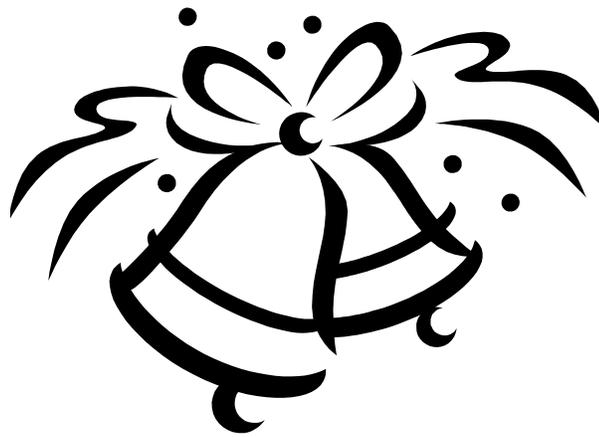


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## Wedding Guidelines

Revised June 2012

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## **GUIDELINES FOR YOUR WEDDING AT ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

St. Paul Lutheran Church  
108 Dutch Hill Road  
LATROBE, PA. 15650  
Approved by the Congregation Council  
November 9, 1994  
Revised December 2007  
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### **A CHURCH WEDDING IS A WORSHIP SERVICE**

A church wedding is a worship service. Couples come to God's house to be united in marriage, and to ask God's blessing on their union. Together they make a covenant of love and faithfulness in God's holy presence and in the presence of the congregation.

It is well to remember that a wedding, like every other event which takes place in church, whether it is a Baptism, a funeral, a service of Holy Communion, or any service of prayer or preaching, is a congregational event. As there are no private events in the church, weddings held here will be announced in the Sunday bulletin, and congregation members are welcome to attend.

A wedding could appropriately take place at a Sunday morning service of worship, and couples are encouraged to consider this in their plans.

The fact that a wedding in the church is a service of worship lends a certain perspective to all the things which happen at the wedding. Feeling the need to make this perspective clear, the *Worship and Music* Committee of St. Paul has put together some guidelines to help couples plan a worshipful wedding service.

If a couple plans to be married at St. Paul, it is expected that they will contact the pastor, and clear the date as early as possible. It is also expected that the couple will meet with the pastor for pre-marriage counseling four times. Rare exceptions to these expectations may be made at the discretion of the pastor.

Weddings during Lent are discouraged, due to the solemn nature of the season, but exceptions may be made when no other date is possible.

### **WHERE DO WE BEGIN TO PLAN?**

The *Evangelical Lutheran Worship Leaders Desk Edition* (p. 45) sets the tone for preparing for a church wedding when it states: "*The marriage liturgy is normally preceded by a period of preparation. Preferably beginning at least six months before the marriage, this time*

*of preparation may involve those to be married in conversation and counsel with the pastor...regarding the liturgy of marriage and the gifts and responsibilities of marriage."*

Marriage plans can become conflicted by consulting too many self-appointed authorities. Make sure any professional wedding consultant you use is aware of these guidelines for weddings at St. Paul. Photographers and florists especially should be informed of these guidelines well in advance of any final plans.

## **HOW CAN WE CHOOSE APPROPRIATE AND MEANINGFUL WEDDING MUSIC?**

*Whereas* the Marriage liturgy is a service of worship, the music therefore must be carefully and discriminatingly chosen. *Such music will* embody high standards of quality, and the texts should reflect the praise of God, the steadfast love of Christ for his Church as the foundation and model for love and fidelity in marriage, the invocation of God's presence and blessing. The guideline of our Church is that all music chosen for a wedding should be in keeping with the spirit of praise of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the song texts must reflect it.

