

*Our Savior's Lutheran Church*  
**Wedding Handbook**

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Dear Marriage Couple,

We're thrilled that you are planning to come before God and exchange vows of love and faithfulness. Since you are considering Our Savior's Lutheran Church as the church to help in this holy endeavor, the items enclosed with this letter should be of importance to you. Along with this letter you should have a Facility Use Agreement and the Wedding Guidelines. Read through them as soon as you can.

Please note that your wedding date and time is not on the church calendar until you returned the Facility Use Agreement with a \$50 deposit. Once the Agreement has been returned to Our Savior's, the staff must approve the date and assign a presiding pastor. You will receive a confirmation notice when the date and pastor are set.

Since many weddings are scheduled two or even three years in advance, the fees listed in the Wedding Guidelines are subject to change. All couples are responsible for the wedding fees in affect at the time of the service.

We look forward to working with you in planning a special and holy day. Please feel free to call the church if you have any questions.

In peace,

Pastor David J. Berggren

Pastor Julie A. Krahn

Our Savior's Lutheran Church (OSLC)  
550 Lincoln Drive  
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For any clarification or amplification of the policies in this handbook or for inquiries about unusual circumstances, please contact the church office.

## *Scheduling a wedding at Our Savior's Lutheran Church (OSLC)*

While many customs and traditions have secular origins, the purpose of a Christian wedding is to worship before God: to acknowledge God's gracious love in which the marriage of two persons might grow, to hear words of guidance from Scripture, to pray for this marriage and all marriages, and to make a public promise of faithfulness to each other in the marriage vows. Couples desiring a wedding at Our Savior's Lutheran Church should be willing to affirm these religious purposes when making arrangements for the church and presiding minister. If not, then a civil ceremony might be more appropriate.

### **Who can get married at Our Savior's Lutheran Church?**

OSLC does not prohibit any couple who can be legally married in the state of Wisconsin from holding a wedding at the church. However, the pastors of OSLC may decide this church is not appropriate for a couple's wedding. All weddings are subject to final approval by the pastors. Membership at OSLC is not necessary to holding your wedding here.

Though membership at OSLC is not necessary to hold a wedding here, application requirements vary depending on whether one of the couple is a member of OSLC. The following are considered members for wedding purposes:

- Anyone who is an active member in good standing of Our Savior's Lutheran Church for at least one year prior to scheduling a date for their wedding.
- If the Membership status is questionable the decision is then left up to the presiding pastor.

### **Premarital Counseling**

It is a requirement that all couples married at OSLC attend a pre-marriage workshop. We recommend Lutheran Social Services or Samaritan Counseling Center. Workshops are scheduled at various sites in Wisconsin throughout the year. The day-long workshops are usually on a Saturday. It is recommended that you attend a pre-marriage workshop that is a minimum of three months before your wedding date.

### **Scheduling a wedding at Our Savior's Lutheran Church is a three-step process:**

***Your wedding is not officially "booked" until all three of these steps are complete.***

1. Obtain this packet of information (Our Savior's Lutheran Church Wedding Handbook). This handbook should answer many of your questions about holding your wedding service at OSLC. You can also find the handbook on our website.

2. Contact the church office and speak to Brandy Foulkes, the administrative secretary to find out if the date you would like is available. If you have any special circumstances surrounding your impending marriage you should speak with a Pastor regarding those issues at this time as well.

3. If the date is available on the church calendar the couple will need to return the completed and signed Wedding Facility Use Agreement, including the \$50 non-refundable wedding deposit, and the date will be taken before the church staff at their weekly staff meeting to make sure that the

wedding does not conflict with another scheduled activity, to assign a Pastor to preside, and to be sure that the appropriate musical and custodial staff are available. Upon approval/discussion of the wedding at staff meeting a letter confirming the wedding will be mailed shortly afterwards.

