

# *Wedding Manual*

*Guidelines for Planning Your Wedding  
at*

## *St. John's Lutheran Church*

*3521 Linda Vista  
Napa, CA 94558  
707-255-0119  
[www.stjohnslutheran.net](http://www.stjohnslutheran.net)*

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## **United in Christ**

Your wedding day will be one of the highlights of your relationship with each other, if not your entire life. The members of St. John's Lutheran Church want to help you make your wedding day a joyous occasion, a day of blessing in the Lord.

Christians want to give Christ the first place in their hearts and their lives, especially at such an important time. Your desire to have your wedding in our Church gives evidence of your desire to have your Lord bless your marriage. You will show your dedication to your Lord by the manner in which you will strive to keep Christ central in your marriage that He might richly and daily bless you in it. Your wedding ceremony is not only the formal occasion in which your lives are bound together, but also an opportunity for you to confess and witness in word and deed that Jesus Christ will be the center of your marriage, as He will be the center of the service.

## **Preliminary Arrangements**

### **Getting Married at St. John's**

At St. John's we are interested not just in a wedding service, but in your marriage, for now and the years to come. Therefore it is important to us that we have a relationship with those who will be married at St. John's. For this reason, we do weddings for those who are part of our St. John's Community, and for those for whom we have the expectation of an ongoing relationship.

### **Contact the Pastor**

The first step in planning your wedding service is to contact the pastor at least five (5) months before the wedding date.

At the first session with the Pastor, this manual will be reviewed, along with other information pertaining to the wedding preparations. Any problems that come up in this initial interview will be resolved to the pastor's satisfaction before proceeding with the wedding plans, or setting a date for the wedding. Please read this manual carefully before the first session and make note of any items that you have questions about.

Please note that the Wedding Date will not be confirmed on our church calendar until the first meeting with the pastor. It would be best to wait until this time before firmly setting the date for your wedding, including reserving a facility for the reception.

### **Wedding Coordinator**

St. John's has a wedding coordinator who will work with the couple in preparing for the practical aspects of the wedding service. She will coordinate unlocking the building and working with the photographer, videographer, decorations, etc. She will be present at the rehearsal and at the wedding in order to work with the Wedding party and their role during the service. Please refer to the fee schedule for the wedding coordinator fee.

After the date of the wedding has been set, you should contact the St. John's Wedding Coordinator as soon as possible. (Please refer to contact section.)

### **Pre-Marital Counseling**

This is required of all couples. The number of sessions, as well as the times and dates will be determined by the pastor when he meets with you. Usually there will be at least five sessions. If any problems arise during the counseling sessions which compromise the Christian faith or church practice, they will be resolved to the satisfaction of the pastor before wedding plans proceed.

The purpose of premarital counseling at St. John's is to assist you, on the basis of God's Word, in seeing yourselves as a marriage under Christ. We will discuss the strengths of your relationship, as well as those areas that need attention. The intent is not necessarily to solve all problems or potential problems. But rather through the counseling we seek to equip you with tools which will help you in growing a Christian Marriage. Premarital counseling will include reading assignments,

Bible studies, relationship-building exercises and discussion with the pastor.

The pastors at St. John's make use of a Prepare/Enrich, a resource for assessing strengths and growth areas in a couple's relationship. There is a fee of \$35 for the use of this instrument.

### **Worship Attendance**

It is expected that couples planning a Christ-centered wedding worship service will be worshipping regularly themselves. The gifts of God through Word and Sacrament are greatly needed by all, especially by you as you plan your life together. The practice of worshipping, praying, communing, and praising the Lord together will give Jesus the room in your hearts and lives to bind you ever more closely in his love.

### **Weddings for those who do not live in Napa**

We occasionally will perform weddings for those who do not live in the Napa area. We are open to these weddings in this circumstances:

- There is a significant connection to our congregation (grew up going to St. John's, parents are still here, etc.),
- The couple is active in one of our sister LCMS congregations in another part of the country

In these cases the worship attendance requirement of course applies to the home congregation of the couple. The couple will also need to secure pre-marital counseling at their own congregation. The wedding will not be scheduled at St. John's until the St. John's pastor has consulted with the pastor or counselor who is conducting the pre-marital counseling. Those who are members of one of our sister LCMS congregations may also want to consider inviting their pastor to come and perform the wedding at our facility.

## **Use of Facilities**

In addition to the sanctuary, the bride and her attendants may use a designated space, specified by the Wedding Coordinator, and for storage, dressing, and preparation. This room will be locked.

The kitchen is available for refreshments during the rehearsal, rehearsal dinners and receptions. Please consult the fee schedule. Let the business administrator know as soon as possible if you would like to use the kitchen and/or fellowship hall so that you may be provided with the necessary paperwork.

If you desire to have your reception in our Parish Hall, please note that there is a separate Reception Coordinator for this event.

The couple must make arrangements for the church to be cleaned after the wedding. If you wish to contract the services of our custodian, please speak to the business administrator about this.

There is to be no smoking in any of the church buildings.

## **The Wedding Service**

The wedding service is above all a Christian Worship service. It is every bit as much a worship service as a regular Sunday morning service. Therefore, the wedding will be planned in such a manner that in all things Jesus is central.