## **WHERE CAN WE FIND A WEDDING MUSIC REPERTOIRE?**

The best place to seek advice for appropriate music is with our musical staff, especially with our music director. The couple should contact the organist (Marty Drexler – (724) 424-9776) after consulting the pastor. This should be as early as possible, so that adequate preparation can be made for music and rehearsal with a soloist, if used. These pieces of music have already been approved for use:

| <u>Name</u>     | <u>Title</u>                               | <u>Genre</u>  |
|-----------------|--|---------------|
| Nicolai         | <i>O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright</i> | Hymn 76       |
| Nicolai         | <i>Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying</i>    | Hymn 31       |
| Schalk          | <i>Now the Silence</i>                     | Hymn 205      |
| Cruger          | <i>Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness</i>  | Hymn 224      |
| Prichard        | <i>Hear Us Now, Our God and Father</i>     | Hymn 288      |
| Prichard        | <i>Love Divine, All Loves Excelling</i>    | Hymn 315      |
| Croft           | <i>O God, Our Help In Ages Past</i>        | Hymn 320      |
| Williams, Ralph | <i>Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life</i>     | Hymn 513      |
| Beethoven, L.V. | <i>Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee</i>        | Hymn 551      |
| SBH 434         | <i>Beautiful Savior</i>                    | Hymn 518      |
| Cruger          | <i>Now Thank We All Our God</i>            | Hymn 534      |
| Ylvisaker       | <i>Borning Cry</i>                         | Hymn 770      |
| Bach, J.S.      | <i>Arioso</i>                              | Organ Prelude |
| Bach, J.S.      | <i>When Thou Art Near</i>                  | Organ Prelude |

|                            |   |                             |
|----------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Bach, J.S.                 | Jesu, Joy Of Man's Desiring                 | Organ Prelude               |
| von Beethoven, Ludwig      | Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee                | Organ Prelude/Postlude      |
| Brahms                     | St. Anthony Chorale                         | Organ Prelude               |
| Franz                      | Dedication                                  | Organ Prelude               |
| Handel, G.F.               | Air   | Organ Prelude/Processional. |
| Handel, G.F.               | Arioso                                      | Organ Prelude               |
| Irvine                     | The Lord's My Shepherd                      | Organ Prelude               |
| Landohl                    | Eternal God, Before Thy Throne              | Organ Prelude               |
| Pachelbel, Johann          | Canon In D                                  | Organ Prelude               |
| Marcello                   | Psalm XIX                                   | Organ Postlude              |
| Schultz                    | In Thee Is Gladness                         | Organ Prelude/Pst.          |
| Clark, Jeremiah            | Trumpet Voluntary                           | Processional/Recess         |
| Purcell, Henry             | Trumpet Tune                                | Processional/Recess         |
| Rodgers, Richard           | Wedding Processional                        | Processional                |
| Mendelssohn, Felix         | Wedding March                               | Recessional                 |
| Barnby                     | O Perfect Love                              | Vocal Solo/Organ Sol        |
| Bradbury                   | Savior, Like A Shepherd Lead Us             | VocalSolo/Organ Solo/Hymn   |
| Dunlap                     | Wedding Prayer                              | Vocal Solo                  |
| Malotte                    | The Lord's Prayer                           | Vocal Solo/Prelude          |
| Schubert, Franz            | Ave Maria                                   | Vocal Solo                  |
| Stuckey, Paul              | Wedding Song (There Is Love)                | Vocal Solo                  |
| <i>Friedell</i>            | <i>Jesus, Come! For We Invite You</i>       | <i>Hymn 312</i>             |
| <i>Gaelic tune</i>         | <i>This Is a Day, Lord, Gladly Awaited</i>  | <i>Hymn 586</i>             |
| <i>Berthier</i>            | <i>Ubi Caritas et amor</i>                  | <i>Hymn 642</i>             |
| <i>English Traditional</i> | <i>Although I Speak with Angel's Tongue</i> | <i>Hymn 644</i>             |
| <i>Hobby</i>               | <i>Beloved, God's Chosen</i>                | <i>Hymn 648</i>             |

The use of hymns to be sung by the congregation is encouraged. Some hymns in the Lutheran Book of Worship which are appropriate are 287, 288, 289, 557, and 565. *If there are hymns from hymnals of another denomination they must be reviewed by both the Pastor and organist and proper copyright permission shall be secured.*

The Austin pipe organ at St. Paul is to be played only by those authorized by the congregation council. Special permission for others to play the organ must be given by our music director.

