

Wedding Planning Guide

St. Gabriel the Archangel Catholic Church

1310 Mainstreet, Hopkins, MN 55343

(952) 935-5536

Parish contacts for your wedding



Father Paul Haverstock, *Pastor*

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Dr. Breck McGough, *Director of Sacred Music and Liturgy*

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Jenn Hill, *Family Life Educator*

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Deacon Darrel and Chris Branch, *Mentor Couple*

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Phyllis Weinbender, *Wedding Coordinator*

Introduction

Congratulations on your engagement! The staff of St. Gabriel the Archangel is glad to assist you as you plan for the momentous, sacred day of your wedding. In choosing to be married in the Roman Catholic Church, you will experience not only a beautiful ceremony with your family and friends, but you will receive the grace of God imparted through the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony.

This document will help you understand the role of St. Gabriel in preparing you for that beautiful sacrament. While it may seem like quite a bit of information, these guidelines are in place to make sure that this time of preparation is helpful and free of worries. We look forward to accompanying you on this journey. If you have questions about anything regarding your upcoming marriage, always feel free to contact us using the information above.

Eligibility for Having Your Wedding at St. Gabriel

To be married at St. Gabriel, one or both members of the engaged couple must be a practicing Catholic and a registered St. Gabriel parishioner, or have parents who are registered parishioners.

If you or your parents are not members of St. Gabriel, you will need to register. You can do so by going to stgabrielhopkins.org/connect/new-member-registration

If you recently moved to the area, requests for use of St. Gabriel by non-parishioners will be considered on an individual basis. Couples are encouraged to first engage their home parish or the parish where you anticipate being active members after your marriage, as this respects the relationship you have with your own pastor and your commitment to your home parish.

If you have been previously married, you will need to meet with the Pastor before any wedding date can be set.

Scheduling a Wedding

Complete the wedding inquiry form on St. Gabriel's website at least six months before the desired date of your wedding. (stgabrielhopkins.org/sacraments-formation/marriage). Prior to arranging any of the other details of your wedding, you must have an initial meeting with the Pastor to outline the requirements of marriage preparation for the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, and to cover specific details for weddings at St. Gabriel. A wedding date cannot be set until this meeting takes place. This meeting will also allow you to clarify any questions you may have regarding the wedding policies.

Spiritual Growth

Your engagement is an opportunity to deepen your Catholic faith and grow in your relationship with Jesus. You prepare your heart to receive God's grace on your wedding day by participating faithfully in Mass and Reconciliation (Confession). We look forward to worshipping with you! The opportunities for celebrating the sacraments at St Gabriel are:

Weekend Mass

Saturday, 4:30 PM

Sunday, 8:00 AM

Sunday, 10:30 AM

Sunday, 1:00 PM*

**Spanish*

Confession

Monday - Friday, 12:00-1:00 PM

Saturday, 3:30pm - 4:15 PM

Sunday, 12:30pm - 1:30 PM

You are also welcome to join us for Mass during the week (11:25 AM, Monday-Friday).

Marriage Preparation Process & Checklist

- Read through St. Gabriel's Wedding Planning Guide (this document).
- Be a registered and participating member of St. Gabriel's
 - see "Eligibility for Having Your Wedding at St. Gabriel" (above).
- Complete Wedding Inquiry Form on St. Gabriel's website at least six months before desired date of wedding.
 - <https://stgabrielhopkins.org/sacraments-formation/marriage>
- Contact Pastor to schedule introductory meeting (about 90 minutes)
 - Couple and Pastor agree upon date for wedding.
 - Discuss marriage preparation process.
 - Begin canonical paperwork requirements.
 - Picture for file.
- Obtain Baptismal Certificates
 - Contact the church where you were baptized and request that they send an official copy of your baptismal certificate directly to St. Gabriel church office (1310 Mainstreet, Hopkins, MN 55343 – Attn: Marriage Preparation).
 - The certificate cannot be a photocopy of your original certificate – it must be issued by your church of Baptism within the past 6 months.
- Meet with *Family Life Educator* Jenn Hill (2-4 meetings)
 - After initial meeting with pastor, Jenn will contact you about the *Prepare* inventory.
 - Complete inventory individually (not as a couple).
 - Meet with Jenn to discuss the results and to learn about marriage and family life.
- Meet with Mentor Couple (2-4 meetings)
- Participate in an approved marriage retreat
 - Archdiocesan retreat: www.archspm.org/marriage/marriage-preparation/
 - Available monthly – sign up early as they fill up fast!
 - Cost: \$250
 - Alternate retreat option: *Engaged Encounter*
 - Cost: \$330 (overnight at retreat center; includes room and board)
 - <https://stpaulminneapolis.engagedencounter.com/>
 - Completion Certificate required within one month of wedding.
- Participate in an NFP (Natural Family Planning) class:
 - Fees vary based on class taken; timing determined by class
 - Completion Certificate required
 - <https://www.archspm.org/marriage/natural-family-planning-nfp/>
- Meet with our *Director of Sacred Music and Liturgy* Dr. Breck McGough to plan the music for your wedding.
 - Breck will contact you to set up a meet about a month after you fill out the Wedding Inquiry Form on our website. Before that meeting, review the section below (page 9) titled "Choosing Music for the Wedding".
- Schedule final meeting with Pastor at least 1 month prior to wedding.
 - You will review the ceremony together and discuss options for the readings, rituals, vows, wedding party, and the date for wedding rehearsal.
- Apply for Marriage License

