



Planning Your Wedding
at
Calvary Lutheran
Church

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Preface

Biblical Points about Marriage

1. Marriage between one man and one woman is designed, ordained, and blessed by God for the purpose of filling the earth and subduing it (*Genesis 1, 2:21-25*).
2. Marriage is intended for life. Marriage is to be ended only by death (*Matthew 19:4-6*).
3. Marriage is a life-long binding covenant before God and society (*Malachi 2:14*).
4. Marriage is the only proper and safest place for sexual intimacy (*I Corinthians 7:23, Hebrews 13:4*). As a result, sex outside of or before marriage is sin. Yet, like all sins, as one repents (being sorry and changing one's ways) and comes again to Christ, they are forgiven and enabled to change by the power of the Holy Spirit (*I John 1*).
5. Marriage is a reflection of the relationship between Jesus and His Church (*Ephesians 5:21-33, Revelation 21, 22*).

We realize that weddings are expensive and the planning is time consuming, but the time and money you invest in this preparation will be, by far, your best investment.

The wedding is but one day, marriage is a lifetime. We desire to help you build a relationship which will last a lifetime. As such, the timeline on page 6 seeks to build up your future as a married couple.

Timeline for Marriage Preparations

I. Contact the pastor of Calvary to set up a time to talk about your wedding plans as soon as possible. No notification is too far in advance and should not be less than 6 months.

At that time, the Pastor will give you a “couple information sheet” to fill out along with a sheet to sign stating that you agree with the biblical points about marriage as stated in the preface.

In order to best prepare couples of marriage, be prepared to talk about your relationship as a couple and any previous relationships with others that might affect your married life together. Also, bring a calendar in order to set up a date for the pre-marriage inventory (one hour), five pre-marriages sessions (about one and a half hours each), and preferred wedding dates to tentatively mark the church calendar.

If a couple live far from the church other arrangements for the pre-marriage sessions may be possible.

II. Take a pre-marriage inventory administered by the Pastor. This is actually an enjoyable conversation starter, not a test. You can preview the inventory at www.lifeinnovations.com

III. Complete a minimum of five pre-marriage sessions with the Pastor.

IV. Optional dinner/activity with other couples preparing for marriage in the spring.

V. Other opportunities to help your relationship grow may be recommended, such as: Seminars, retreats, etc.

VI. One or two months before the wedding day, finalize your service plans, evaluate the pre-marriage process, and make final arrangements as needed.

VII. Wedding rehearsal and the wedding day.

Wedding Plans

A Wedding is Worship

As you make plans for your wedding day, you will want to bear in mind that a church wedding is a worship service of the church. For that reason, certain customs which may pertain to a civil ceremony are not fitting within such a worship service. Since marriage is instituted by God, the marriage service should reflect our reverence for Him and should reflect our faith in our God as He has been revealed in Jesus Christ. Since a wedding service is a worship service, it is always fitting to extend an open invitation to members of the congregation to attend this service of the church. Also, since it is very easy for all the other incidentals of a wedding service to assume more importance than they ought, it is advisable for couples to observe a measure of restraint with the outward aspects of your wedding. The pastor will be in charge of the wedding service and should be consulted first before initiating something which may not be in harmony with the practices of the church.

The Wedding Date

The date of the wedding should be cleared with the pastor and the church office early in your planning, and invitations should not be sent out until dates and times are established with him. He will also set appointments for pre-marital sessions with you. Because of the solemnity of the season, weddings are not held during Holy Week: Palm Sunday through Easter Sunday.

Flowers & Decorations

Decoration of the Sanctuary for the wedding does not need to follow any set pattern, ***but must always meet the approval of the officiating pastor.***

Flowers, as a symbol of life and the beauty of God's creative love, are certainly fitting for the wedding service. We request that only real flowers be used in the chancel area since they are a symbol of life. Chancel furnishing should not be removed for the placement of flowers, nor should arrangements be overly ostentatious. A single bouquet at the foot of the cross is sufficient and elegant. Other decorations are permitted, providing they are not overly ostentatious or distracting. ***We ask that decorations NOT be attached to the standing candelabras.*** The use of an aisle runner is not recommended on our carpet.

A ***Wedding Banner*** is available. It can be decorated with ribbons in the bridal colors attached to the sides if you desire. If you choose to use ***pew bows***, the church sanctuary has 17 pews on each side for a total of 34 pews. We also have a ***prie-dieu*** and a ***unity candle stand & holder*** available for your use.