## **HOW MAY WE DECORATE THE CHURCH ?**

It is most proper that the church setting remain intact. Sweeping changes of decor are not suitable for a church wedding, but simplicity is often the maker of good taste.

Paraments, the colored hangings on the altar, pulpit and lectern, shall be those appropriate for the current season of the church year.

Altar candles are provided for weddings by the church. Additional candles **must** be dripless candles. The Unity candle may be purchased through the Church if the couple wishes. Colored candles are not recommended, but ivory or cream is acceptable.

Flowers are not mandatory. When flowers are used, they should also follow the principle of simplicity. Care should be taken not to create an overbearing floral display. Palms, ferns, or other greens may be used according to the formality of the occasion. Only live flowers are acceptable beside the altar.

A white aisle runner (crash) is appropriate but not essential when the bride wears a train which extends onto the floor. A 50 ft. runner is adequate for our center aisle. The runner can be purchased from the florist. The florist should check with the pastor before installing it. Its proper use requires two ushers. Please allow for this when naming your attendants.

Lighting of the church interior should lend itself to the service. Again, there should be no overbearing dramatic effect. If needed, consult our sexton if ushers are not familiar with lighting.

## **ARE THERE SOME STANDARDS ABOUT ATTIRE?**

In keeping with the Christian spirit of humility during worship, tasteful attire is expected. If the groom is in the military service at the time of the wedding, a military uniform may be appropriate for him. Other men in the wedding may be suited in civilian clothes to the degree of formality desired. Other military personnel may wear their uniforms if desired.

## **WHAT ABOUT THE SEATING OF GUESTS?**

Ushers should be on hand to seat guests at least one half hour before the service, and to distribute wedding bulletins if they are used. The bride's family and friends are customarily seated on the left facing the altar. The groom's are on the right side. At most weddings at St. Paul, the groom's mother is seated a few minutes before the ceremony begins. The bride's mother is seated immediately after that. The ushers should not formally seat anyone after the mother of the bride is seated. *St. Paul seating capacity is 250 persons.*

## **WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE FOR THE BRIDAL PROCESSION?**

There is no specific Church guideline concerning how a procession should take place. Most bridal parties still prefer the traditional one which is as follows:

The groom, best man, and any ushers who are designated to be in the party at the front of the church usually enter from the side door at the front of the nave. After they are in place, the bridesmaids enter from the rear and proceed down the center aisle. The order for their entrance is: junior bridesmaids, bridesmaids, maid or matron of honor; ring bearer; flower girl; bride and father or escort. The bride's father or escort is on the bride's right. This order may be revised at the rehearsal as the couple desires.

Having many bridesmaids sometimes creates a problem at St. Paul due to the size of the chancel, so it is wise to plan carefully for this. It is not inappropriate to have more ushers than bridesmaids.

## **WHAT ABOUT EXPENSES?**

### Fee for the use of the church

There is no fee for use of the church for a wedding if one of the marriage partners is a member of St. Paul. For non-members who have been given permission to be married here the fee for the use of the church is \$200.00. Please bring the fee to the rehearsal. Give it to the pastor for distribution to the church.

### Sexton

The sexton (custodian) of St. Paul does the normal clean-up after weddings and returns the church to its normal state. The sexton's fee for all weddings is \$50.00. The enclosed envelope is for your convenience. If the social room is used for the reception, please consult the sexton for clean-up procedures. Please bring the fee in the envelope to the rehearsal. Give it to the pastor for distribution to the Sexton.