- Apply for MN marriage license about 1 month prior to your wedding date.
- <https://www.hennepin.us/residents/licenses-certificates-permits/marriage>
- Cost: \$115 (reduced to \$40 once you qualify for reduced fee upon completing premarital preparation)
- Before applying for a license, obtain a reduced fee form from Pastor.
- Bring Marriage License to wedding rehearsal. St. Gabriel will submit completed marriage license to county after wedding ceremony.
- Wedding Rehearsal and Wedding Ceremony
 - Be on time (See policy on starting late, below).
 - Bring your marriage license to rehearsal.
- Recommended Reading
 - *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work* (by John and Julie Gottman)
 - *Good News about Sex and Marriage* (by Christopher West)

Marriage Preparation at Another Parish

If a parish other than St. Gabriel is overseeing your marriage preparation, that parish is required to provide the following completed documents to St. Gabriel no less than two months before the wedding date:

- Pre-Nuptial Questionnaire [with seal of Chancery, if required]
- Dispensation Forms [if required]
- Freedom to Marry Forms [if required]
- Baptismal Certificates [Baptismal certificate of Catholics must be issued no more than six months prior to the wedding date.]
- Marriage License [Marriage license must be issued no more than six months before the wedding date.]
- Certificate of Completion from a marriage preparation program

Please be advised that no wedding can take place without the above documents properly completed and submitted to St. Gabriel. It is the responsibility of the couple and the pastor of the preparing parish to ensure that St. Gabriel receives the documents no less than one month before the wedding.

Wedding Times

- **Fridays:** September-May, 2:00 pm — June-August, 2:00/3:00/4:00 pm
- **Saturdays:** 12:00/1:00 pm
- Weddings are not scheduled on Sundays, Holy Days, or during times of regularly scheduled parish services.
- Generally, we do not celebrate weddings during Advent or Lent.
- Rehearsal time: usually 5pm the day before the wedding. (Occasionally the rehearsal will need to be at a different time; always confirm rehearsal time with the pastor.)

Wedding Fees

- The fee to marry at St. Gabriel is \$1,000. This covers the use of the church, professional musicians (an organist and a cantor), a wedding coordinator for the ceremony, altar boys, a printed liturgy guide, marriage preparation leadership, and help with understanding and completing the paperwork required by Minnesota and the Archdiocese.
 - If you complete your preparation at another parish, our fee is reduced to \$800. If you complete your marriage preparation at St Gabriel's but your ceremony is being held elsewhere, our fee is reduced to \$250.
- Payment in full is required before the wedding ceremony.
 - Payment in cash (preferred). To pay in cash, deliver payment in an envelope marked "Attn: Wedding Payment for [your name]" to the parish office at least one week before your wedding.
 - Payment in check. Write the following checks and bring them to the parish office in an envelope marked "Attn: Wedding Payment for [your name]" at least one week before your wedding.
 - Check for \$400 to "Breck McGough"
 - Check for \$400 to "St. Gabriel the Archangel"
 - Check for \$200 to "Phyllis Weinbender"
 - (For all checks, write your names on the memo line.)
- NOT included in your fee
 - Archdiocesan marriage retreat (~\$250)
 - Natural Family Planning course (~\$160)
 - Additional musicians (\$200 for each additional musician)
 - Arranging music (*to be discussed with Director of Sacred Music & Liturgy*)
 - Free-will gift to the priest who celebrates your wedding

