

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH WEDDING GUIDELINES

May God richly bless you as you prepare to enter into a marriage covenant. As you stand before God's altar in this church you will speak your promises of commitment to each other and to God. Such promises are your way of showing that you recognize marriage as a gift from God and that you desire the Lord's blessing on your life together in and through Jesus Christ. The members of St. Paul's Congregation extend to you their hand of welcome in the spirit of Jesus Christ.

WEDDING DATE and COUNSELING

Once you have selected a wedding date, please contact the Pastor through the Church office at (810)765-4808. It is recommended that you contact the Pastor several months ahead to assure that the date is available and allow sufficient time for pre-marital counseling. All couples are required to participate in a minimum of three pre-marital counseling sessions with the Pastor before the wedding.

REHEARSAL

Most marriage ceremonies require a rehearsal in order to assure that the wedding proceeds smoothly. The Pastor will arrange a rehearsal time with the couple and will serve as the lead for the rehearsal process. Details of the wedding ceremony must be reviewed with the Pastor prior to the rehearsal. All participants are expected to be prompt to rehearsal.

CONGREGATIONAL WEDDING COORDINATOR

The Pastor will arrange for the Congregational Wedding Coordinator to be in attendance at the rehearsal and also during the wedding ceremony. This person is responsible for the church building and its operation (ringing the bell, lights, heat/fans, sound system, unlock and lock up, clean up and vacuum after rehearsal and wedding etc.) The lighting of the altar candles may be done by a member of the wedding party, family member or the Wedding Coordinator. (See the Wedding Coordinator detailed responsibilities attached.)

WEDDING CEREMONY

The heart of the wedding ceremony is contained in the vows of lifelong love, faithfulness and commitment on the part of the bride and groom to each other. The ceremony itself takes place within a worship service, which also includes the reading of appropriate selections of scripture from the Bible, a brief sermonette, the exchange of rings, the prayerful invocation of God's blessings on the couple, and the playing or singing of selected music as well as additional music by a soloist/group. It may also include the symbolic lighting of the unity candle or combining of unity sand. The order of the service will be reviewed with the Pastor at a pre-marital counseling session. The wedding party and all guests must show respect for the house of worship in which the rehearsal and wedding is taking place. Disrespectful language and behavior in the church or church property violates the intended purposes of God's house.

ORGANIST/PIANIST

The church organist/pianist (Janet Teltow – 810-334-5480) or accompanist of your choice should be contacted once you have confirmed your wedding date with the Pastor. The music utilized during the wedding ceremony must be approved by the Pastor prior to the rehearsal. The organist has music that is appropriate for a Christian wedding service.

SOLOIST/GROUP

If a soloist/group is the choice of the couple, these singers should be selected early in order that they can practice with the organist ahead of rehearsal and the wedding ceremony. (If you cannot find a soloist/group to sing please contact the church office for assistance.)

PHOTOGRAPHER

Pictures may be taken anywhere inside or outside the church, before or after the wedding ceremony. However, no photography should interfere with preparation for the service. The wedding ceremony shall be considered begun as soon as the bride has been escorted down the aisle. The service is concluded when the recessional music begins. Tripods may be used only in the balcony or the rear of the church. We request that no flash pictures be taken in the church while the ceremony is in process. (This does not include time exposures without flash bulbs from the balcony or the rear of the church)

VIDEOGRAPHER

Video recording of the service is allowed as long as no additional lighting is required. All Videotaping must take place from either the balcony or the rear of the church.

BULLETINS

Bulletins are optional. Pastor will provide the order of service. Couples are responsible for their production and distribution. You may wish to review your bulletin with the Pastor prior to printing to ensure accuracy of service.

FLOWERS / DECORATIONS / CELEBRATIONS

Contact your florist for your choice of flower arrangements. Coordinate flower delivery with the Wedding Coordinator. Altar flowers may be left for Sunday Church Worship. If this is your intentions please sign the flower chart on the bulletin board in the rear of the church as soon as possible.

(Arrangements left for the Sunday worship service are to be only real flowers on the altar).

If you are utilizing an aisle runner, please note the length of the aisle from the bottom of the chancel step to the center of the rear of the church is 53 feet. There are 9 pews on each side of the church, one with wheelchair accessibility. Unity Candle or sand placement to be determined with the Pastor.

Candle stands down the aisle may be used if the candles are glass enclosed. **No tape or wire** shall be used on wood surfaces to attach bows or candles. We ask that **no** bows be placed on the altar candelabras. Please use rubber bands or ribbons to fasten bows on any wood finishes.

Throwing rice is prohibited on the church/property. Bird seed may be used outside the church or consider blowing bubbles.

SMOKING / ALCOHOL

Smoking is not allowed in the church premises. Smokers should be at least 30 feet from the church building or in their car and dispose of cigarette butts appropriately. (NOT in any wastebaskets). Alcoholic beverages are prohibited in the church and anywhere on the church property. The Pastor will not perform the ceremony or sign the marriage license if the Bride or Groom are intoxicated.

NO PARKING

No parking is permitted in the area in front of the church, educational building and cemetery.

Wedding cars and limousines can park in the church driveway to the south of the church or the parking lot.

The church is not responsible for personal property or damage related to the wedding.

MARRIAGE LICENSE

Couples are responsible for obtaining the marriage license from the county clerk's office of the county where either the bride or the groom legally reside. Please submit it to the church office **one week prior to the ceremony**. The secretary will type in the appropriate information so that it may be signed immediately prior to or after the ceremony.

ST. PAUL'S BUILDING USE POLICY:

There will be \$50.00 donation for use of the building for member weddings. This fee will include the use of the building for the wedding rehearsal day and the day of the wedding. This fee is to be paid 2 weeks in advance of rehearsal date; paid in cash or check and included with completed building use form. (form attached)

HONORARIA FOR ALL WEDDINGS

All weddings are subject to the following:

Congregational Wedding Coordinator: \$100.00

Church Organist: \$150.00

Pastor: \$150.00

These individual payments (check or cash) to be in envelopes are to be given to the Wedding Coordinator before the wedding rehearsal starts.

Payments to other musicians and soloists are arranged with those individuals.

NON-MEMBER or IN-ACTIVE MEMBER CHURCH USAGE

There is a Non-Member or In-Active Member Church Usage Fee of \$400.00 (A \$50 **NON-Refundable** deposit is to be paid in cash or money order to the Church as soon as you confirm your wedding date with Pastor). The balance of \$350.00 to be paid in full (by cash or money order only) two weeks prior to the rehearsal; and include with a completed building use form. (form attached)

A MEMBER is defined in accordance with the St. Paul's Lutheran Church Constitution as follows:

*C8.02.b. Confirmed members are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith.

*C8.04. It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:

- a. Make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;
- b. Live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of the Lutheran Church; and
- c. Support the work of this congregation, the synod, and the churchwide organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America through contributions of their time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.

This is an exciting, joyful and often busy time for a couple. During your time of engagement, we at St. Paul's encourage you to continue to nourish your faith by worshipping together as a couple. We look forward to supporting you as you prepare to enter into a covenant of commitment to each other and to God through Jesus Christ.