### Organist

The fee paid to the organist for weddings at St. Paul is \$100.00. This will include the organist's attendance at the wedding rehearsal unless otherwise arranged with the bridal party. Monetary consideration should be given to extra work with soloists and/or instrumentalists at a rate of \$25.00 per ½ hour. The enclosed envelope is for your convenience. Please make your own arrangements with your soloist. Marty Drexler's telephone number is 724-424-9776. Please bring the fee in the envelope to the rehearsal. Give it to the organist or the pastor for distribution to the organist.

### Pastor

As the Pastor's call to this congregation includes the responsibility to marry its members, there is no expected honorarium when one of the marriage partners is a member of St. Paul Lutheran Church. The expected honorarium for a non-member wedding is \$100.00.

## **WHAT ABOUT ASKING OTHER PASTORS TO PARTICIPATE?**

The pastor of St. Paul should always be consulted before another pastor is asked to participate in a wedding held here. Other pastors are welcome to participate in the service at the discretion of the pastor of St. Paul.

## **WHERE AND HOW ARE WE TO ARRANGE A RECEIVING LINE?**

Good etiquette calls for the bride and groom to greet their guests at some point after the ceremony or during the reception. It is no longer a standard that a formal receiving line take place, but most couples still prefer it, either at the church or at the reception.

The narthex of St. Paul church is small, making it uncomfortable to have a receiving line there, although it may be done in inclement weather. On warm days a line on the front porch works well. No rice or birdseed is permitted.

The order for the line may vary, but we have found the following to be comfortable and appropriate:

Mother of the bride  
Father of the bride  
Bride  
Groom  
Mother of the groom  
Father of the groom  
Maid or Matron of honor  
Best Man  
Bridesmaids  
(Ushers, flower girl and ring bearer need not stand in the receiving line.)

## **MAY WE HAVE OUR REHERSAL DINNER AND/OR RECEPTION AT THE CHURCH?**

*Yes. Your preference to have either the wedding rehearsal dinner or the wedding reception at the church should be noted when scheduling the wedding. Any decorations that you put up must be taken down immediately following the reception. The fellowship room should be returned as you found it.*

*There is a \$300 user fee for the fellowship hall and kitchen facilities for non-members.*

No alcoholic beverages are permitted on the premises of the Church.

## **WHAT ARE SOME OTHER DETAILS TO BE CONSIDERED?**

Wedding rings may either be carried by the best man and attendant of honor, or they may be carried on a pillow by the ring bearer, although this does incur some risk.

The taking of flash pictures is not appropriate during the service from the time the bride enters until after she and the groom have gone back the aisle. It is more appropriate to pose for pictures after the service than to interrupt the focus of worship to capture a certain moment on film. Photographers may not follow the bride up the aisle, or walk around at the front of the church during the service. It is acceptable for the photographer to be at the back of the church to catch the bride coming in and proceeding up the aisle. The balcony at rear of the church provides an inconspicuous location for a video camera. Please have your photographer consult with the pastor before the day of the wedding.

Wedding bulletins are a helpful addition to the service to let guests know the names of all in the party, and to provide either an outline of the service, or present the entire service printed out. Couples are asked to purchase their own bulletin covers and bring them to the Church office at least a week before the wedding. The Church secretary will type the bulletins.

Flowers in the altar vase may be given to the church to be used the following Sunday service. Notification about this ought to be given to the altar guild as soon as possible. Church vases and liners should not be taken home. If the same flowers are to be used at the reception, the florist can provide suitable vases.

It is up to the wedding party to decide whether the guests are to be ushered out. The mothers of the bride and groom are always escorted out first. If ushering is desired, remember to plan for it at the rehearsal.

Picture sessions following weddings seldom take less than 45 minutes, so plan for this when deciding on reception times. Plan on 1/2 hour to 45 minutes for a receiving line. Pictures at another site may add another 1/2 hour to 45 minutes.