One of the responsibilities of the pastor of this congregation is to make sure that the worship services use music and resources which reflect the teachings of the Bible. Therefore, anything pertaining to the worship service must be cleared with the pastor.

It is expected that at all times the wedding party will conduct itself in a manner befitting a Christian Church. Even if the participants in the wedding do not share the faith of the bride or groom, we expect that out of respect to them and the members of the church, they will conduct themselves in a reverent manner, and so not give offense either to the Lord or His worshipers.

### **Order of Service**

This is the order of a typical wedding service. The actual service will be laid out in the course of the premarital counseling

Prelude (*Vocal or instrumental music*)  
Seating of parents  
Processional (*Hymn or instrumental*)  
Invocation, Welcome and Prayer  
Scripture Readings  
Sermon  
*Hymn or Vocal Music*  
Wedding Ceremony:  
    Exchange of Vows  
    Exchange of Rings  
    Marriage Announcement  
    *Unity Candle (Hymn, vocal, or instrumental music)*  
Prayer and the Lord's Prayers  
*Hymn or Vocal Music*  
Marriage Blessing and Benediction  
Recessional (*Hymn or instrumental*)

*Items in italics are optional*

## **Music**

Vocal music used during the wedding must reflect a distinctive Christian message that gives honor to Christ. Secular music is best left to the reception. Even music without words should be chosen carefully to make sure that it is appropriate for worship, and does not distract from it. A simple test is to ask yourself if the music would be appropriate on a Sunday morning worship. The couple should not choose any music nor make any arrangements for musicians before reviewing music with the pastor. He will have suggestions on appropriate music.

Organ, piano, or other instrumental music for the processional, recessional, prelude, and postlude needs to be reviewed by the one of the pastors. If you would like suggestions on other musicians (strings, guitars, etc.), please speak to the pastors.

Hymns and praise songs provide wonderful opportunities for the wedding guests to worship with you, singing praise to the Lord. For suggestions of familiar praise songs, as well as wedding hymns set to familiar tunes, please ask the pastors.

## **Faith Chapel**

Your wedding may be in the main Sanctuary or the Faith Chapel (outdoor sanctuary). If you choose to have the wedding in the Faith Chapel, please note that you will be expected to coordinate workers for the setting up and taking down of the chairs.

## **Decorations**

Flowers may be placed on the stand behind the altar, or at other places in the chancel. Bows or flowers may be applied to the pews. Wedding banners may be selected from our banners, or special banners may be supplied by the couple if considered appropriate by the Pastor. The paraments will not be changed for the wedding. Any other decorations should be cleared with the wedding coordinator

## **Photography**

The photographer needs to meet with the wedding coordinator before the wedding for instructions. Video taping of the service is permitted provided no other lighting is needed. The wedding coordinator will designate where the equipment can be placed. No flash pictures are permitted during the wedding service.

## **Wedding Service Folder**

The use of a wedding service folder is optional. You may have your own made or have the church use a pre-printed folder that you purchase. If you want the church to print the worship folder, we will need a list of all the wedding party and participants at least two weeks before the wedding. If you are printing your own, the pastor will need to review it before it goes to print.

## **Other Clergy**

Other clergy and guest participants in the wedding service must have the approval of the pastor. He will issue the invitation and determine the function of any other clergy or guest participants.

### **Wedding Rehearsal**

A wedding rehearsal will be held for all participants, preferably on the day before the wedding. Vocalists and musicians do not need to attend the rehearsal. It is important that all are present and on time. Exceptions to this need to be shared with the wedding coordinator in advance so that the absent wedding participants can be properly instructed before the wedding service.

If you wish the pastor or wedding coordinator to attend a dinner before or after the rehearsal, the invitation needs to be made prior to the wedding rehearsal.

### **Fees**

Below are the fees for the weddings at St. John's. It is expected that fees will be paid before the wedding, unless other arrangements have been. The member fees apply when the bride and/or groom are members of St. John's.

#### **Member Fees**

Prepare/Enrich	\$35	
Sanctuary	No charge	
Kitchen	No charge	
Parish Hall	Donation at the discretion of the couple	
Organist	\$200	
Practice with soloists	\$50	
Pastor	Left to the discretion of the couple	
Wedding Coordinator	\$150	
Sound Technician	\$75	(\$100 for Faith Chapel)
Reception Coordinator	\$150 +	(depending on the size of the reception)

#### **Non-Member Fees\***

Prepare/Enrich	\$35	
Sanctuary Use	\$250	
Kitchen	\$100	
Fellowship Hall (reception)	\$250	
Organist	\$200	
Practice with soloists	\$50	
Pastor	\$300	
Wedding Coordinator	\$150	
Sound Technician	\$75	(\$100 for Faith Chapel)
Reception Coordinator	\$150 +	(depending on the size of the reception)

**Contact Information**

Pastors

Pastor Mike Schmid (707-255-0119, ext. 122)

Pastor Mark Heine (707-255-0119, ext 124)

Wedding Coordinator

Jill Kusel (707-265-0236)

Organist/Pianist

Erin Blackwood 707-227-0460

Business Manager

Tim Kramer (707-255-0119, ext 121)

Church Office Manager

Christy Kramer (707-255-0119, ext 120)

Reception Coordinator

Lori Hardin (707-253-7714)