Presider

- The pastor of St Gabriel will celebrate your wedding.
- Couples may request a Catholic priest or deacon from outside the parish to preside at their wedding, subject to the approval of the pastor of St. Gabriel.
- Checklist for Guest Presiders
 - Send a "letter of intent" to the Pastor of St. Gabriel. The letter states that the priest or deacon will file the correct paperwork with the Archdiocese and will preside at the wedding. The letter must include the date and time of your wedding.
 - If the officiant is not a priest or deacon from the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, he must have his diocese's chancery contact the chancery of the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis to get permission to preside at the ceremony. This is the universal policy of the Catholic Church.
 - Any questions or concerns regarding a guest presider may be sent to the Pastor of St. Gabriel.

Planning Your Wedding

The staff of St. Gabriel works with you to plan a wedding celebration that is beautiful and is in keeping with the best of Catholic liturgy, theology, and spirituality.

Wedding Attire and Dress Code

As our church teaches in the Catechism; “Purity requires modesty... Modesty protects the intimate center of the person. It means refusing to unveil what should remain hidden... Modesty protects the mystery of persons and their love. It inspires one’s choice of clothing.” (CCC 2521-2522). Please consider modesty as a gift to God, to your spouse and to your guests as you choose the attire for yourselves and your wedding party. Wedding attire must be modest and reflect the dignity of Christian marriage. Attire appropriate for a social celebration is not always appropriate for the liturgy.

Strapless and sleeveless dresses are strongly discouraged. Low V-necklines are not allowed. A wrap will be offered if the attire is distracting from modesty. If you have any questions, please check with the Wedding Coordinator.

Suits and tuxedos worn by the groomsmen must be appropriate for a religious service. “Costume” style tuxedos are not appropriate for a sacred event held in a holy place.

The Wedding Party

Best Man and Maid of Honor (Witnesses)

Minnesota state law dictates that the official witnesses, the Best Man and Maid [Matron] of Honor, must be at least sixteen years of age. Please choose a man to serve as Best Man and a woman to serve as Maid of Honor. Other wedding party members may be any age.

Bridesmaids and Groomsmen

The bridal party is chosen from family and friends who love the couple and will support their Catholic marriage. For practical reasons, couples are advised to avoid elaborate and large wedding parties and processions. Only two witnesses are necessary for the wedding ceremony.

Padrinos (Hispanic weddings)

At Hispanic weddings, instead of bridesmaids and groomsmen, it is customary to have a number of godparents (*padrinos*) that assist with various aspects of the ceremony and that promise their support of the Bride and Groom throughout their marriage.

Typically, there may be *padrinos* for any or all of the following: *anillos* (rings), *arras* (coins), *lazo* (large rosary), and *testigos* (witnesses).

Acolytes (Altar Servers)

If your wedding service is a Mass, then an altar server will be provided by the parish.

We ask that our servers be utilized; if a couple wishes to provide their own servers, they must first speak with the Pastor and obtain his permission.

Ushers

Ushers carry out several important roles:

- They greet guests and hand out programs.
- They may usher guests into the church and help seat them. (*It is fine to have groom's guests sit on the bride's side and vice versa.*)
- They open and close the inner church doors at the beginning and end of the wedding.
- They tidy up the church after the ceremony (collect programs, flowers, etc).
- They help wedding guests exit the church.

It is necessary to have at least two ushers in addition to groomsmen. We recommend having one usher per fifty guests. Groomsmen are often busy with photographs as the guests are arriving and are therefore unable to seat them. Ushers are also able to assist at the beginning and end of the ceremony.

Lectors (Readers)

The wedding celebration can include up to three Lectors (readers) at the liturgy, chosen by the couple. The following options may be considered:

1. A person for the First Reading,
2. A second person for the Second Reading
3. A third person for the Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful).

If the wedding is a Mass, lectors for the readings should be Catholic. The reader for the Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful) may be Catholic or a non-Catholic Christian. When choosing persons to read, please choose people who have had experience with reading in their own parish or church and who can confidently proclaim the Word of God.

Lectors should attend the wedding rehearsal, at which they will practice the readings. Couples are asked to provide Lectors with a copy of their assigned reading to practice prior to the ceremony.

