faith, it is important to realize that there is a difference between music appropriate for a secular occasion, such as a wedding performed before a justice of the peace, and music used for a Christian church wedding.

Please note that there are many beautiful instrumental compositions that if people know the words Christ will not be glorified. No instrumental pop or country songs will be approved.

There are numerous musical choices available for the service that will give witness to our Christian faith. Please save yourself some work and set up a time to meet with our coordinator of music, Linda Birtell at 308-995-2208. She can usually meet immediately after the 10:45 A.M. service to give you help and suggestions. All music is to be approved.

When considering if a musical selection is appropriate for a Christian wedding at Mount Calvary Lutheran, you should be able to answer yes to the following questions:

- Does it give glory to God?
- Is Jesus Christ mentioned as Lord and Savior?
- Is God's plan for the marriage relationship emphasized?
- Will those in attendance be encouraged in their faith?
- If the original version of the song has lyrics. Do they answer the above questions with a "Yes"?

Musicians

The couple is responsible for contacting the organist, pianist, soloist or musicians they would like for their wedding.

The Organist/Pianist: Janice Von Loh, Linda Birtell, Julie Maaske or a musician of your choice may play for your service.

Janice Von Loh	308-991-5202
Linda Birtell	402-791-8338
Julie Maaske	308-991-5312

Recorded Music

Sometimes the bride and groom select recorded music for the lighting of the unity candle. This music *must be pre-approved by the presiding pastor* and as per copyright laws, all recorded music must be legally purchased. This means that it must come from a purchased CD or online venue such as iTunes or amazon. Acceptable forms to play on the church sound system are a purchased CD, USB stick or an organized playlist on a Spotify or Amazon account. Submit the music to the sound technician no later than a week before the wedding rehearsal.

Special Music

At times a bride and groom may choose to have a special musician or musicians perform at the wedding. Again, this music *must be pre-approved by the presiding pastor*. The musician and the sound technician will need to get together before the wedding rehearsal to work out staging and balance issues so that it is ready to perform for the wedding rehearsal and the wedding itself. Meeting an hour before the wedding rehearsal is usually adequate. Inform the sound technician of any special music and the rehearsal time.

Music Suggestions

Here is a list of songs for a wedding solo or unity ceremony.

How Beautiful (Twila Paris)
I Will Be Here (Steven Curtis Chapman)
Wedding Song (There is Love)
Only God Could Love You More
(Kelly Nelon Thompson)
The Prayer (Celine Dion)
The Lord's Prayer
He Has Chosen Me for You (Pat Terry)
Household of Faith (Steve Green)
This Day (Jaden Lavik)
When I Say I Do (Matthew West)
A Parent's Prayer
(Steven Curtis Chapman)
Cause He Gave Me You
(Warren Stephens)
Two Becoming One
(Jonathan & Emily Martin)
This Ring (T Carter Music)
The Blessing (Elevation Worship)
Love Found Us (Warren Stephens)

For a Lifetime (Ryan Darling)
I Choose You (Ryan Darling)
You, Me, & Jesus (Arbor North)
With All My Heart
(Promised Land Music)
Journey As One (Thaddaeus Tean)
When God Made You (Newsong)
Love Like This (Lauren Daigle)
Perfect Union (Matthew Ward)
To Have and to Hold
(The Trina Belamide Network)
Cherish the Treasure (Steve Green)
This is the Day (Scott Wesley Brown)
Hymns
LSB 858 - O Father, All Creating
LBS 860 - Gracious Savior, Grant Your
Blessing
LSB 861 - Christ Be My Leader
LSB 922 - Go, My Children, with My
Blessing (with marriage verse)

Wedding Slides

We have the ability to put the wedding program on the TVs in the sanctuary. If you would like to use the TV's, please contact Eileen Golus in the church office at least 4 to 6 weeks prior to the wedding. You will need a sound technician if you choose to have the wedding slides.

Wedding Video & Sound

As a service to you, a basic video of the wedding can be provided at your request. Sound for the video is run through the sound system so the presiding pastor and songs are heard well but the vows may be very faint. If a high-quality video is desired, the bride and groom are encouraged to hire a professional videographer.