**Service and Fees**

- Reservation Fee \$50
- Organist \$200
- Wedding Coordinator \$200
- Bulletins (optional) per 100, \$15
- Offsite Wedding Fees (if applicable) See pg 9
- Fellowship Hall Reception \$75  
- includes use of kitchen

**Additional Costs – inactive or non-members**

- Wedding Fee \$150
- Clergy Fee \$150
- Building Rental
  - Sanctuary \$100
  - Fellowship Hall \$100

Organist fees are payable directly to the organist.  
Wedding coordinator fees are paid directly to the wedding coordinator.  
Clergy fees are payable directly to the presiding minister.  
Special music fees should be worked out directly with the musicians involved.  
All other church fees are payable to Our Savior's Lutheran Church.  
Couples will also incur a fee for the Pre-Marriage Workshop.

If you are planning a reception at Our Savior's, you and your caterer need to be in touch with the church office staff as early in the planning process as possible.

**ALL FEES MUST BE PAID BY THE DAY BEFORE THE WEDDING**

**Payment Methods**

Checks shall be made to "Our Savior's Lutheran Church." Please be sure to note the couple's names and the wedding date on the check.

**Date and Time Availability**

Weddings must be scheduled at least three months in advance. Saturday weddings must begin before 2:30pm or after 7:00pm. Because of other church activities, weddings are not held at OSLC during Holy Week and it is up to the discretion of the pastor to hold weddings during advent, the week between Christmas and New Year's or any other time. Our Savior's may schedule more than one wedding per day provided that wedding start times are four hours apart. If the wedding is on a Saturday, all wedding events must be completed and cleaned up by 4:00pm due to an evening worship service.

## *Planning the Service*

The Christian marriage service celebrates the love of God and thanks God for bringing a woman and a man together. The service also asks our heavenly Father to bless the relationship two people plan to share for the rest of their lives.

At Our Savior's, we believe in helping marriages get off to a healthy beginning. Therefore, the time of preparation is taken very seriously. A wedding is an event, but a marriage is a life affirming, life long relationship of two people willing to form the very foundation of human community. We confidently and unabashedly seek God's help through Jesus Christ in joining a man and woman together in a holy alliance. We boldly dare to expect the vows of faithfulness to be pledged by people fully committed to live out their lives together in the marriage covenant.

We teach that the wedding ceremony is primarily a worship service. All that happens at the service centers on the love of God, the power of the Holy Spirit, and the grace of Christ. The elements of the worship need to be in keeping with the understanding that everything we do honors God. This includes music, readings, and vows.

The marriage service also gives public witness to the joy of life which is so abundant at this time. Since the congregation will give ongoing support to the couple, their participation is encouraged during the service. The marriage service is the most important event of the day. We encourage couples to invite as many guests to worship as they invite to the reception.

Preparations should be made with this in mind. It is the desire of Our Savior's Lutheran Church that your wedding be a memorable event - beautiful and meaningful. It is to this end that the following guidelines and policies have been established.

### **The Wedding Service**

Generally, the marriage service in the *Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW)* will form the basic outline of the service. The service details are determined by the couple and the presiding pastor. This process should be started four months before the wedding. Couples may choose to add their own prayers and vows using the forms in the *ELW* as examples. Other Christian marriage services will be considered. Any revisions must be submitted in plenty of time to the presiding minister for approval.

### **Clergy**

Our Savior's Lutheran Church will assign a presiding pastor to each wedding. Additional ministers may be invited by the presiding minister to also be a part of the service, should the couple request it. Our Savior's pastor will determine what role additional ministers will play and have final authority on all matters related to the service and the use of Our Savior's facilities.

## **Readings**

Couples are encouraged to choose their own scripture reading for the worship. You may choose one or more friends or family members to serve as lectors during the worship service and read one or more of the readings. Many Biblical texts are appropriate including the following:

### **Psalms**

Psalms 33, 100, 117, 127, 128, 136, and 150

### **Old Testament**

Genesis 1:26-31

Genesis 2:18-24

Ruth 1:15-18

Song of Solomon 2:10-13

Song of Solomon 8:7

Isaiah 63:7-9

Jeremiah 31:31-32a, 33-34a

### **New Testament**

Romans 12:1-2, 9-13

I Corinthians 12:31 - 13:13

Ephesians 3:14-19

Ephesians 5:21-33

Revelation 19:1, 5-9a

I John 3:18-24

I John 4:7-16

Colossians 3:12-17

### **Gospels**

Matthew 5:1-12a

Matthew 13-15

Matthew 19:3-6

Matthew 22:35-40

Mark 10:6-9

John 2:1-11

John 15:9-12, 9-17

## **Vows**

A list of suggested vows is available from the pastor and can be found in the *ELW*. You may choose one of these, or you may write your own vows. Written vows should be consistent with the biblical understanding of marriage and should make clear that the promises are a life-long commitment. They must be submitted to the presiding minister for approval at least one month before the wedding.