Rice throwing: In the past, we have had an abuse in the use of rice associated with post-wedding activities. It has been passed out before weddings, during receptions, and at other times which inevitably prolongs the period a person carries it around inside the church. Small children and irresponsible youth and adults have scattered it about in the Sanctuary, Friendship Room, on stairways and outside walks, making clean-up difficult, walking hazardous, and appearance unsightly. While throwing rice is not only a pagan ritual, it is unethical in a day when so many go hungry, and it renders the church open to legal action in case of accident. Therefore, the practice of throwing rice in post-wedding festivities is not allowed. Further, ***the Trustees have established the policy that no rice shall be brought into the church building or on the church grounds for the purpose of showering wedding couples following the ceremony.*** Bubbles or balloons are acceptable alternatives.

Music

The music in a church wedding should be of a Christian character, invoking the presence of the Triune God and glorifying Him. The “traditional” *Here Comes the Bride* by Wagner, and the *Wedding March* by Mendelssohn are not considered suitable for the worship setting of the wedding since they are of entirely secular origin and of questionable background. An abundance of good music for processions and recessions is available which would be more suited to a Christian marriage service.

It should also be noted that our organ has been dedicated to the glory of God and the service of His people in worship. It is not, therefore, appropriate to use it for theatrical and secular music within a worship service. Since those present are invited to worship with the couple, we suggest the practice of congregational singing. There are many fine and suitable hymns in our hymnal and worship resource, *The Lutheran Service Book*. These may also be considered for solos. Any music by vocalists should be approved by the pastor, and should be within the ability of the vocalist to perform with competence.

For your convenience, here is a listing of appropriate selections:

Wedding Song Selections:

This Is the Day	Scott Wesley Brown
With This Ring.....	Edited, Jack Scramer
Walk Hand in Hand	Johnny Cowell
Our Love, in Christ	Kelly Willard
He Has Chosen You For Me.....	Pat Terry
God, A Woman and A Man	Lilly Green
When You Created Love	Tom Fettke
I Love You With the Love of the Lord	Jim Gilbert
Song for a Christian Wedding.....	Chuck Girard
Here We Are	Dallas Holm
Together	Rodger Strader
Together in Him.....	Tracy Dartt
Lord Bless this Hour	Norman J. Clayton

A Wedding Benediction.....Austin C. Lovelace
 Parents' Prayer..... Greg Davis
 Entreat Me Not to Leave Thee.....Gounod
 Settings of the 23rd Psalm Malotte & Others
 God, My Shepherd, Walks Beside Me.....
Back-Dickinson
 The God of Love My Shepherd Is Thimen
 O Perfect Love Barnby-Willan-Burleigh
 Wedding Prayer Dunlap
 O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts Brahms
 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling Welsh Hymn Tune
 Whither Thou Go'est Flor Peeters
 O Perfect Love Willan-Cassler-SBH
 Nuptial Blessing.....Proulx-Augsburg
 Wedding Song..... Schutz-Chantry Press

Also, selections from:

Wedding Blessings..... Bunjes-Concordia
 The Greatest of These Moe-Augsburg
 Abide With Them Cassler
 Lord, Who at Cana's Wedding Cassler

Duets:

Our Love Sam Scott, Tom Coombes, Bill North
 Author of Love..... Paul Clark

Unity Candle:

When Two Become OneMelody J. Dyer
 Two Candles Sonny Salsburg

Prayer:

Our Lord's Prayer Albert Malotte
 Thine Be the Glory..... John Lee
 Wedding Prayer Fern G. Dunlap
 Thy Will Be Done.....Joyce E. Eilers

Organ Music:

Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring..... Bach
 Be Thou Near Bach

Air—Suite in D	Bach
Prelude, on Brother James Air	Searle Wright
Rhosymedre (Lovely)	Vaughn Williams
Arioso in A	Handel-Fischer
Dearest Jesus, We Are Here	Purvis
Vision	Rheinberger
Choral & Prayer, Suite Gothique	Boellmaun
The Lord's My Shepherd (tune: Crimond)	Mueller
Adagio	Bach
Water Music Suite	Handel

Wedding Processionals & Recessionals:

Now Thank We All Our God	Karg-Elert
Psalm 19	Marcello
Trumpet Tunes	Purcell
Rigandon	Campro-Ferrari
Processional on St. Theodulph	Jan Bender
Praise My Soul the King of Heaven ...	Ludvig Lindeman
Trumpet Tunes (E Major & D Major)	David Johnson

Congregational Hymns from the Lutheran Service Book:

O Father, All Creating	#858
Lord, When You Came as Welcome Guest	#859
Gracious Savior, Grant Your Blessing	#860
Go My Children, With My Blessing	#922

Organists

Calvary currently has three organists and one pianist on staff. If you would like one of them to play at your wedding, we recommend that you contact the individual once your wedding date has been established to see if he or she is available to play for your wedding.

Calvary's organists are:

Ken Johnson	712-574-6659
Robin Mohl	605-422-1370

Brenda Saunders 712-947-4737

Calvary's pianist is: Don Horsted 712-277-4179

Wedding Bulletins / Programs

Wedding bulletins/programs can be printed by the church office if the couple provides the information and the blank bulletin covers. The covers are available at local Christian book and supply stores, or you can order them from Christian supply catalogs available in the church office.