If you have recorded music, special music (soloist, etc.), are requesting a video or wedding slides on the TVs you will need a sound technician. The sound technician will be a church member that is trained to work in the sound booth.

Flowers and Decorations

Decorations are not to be placed on or attached to the altar, pulpit, baptismal font, or lectern. Baptismal font and lectern can be moved to the side, but can not be removed from the sanctuary.

Flowers: Flowers may be placed on the altar or in the altar vases.

Pew Bows: Tape is not to be used on the chairs or other church furniture. Bows may be attached to the chairs using a clip.

Seating capacity: The sanctuary will seat approximately 208 individuals. By adding another row in the front and seating in the choir loft we can seat approximately 245. You are welcome to add chairs in the narthex but please plan to set them up and put them away following the wedding. We are also able to seat overflow guest and stream the service to the fellowship hall.

Church Volunteer

The church will provide a volunteer to help with some of the preparations at the church. The volunteer will turn heat/air up, help line up family and wedding party and be available to answer questions that may arise. The volunteer will not be at the church all day, but will leave a contact number.

Items to Plan For

When planning the wedding, please assign a family member or friend to:

- Pin flowers on wedding party
- Pick up any flowers petals or programs left in the sanctuary following the ceremony
- Pack up and take guest table items
- Put away any chairs, tables or other items that belong to the church
- Take down any decorations in the sanctuary or hallways (including the unity candle, cross, etc.)
- Take clothing bags and items used to get ready out prior to leaving the church
- Clean up and take any food that was served to the wedding party

Photography

Still photography may be taken only from the balcony during the service. The professional photographer may use flash photography as the wedding party is processing in. He or she is not to go past the **front row in the sanctuary**. Please place the following statement in your wedding folder:

The marriage of _____ takes place within the context of a Worship Service. So that there are no distractions, please refrain from taking flash pictures.

Receptions and Rehearsals

The fellowship hall may be reserved through the church office for the reception and/or rehearsal dinner.

Day of the Wedding

You are welcome to use the youth room to serve snacks or lunch to the wedding party.

Please have parents and grandparents wait in the youth room at least 10 minutes prior to the wedding while guests are being seated.

Remember that we have Worship services and Sunday School the next morning, so plan to take everything with you Saturday evening.

As a courtesy to you our custodian will come in and clean the bathrooms and Sunday school rooms Saturday evening after the wedding. Please be considerate and leave the rooms the way you found them.

Please no alcohol in the church or on the property. Thanks!

The Departure from the Church

When the wedding party leaves the church after the service, the throwing of birdseed or rice is not permitted. Liquid bubbles may be released outside of the building. Balloons may be released but must stay outside of the building.

Wedding Toasts

It has sadly become the custom at many wedding receptions for the best man or maid of honor or others to seek to embarrass the bride and groom by sharing off colored jokes or inappropriate stories. You are strongly encouraged to talk with them to discourage this as you seek for your wedding to be a clear witness to your love for Christ and one another. Thank you!

Participants

The Pastor: All weddings are to be performed by or under the direction the pastor of Mount Calvary Lutheran Church or another LCMS pastor. If the bridal couple wishes to invite the officiating pastor and his wife and family and the organist and spouse to either the Rehearsal Dinner or the Wedding Reception, or both, they should notify them at least a month in advance of the Wedding. This courtesy is appreciated.

Flower Girl and Ring Bearer should be at least 4 years old to stand through the service. Younger children may be escorted down the aisle and sit with family or friends during the service.

The Board of Elders must approve all weddings.

Wedding Fees

Building Use (No Charge)

Fellowship Hall (No Charge)

Custodian (No Charge)

Clergy Couples discretion

“Marriage God’s Way” (No Charge)

Organist/Pianist \$100

(An additional \$10 is appreciated if an extra soloist rehearsal is necessary prior to the service.)

Sound Technician \$100

(A Technician is needed if you are using slides, video, special music or recorded music)

Soloist \$50 (suggested)

Please pay all fees prior to the Wedding Service to the Pastor, Organist/Pianist, Musician and Sound Technician. Any other donations may be left with the office. Contact the church office if you have questions.