## **Holy Communion**

Holy Communion is an appropriate addition to Christian weddings when couples being married are active participants in the faith community. Couples may choose to include Holy Communion in the wedding worship service, provided that the sacrament is celebrated by the whole community in accordance with the practices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA).

## **Music**

No area of wedding planning causes as much controversy as the area of wedding music. For this reason, the following guidelines should be carefully considered.

The music should be in keeping with Christian worship, reflective of fine art and of high quality. Only sacred vocal music is allowed. Secular music may not be used, nor any music that is recorded. Secular music of special meaning to you should be reserved for the wedding reception.

The Director of Music at Our Savior's must be consulted about all music. It is the responsibility of the couple to contact the organist/musicians and arrange wedding music about three months before the wedding. It is not required for the organist to be at the rehearsal.

Congregational singing is suggested. This participation will allow your guests to be participants in your wedding. Many hymns are appropriate; including the following (numbers are from the *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*):

<i>Hear Us Now, Our God and Father</i>	# 585
<i>Let All Things Now Living</i>	# 881
<i>Love Divine, All Loves Excelling</i>	# 631
<i>Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee</i>	# 836
<i>Now Thank We All Our God</i>	# 839 or 840
<i>Jesus Come! For We Invite You</i>	# 312
<i>Beloved, God's Chosen</i>	# 648
<i>Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life</i>	# 816
<i>O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright</i>	#308
<i>Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness</i>	#488
<i>This Is A Day, Lord, Gladly Awaited</i>	#586

Special music is often used at weddings. Musicians should be competent vocalists or instrumentalists. Musical selections should compliment the service and maintain worship of God as a central theme. The above list of hymns is a good starting point for choosing music.

The pastor, organist, and music director may also have some ideas for music especially written for the marriage service. It is a requirement that the keyboardist, organist or pianist, shall be one of the musicians on the staff of Our Savior's Church.

The music for a wedding ceremony typically consists of the following:

- Prelude as the guests are arriving and being seated.
- Processional as the wedding party enters the sanctuary.
- Recessional as the wedding party leaves the sanctuary.
- Postlude as guests leave the sanctuary.
- Appropriate vocal or instrumental solos and congregational hymns, may be used.

If you wish to have a friend or family member sing or play at the service, arrangements must be made with the Music Director/Organist, John Krueger when you meet with him to select music. Additional instrumentalists or vocalists are paid directly by the wedding couple.

### **Bulletins**

OSLC will happily assist you with your wedding bulletins. The order of the marriage service will be printed by OSLC on an appealing sheet of 8.5x11 paper and folded in half. Your bulletin outline and wedding party list must be given to the church office **one month** prior to the wedding in order to allow ample time for review and printing. The church office is able to give you a variety of wedding bulletin designs to choose from, this needs to be done three months prior to the ceremony.

## **Offsite Weddings**

On occasion a couple plans their wedding at a venue other than the Our Savior's Lutheran Church sanctuary. In those instances the following guidelines apply:

- The process of scheduling an offsite wedding is the same as those of an onsite wedding. The \$50 wedding reservation fee and Facility Use Agreement need to be submitted to the church office. The wedding request is taken to an upcoming staff meeting where schedule conflicts and such are reviewed. Upon approval/discussion of; a letter will be sent regarding the approval/availability of accommodating the request.
- An Our Savior's keyboardist and wedding coordinator are not required.
- Pre-marriage counseling requirements are still necessary, and all Wedding Guidelines still apply.
- In regards to pastoral authority, the presiding minister may:
  - Refuse a wedding because of venue.
  - Require any changes in the venue space that seems appropriate.
  - Request a time change that will allow him/her to complete other duties.
- Additional costs incurred by presiding pastor:
  - Mileage costs at IRS guidelines.
  - All meals.
  - Housing as appropriate.
  - Entry or participation fees.