If you are having the church office print your bulletin/programs, please have the covers and the information turned into the church secretary ***no later than two weeks prior to the ceremony***. This will allow time for proof-reading and corrections. Samples of several types of fonts and style formats are available in the office.

A Wedding service format is printed in this booklet on page 16. Any modifications should be discussed with the pastor.

The Wedding Rehearsal

The date and time of the wedding rehearsal are second only to the date and time of the wedding. This time should be set with the pastor at the first consultation. It is important that everyone who is going to participate in the wedding to be at the rehearsal—and to be there ***on time***. If everyone is on time and nothing unpredictable takes place, the rehearsal should last 45 minutes or less.

If you plan to have a pre-nuptial dinner—please plan to have it ***after*** the rehearsal so that you can be present on time. There are several people whose schedules depend on your being prompt.

The Nursery Room is used as the bride's room with a full length mirror, etc. The groom and the remainder of the men in the wedding party will meet in the Conference room next to the pastor's office.

The Wedding Ceremony

As was indicated under the section of wedding music—the wedding ceremony at Calvary Lutheran Church is a sacred Christian service. It is, in effect, a worship service with honor and praise given to God for the institution of Holy Matrimony. Although the couple being married is certainly important—the real joy and expression of the Christian ceremony is the fact of its being founded on the person of Christ and the strength and stability that will be given to the marriage because of that fact.

Many of the things that have become associated with weddings have come through secular and commercial promotion. The fact that “everyone else does it” by no means makes it right or proper for a Christian ceremony. Any additions or changes in the wedding ceremony must be discussed and agreed upon by the officiating pastor. It is hoped that his discretion will be honored whenever a questionable area is discussed.

A pastor of Calvary Lutheran Church must be in charge of each wedding held at Calvary or consulted to delegate this authority. At his personal conviction, the pastor has the right, at any time, to refuse to marry anyone or allow anyone to participate in the ceremony who projects disrespectful manners. He has this right even after arrangements have been made—if the circumstances prevail

Photography

The wedding service is a sacred ceremony and should be conducted in reverence and with dignity. Flash photographs taken by friends, relatives, and professional photographers can be disruptive and at times rude and sacrilegious. Therefore, the policy has been established that ***no flash photos will be allowed during the wedding ceremony.***

Many couples pose for formal photographs some time prior to the wedding, so as not to keep the guests waiting after the service.

It is permissible to video-tape the ceremony, provided it is not

done in an obtrusive or distracting manner. The wedding photographer should contact the pastor in charge of the ceremony prior to taking any and all photographs to prevent any misunderstanding.

Wedding Reception

Your wedding reception should reflect, not erase, the sanctity and importance of your union in Christ. Again, good taste and dignity are in order. In more recent years, we have noted an increasing emphasis on the reception along with escalating costs and preparations. Couples should seriously question whether this is in keeping with an attitude of Christian moderation and a wise use of the financial resources God has placed at our disposal. Such extravagance certainly has no bearing on the success of the marriage.

If you wish to reserve the Parish Hall for your reception, please obtain approval well in advance of the wedding date. Our Parish Hall can accommodate a maximum of about 200 guests. Our Calvary Lutheran Women's League (CLWL) can help you with your preparations for the reception in the Parish Hall. Call the church office (239-1575) for contact information. Please note: Alcoholic beverages are not permitted on the church premises.

Marriage License

The marriage license must be in the hands of the pastor no later than the day prior to the wedding. This is to allow the pastor time to prepare the license for the signatures before the day of the wedding.

The pastor will need the signature of the Bride, Groom and the two witnesses before the ceremony is completely finalized. He will then record and return the license to the proper county clerk and, after it is recorded, the county clerk will return a photocopy to the married couple.

Costs & Fees

The previous comments about containing the costs of the wedding day should be borne in mind. Simplicity in dress, decorations, etc., is generally advised rather than that which suggests an elaborate “show” or an attempt to “outdo” others.

Our Calvary Lutheran Women’s League (CLWL) does have a set fee for assisting at the reception. Consultation with the CLWL is required. We do not set fees for others who serve you in your wedding service, (pastor, organist, custodian, etc.) but it is an appropriate gesture of gratitude to present them with an honorarium of some sort. The amount given to our organists for playing at a regular church service can be supplied to you on request.

Generally speaking, wedding services are held at our church for members only; but should unusual circumstances permit the wedding of two non-members, it is expected that they would make a contribution to the congregation for the use of the facilities.

May God bless your Wedding Day

and

Grant you many blessings

as you begin your life together.