## **THE ORDER FOR MARRIAGE**

**GATHER:**

The wedding party enters the sanctuary.

**Greeting:**

P. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

### **C. And also with you.**

Introduction to the service

Option A.

Dear friends: We have come together in the presence of God to witness the marriage of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, to surround them with our prayers, and to share in their joy.

The scriptures teach us that the bond and covenant of marriage is a gift of God in which a man and a woman are joined as one, an image of the union of Christ and the church. As \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, make their promises to each other today, we remember that at Cana in Galilee our Lord Jesus Christ made the wedding feast a sign of God's reign of love.

Let us enter into this celebration confident that, through the Holy Spirit, Christ is present with us now also. We pray that this couple may fulfill God's purpose for the whole of their lives.

Option B.

The Lord God in goodness created us male and female, and by the gift of marriage founded human community in a joy that begins now and is brought to perfection in the life to come.

Because of sin, our age-old rebellion, the gladness of marriage can be overcast and the gift of family can become a burden. But because God, who established marriage, continues still to bless it with abundant and ever-present support, we can be sustained in our weariness and have our joy restored.

Will you, the families of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, give your love and blessing to this new family?

Answer: We will.

Question to the assembly: (This can be omitted)

Option A.

Will all of you, by God's grace, uphold and care for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in their life together?

Answer: We will.

Option B.

Families, friends, and all those gathered here with \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, will you support and care for them, sustain and pray for them in times of trouble, give thanks with them in times of joy, honor the bonds of their covenant, and affirm the love of God reflected in their life together?

Answer: We will.

## Prayer of the Day

WORD: (the following is a list of scripture lessons suitable for the service. Normally, one reading is selected from each of the following categories.)

### The First Reading:

Genesis 1:26-31      Genesis 2:18-24      Proverbs 3:3-6  
Song of Solomon 2:10-13      Song of Solomon 8:6-7  
Isaiah 63:7-9      Jeremiah 31:31-34

### The Psalm:

Psalm 67      Psalm 100      Psalm 117  
Psalm 121      Psalm 127      Psalm 128      Psalm 150

### The Second Reading:

Romans 12:1-2, 9-18      1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13  
Ephesians 3:14-19      Ephesians 5:1-2  
Philippians 4:4-9      Colossians 3:12-17  
1 John 3:18-24      First John 4:7-16

### The Holy Gospel

Matthew 5:1-10      Matthew 5:14-16      Matthew 7:24-27  
Matthew 19:3-6      Matthew 22:35-40      Mark 10:6-9  
John 2:1-11      John 15:9-17

### Sermon

### Hymn of the Day (Optional)

## MARRIAGE:

Vows: Below are several versions of the wedding vows that may be used. *Couples may also write their own vows and present them to the pastor for approval before the wedding rehearsal.*

### Option A

In the presence of God and this community, I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you, \_\_\_\_\_, to be my wife/husband; to have and to hold from this day forward, in joy and in sorrow, in plenty and in want, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, as long as we both shall live. This is my solemn vow.

### Option B.

\_\_\_\_\_, 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, to forgive and strengthen you, 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.

Option C.

I take you, \_\_\_\_\_, to be my wife/husband from this day forward, to join with you and share all that is to come, and I promise to be faithful to you until death parts us.

Giving of Rings

Option A.

\_\_\_\_\_, I give you this ring as a sign of my love and faithfulness.

Option B.

\_\_\_\_\_, I give you this ring as a symbol of my vow. With all that I am, and all that I have, I honor you, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN.

Acclamation

Unity Candle – This is optional

Marriage Blessing.

Prayers of Intercession

(If the sacrament of Holy Communion is desired, this is where it would take place in the service. Lutheran practice is that all who are baptized are welcome to receive Christ as he comes to us in, with and under the elements of bread and wine).

The Lord's Prayer

SENDING

Benediction

Closing Hymn (Optional)

Dismissal

Postlude music