## *Use of the Building*

In all matters pertaining to the building, authority rests with the presiding minister and wedding coordinator. Everyone associated with the wedding, including the wedding party, guests, and contracted service providers, are expected to abide by the policies of OSLC and the decision of the staff.

The church is a place of worship. The wedding party should reflect reverence and praise to God. Rowdy or drunken behavior by anyone in the wedding party at the rehearsal or on the wedding day may cause cancellation or postponement of the wedding.

The congregation reserves the right to schedule building use for some other event, including another wedding, within four hours of your wedding.

If the wedding couple is considering using the church Fellowship Hall for a reception the Board of Fellowship needs to be contacted as soon as possible. This can be done by calling the church office and requesting contact name and information. The limited use of wine at a reception held at the church may be used with prior council approval.

## **Accessibility**

A wedding rehearsal is usually held the evening before the wedding. We would like to entire rehearsal to last about 30 minutes. The doors will be opened approximately 15 minutes before your scheduled rehearsal. Make every effort to arrive on time. On your wedding day the church is open about 2 hours before your ceremony time unless an alternative time is pre-arranged with the wedding coordinator.

## **Church etiquette**

- No tobacco or alcohol is allowed on the premises of the church.
- No rice, bird seed, flower petals (real or artificial), confetti or similar materials are allowed on church grounds.
- No food or beverages are allowed in the sanctuary.
- Flash pictures are prohibited during the service.
- Unity candles with pictures other than our Lord's are prohibited.
- The color of paraments used for the wedding service will be the color for the church year season during which the wedding is conducted. The color may not be changed for a wedding service.
- The preparation areas for the bridesmaids & groomsmen must be tidied up following the ceremony; all trash must be picked up and put in proper containers. As well as any other areas of the building used for wedding activities.
- All inappropriate body art must be fully covered by everyone and anyone in the wedding party.
- OSLC does not furnish candles of any type for the service. Please consult the wedding coordinator if you have additional questions regarding candles.

## **Sanctuary**

All weddings at OSLC are held in the sanctuary which can comfortably hold 400 people. The church Sanctuary is the central location for worship by the people of God. It is a place that is held in reverence because of its purpose. All preparations for the wedding service and the service itself will be conducted in the spirit of this reverence.

## **Photography**

A photographic record of weddings is important to the couple being married and their families. In order to assure a proper working relationship between the photographer and the church staff, the following policy has been put in place. The use of Our Savior's Lutheran Church as a setting for photographs is a privilege, not a right that comes with the services of a photographer. Every attempt will be made to assist the photographers in accomplishing their task, so long as these policies are observed. Guidelines and policies preceding and following the wedding service are different from those during the service itself.

## **Before and After the Service**

Formal photographs of the wedding party can be taken within the sanctuary until thirty minutes before the service and following the service. For a Saturday wedding, all activity in the church building must be cleaned up before 4:00pm, as the building needs to be prepared for an evening worship service. Photographers are expected to bring their own extension cords. Under no circumstances shall any of the furniture be moved for photographs. The altar is used exclusively for sacramental purposes. Nothing should be placed on the table at any point.

## **During the Ceremony**

Photographers and their assistants moving without constraint during the service is an unnecessary distraction and inappropriate in a service of worship. Worship itself must remain the focus during the ceremony.

Because the wedding liturgy is a worship service of the church, no flash photographs may be taken during the service. One photographer may take flash photographs as the wedding party enters the Sanctuary, but must not stand in the center aisle. Any/all photographers are asked to sit among the wedding guests and not be a distraction to those surrounding them. The photographer may not take any flash photographs until the wedding party leaves the front of the sanctuary at the end of the service.

During the worship service, one photographer is allowed to take photographs without flash from the balcony or the back of the sanctuary. All photographers' equipment must be stored out of sight during the worship service.

### **Video Cameras**

The same policies as those listed for photographers apply to video cameras; however, it is possible to put a video camera on a tripod at an appropriate location in the sanctuary, check with the wedding coordinator for specific locations. This video camera may be activated prior to the service and left unattended throughout the service. The video camera or equipment must not become a distraction at any point during the service.