The Marriage Service

Prelude

Pre-service music

Lighting of Candles

Seating of Grandparents

Seating of Parents

Processional

Invocation

When the wedding party has come to the foot of the altar, the pastor begins:

Pastor: In the Name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

People: Amen

Pastor: We are gathered here in the sight of God and of His Church to witness and bless the joining together of this man and this woman in holy marriage. This is an honorable estate, which God Himself has instituted and blessed, and by which He gives us a picture of the very communion of Christ and His bride, the Church. God has both established and sanctified marriage and has promised to bless therein all who love and trust in Him and who seek to give Him their faithful worship and service, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The union of husband and wife in heart, body and mind is intended by God for their mutual joy, for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity (and, when it is God's will, for the procreation of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of the Lord). Therefore, marriage is not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, deliberately, and in accordance with the purposes for which it was instituted by God.

Parental Support

Pastor: I now ask you parents: Do you give your consent and approval to this marriage?

Parents: We do.

Pastor: Will you, as parents, support encourage and strengthen (names) in their marriage, remembering at all times that God wants them to live in obedience to His holy ordinance until death parts them?

Parents: We will.

Scripture Readings

Appropriate portions of Holy Scripture are read.

Music (if desired)

The Marriage Sermon

Music (if desired)

Marriage Vows

Pastor: So that everyone may know that your mutual consent has been sincerely and freely given, I now ask you: (Groom), 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?

Groom: I will.

Pastor: (Bride), 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, and keep him in sickness and in health and forsaking all others, be wife to him as long as you both shall live?

Bride: I will.

Pastor: Join your right hands and repeat after me:

The groom, taking the right hand of the bride and facing her, repeats after the pastor:

Groom: I, (name), in the presence of God and these witnesses, take you (bride's name), to be my wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, until death parts us, and I pledge you my faithfulness.

The bride, in the same way, says after the pastor:

Bride: I, (name), in the presence of God and these witnesses, take you (groom's name), to be my husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, until death parts us, and I pledge you my faithfulness.

Exchange of Rings

The bride and groom exchange rings as the pastor says:

Pastor: Exchange these rings as a pledge and token of wedded love and faithfulness.

The pastor may speak a blessing upon the pledging of their love with the exchange of rings.

Pastor: Grant your blessing, O Lord, to your servants, (bride) and (groom), that they may be ever mindful of their solemn pledge and, trusting in your mercy, abound evermore in love all their days; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

People: Amen.

Pastor: Now that (bride) and (groom) have consented together in holy marriage, have given themselves to each other by their solemn pledges, and have declare the same before God and these witnesses, I pronounce them to be husband and wife, in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

What God has joined together, let no one put asunder.

People: Amen

Pastor: The almighty and gracious God abundantly grant you His favor and sanctify and bless you with the blessing given our first parents in paradise that you may please Him in both body and soul and live together in holy love until your life's end.

People: Amen.

Music (if desired)

The Ceremony of the Candles

Pastor: The two outside candles have been lighted to represent the lives of (bride) and (groom) at this moment. They are two distinct lights, each capable of going their separate ways. To bring bliss and happiness to their home there must be the merging of these two lights. This is what the Lord meant when He said, "On this account a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall be one flesh." From now on their thoughts shall be for each other rather than for their individual selves. Their plans shall be mutual, their joys and sorrows shall be shared alike.

(Bride) and (groom) will now take a candle and together light the center one. They will extinguish their own, thus letting the center candle represent the union of their lives into one flesh. As this one candle cannot be divided, neither shall their lives be divided, but a united testimony in a Christian home. May the radiance of this light be a testimony of their unity in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Music/Solo (if desired)

Pastor: Let us pray:

Almighty, everlasting God, our heavenly Father, grant that by your blessing (bride) and (groom) may live together according to your Word and promise. Strengthen

them in faithfulness and love toward each other. Sustain and defend them in all trial and temptation. Help them to live in faith toward each other that they may ever enjoy your heavenly blessing; through Jesus Christ, your Son, Our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

People: Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Benediction:

Pasotr: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord lift up his countenance on you and + give you peace.

People: Amen.

Announcement of Husband and Wife

Recessional

Suggested Scripture Readings

Old Testament:

Psalm 127
Genesis 2:18-24
Ruth 1:16-17
Psalm 23
Psalm 144:15

New Testament:

Gospels:

Matthew 6:33
Matthew 7:24-27
Matthew 18:20
Matthew 19:5-6
John 6:68
John 14:27

Epistles:

Acts: 16:31
Romans 15:5-6
I Corinthians 13:1-8
II Corinthians 13:11
Ephesians 5;22-25
Colossians 3:17-19
James 1:17
I Peter 3:7
Jude 20-21

Questions for the Pastor

(Use this space to write down any questions you may have about what you have read in this booklet and bring them to your meeting with the pastor.)