These policies must be respected. We ask that the couples ensure that the professionals they engage adhere to these policies. Should these policies be violated by photographers or guests, the presiding minister may stop the service until the integrity of the service is restored.

### **Decorations**

Part of the joy of holding a wedding at OSLC is the beauty of the Sanctuary. Little, if any, decoration is necessary. It is the responsibility of the wedding couple to ensure the wedding coordinator knows what time the building should be open for any purchased or rented items to be delivered.

Flowers for the wedding party are to be placed in the narthex by the florist. Bouquets, boutonnieres, etc. may not be stored in the church Sanctuary. It is the responsibility of the florist or the bridal party to remove all boxes or decoration materials from the Sanctuary and Narthex no later than 45 minutes prior to the wedding service. Two altar arrangements are permitted for use on the altar for wedding services. These are in addition to any flowers you would like to have near or around the unity candle. If you wish to make the wedding flower arrangements available for the Sunday morning worship services, let the church office know at least two weeks before your wedding so proper credit can be given to you in honor of your celebration.

The color of paraments and vestments used for the wedding service are the color for the season of the church year during which the wedding is conducted. The color is not changed for a wedding service. The furnishings in the sanctuary may not be moved or altered for the wedding service. The railings, altar, and clergy seats are not to be decorated; however, pew bows may be used if arranged with the wedding coordinator.

The wedding coordinator can give you guidelines how the bows may be attached. Adhesive tape or clamps are not to be used as they may scratch the pews or remove the varnish. Couples must arrange to have a member of the bridal party (personal attendant) remove decorations prior to leaving our facilities.

If you plan on using an aisle runner, the aisle is 45' long, it is recommended that your aisle runner be 50' length.

### **Dressing Areas and Food & Drink**

Two rooms will be made available as dressing spaces prior to the wedding. The wedding couple is expected to notify the wedding coordinator as to what time they would like to have access to the building. A bride's room (typically the Chapel) will be set aside for the use of the bride and her attendants. If desired, at the rehearsal the women may bring their gowns and other items to be left at the church. If the bride is wearing a veil and having her hair done before she arrives at the church it is important that the veil not be left at the church with the gown. This room has a full length mirror and a basket filled with possible necessities.

A room for the groom and his attendants (typically a classroom off the Fellowship Hall in the basement) will also be available. The Narthex and Library is available as a lounge for parents, grandparents and wedding party members.

Some couples may decide to provide finger food to their wedding participants prior to the ceremony. If you are considering this please be sure your wedding coordinator is aware of this so accommodations can be made depending on where the food will be served. Plates, napkins, cups and other table wear and service pieces must be provided by the wedding party. The wedding party is responsible for leaving all used areas reasonably clean and for cleaning up any messes made by those eating.

No tobacco or alcohol is allowed on the premises of the church.

## *Preparing for your Wedding*

The following is a timeline of appointments and tasks to be completed to help your wedding at Our Savior's Lutheran Church runs smoothly. For further explanation of the following tasks, please consult the referenced sections and pages in the wedding handbook.

### **4 or more months before your wedding:**

- Contact the presiding minister to begin planning the wedding ceremony (pg.6 )
- Contact the wedding coordinator to arrange a meeting date.

### **3 months before your wedding:**

- Be sure you have attended a pre-marital class. (pg. 4)
- Contact Music Director John Krueger to plan music for the wedding ceremony. (pg. 7)
- If you would like the church office to assist with your wedding bulletins please contact them to arrange a time to view styles. (pg. 8)

**1 month before your wedding:**

- If church office is printing the wedding bulletins, be sure they have all the bulletin details they need to accomplish this task.
- If you are considering any provisions to the standard ceremony the presiding pastor must have all items approved by this time.

**1 week before your wedding:**

- Proof the wedding bulletin set up by the church office if you chose.
- Ensure the wedding coordinator and presiding pastor have had a chance to look over your wedding bulletin.

**1 day before your wedding:**

- Wedding Rehearsal, the wedding coordinator provided by OSLC will direct the rehearsal. All members of the wedding party, including attendants, parents, additional clergy, readers, ushers, soloists and musicians, are expected to attend unless excused by the presiding minister.

**REMEMBER:** Bring your marriage license to the rehearsal! The rehearsal cannot continue without the wedding license.