Choosing Music for the Wedding

Certain songs or pieces of music can be very meaningful to you and your family. It is important to remember, however, that to be inside the church is to be near the tabernacle where Christ is truly present. This means that this is a sacred space, and therefore any music which occurs here should be sacred. This is especially true during a liturgy, such as a wedding. The Church says that all music used in its liturgy should be easily identifiable as prayer. Sacred music, as stated in papal documents, is a “complementary part of the solemn liturgy” and participates in the “general scope of the liturgy, which is the glory of God and the sanctification and edification of the faithful.” The liturgy of marriage celebrates not only the human love between two persons but also their relation to God who is love. The texts must always conform with Catholic doctrine; indeed, they should be drawn chiefly from Holy Scripture and liturgical sources.

The following questions can be helpful as you prepare for your meeting with our Director of Sacred Music and Liturgy. He will offer recommendations and is ultimately responsible for making decisions about which music may be used at St. Gabriel’s.

Is it prayerful?

The purpose of any Catholic liturgy, including a wedding liturgy, is to give glory to God and to sanctify the worshipers. Your wedding music should help the assembly to pray and to give thanks to God for your marriage.

Is it beautiful?

All music used in the sacred liturgy should be beautiful. The Catechism states that beauty is a window into the divine. In the Catholic sense, beauty is *not* simply in the eye of the beholder, nor is it related to sentimentality or familiarity. A work of beauty should teach us something about the One from whom all true beauty finds its source. This is why secular songs, even if performed by instruments, are prohibited during the liturgy.

Choosing Readings for the Wedding

A Catholic wedding includes readings from the Holy Bible, including a Gospel, a Psalm, and either a reading from the Old Testament, a reading from the New Testament, or both.

Options for the readings are provided in Appendix 1 at the end of this document. Please review these options in preparation for your final meeting with the pastor, when you will plan the details of your ceremony. The pastor is happy to provide guidance on your reading selections if you would like.

Choosing Wedding Vows

The Catholic Church provides several options for your wedding vows. Please see [Appendix 2](#) at the end of this document to review the different forms of vows that are permitted. Please note that adaptations and custom wedding vows are not allowed.

Prayers of the Faithful

Please see [Appendix 3](#) for the petitions that will be used as part of the Prayers of the Faithful (“Universal Prayer”).

Optional Rites for Weddings

The following rites are optional, and the couple may freely decide whether or not they would like to do any or all of them.

1. Flowers to the Blessed Virgin Mary

It is a beautiful tradition that the Bride and Groom may bring a bouquet of flowers to the altar or image of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This gesture is a sign of the couple’s devotion to Mary, the Mother of God, and of their desire to ask for her to pray for them as they enter married life.

After the exchange of the vows and the rings, the couple proceeds to the altar of Our Lady (located in the front left of the church), sets a bouquet of flowers in front of the altar, then kneels down and prays together for a short time. The *Ave Maria* is often sung during this rite.

2. Arras (Hispanic tradition)

In Hispanic culture, a traditional part of the wedding may include an exchange of coins (*arras*) between the Bride and Groom. This exchange symbolizes the couple’s intention of sharing all their material goods together for the rest of their lives, since they will be “no longer two but one flesh.”

After the exchange of rings, the padrinos of the arras present the box of coins to the priest, who blesses it. The Groom then takes the box of coins and empties it into the hands of his wife. Then he gives the empty box to the padrino, and places his hands underneath his Bride’s hands, and she opens her hands, returning the coins to him.

3. *Lazo* (Hispanic tradition)

In Hispanic culture, a traditional part of the wedding ceremony may include the imposition of the *lazo* (a large Rosary). This rite symbolizes the essential role that prayer and faith play in uniting two people in the sacrament of marriage.

Immediately before the Preface and the Eucharistic Prayer, the *padrinos* of the *lazo* come forward and place the *lazo* around the shoulders of the Bride and Groom. The Bride and Groom continue to wear the *lazo* until after they have received Holy Communion, at which time the *padrinos* of the *lazo* will return to remove the *lazo*.

Wedding Coordinator

St. Gabriel will provide you with a wedding coordinator, whose role is to facilitate a smooth rehearsal and wedding ceremony.

Live Stream

Your wedding can be live-streamed without additional fees. Our church provides a single-camera, unmanned streaming desk with a fixed shot of the area surrounding the sanctuary (the elevated space near the altar) and streams to the St. Gabriel website and YouTube channel in standard definition. *Please let the Director of Sacred Music and Liturgy know if you would like to have this set up for your wedding no later than 2 weeks prior to the event.*

If you wish to record or stream with multiple cameras and/or in high definition, you will need to make your own arrangements. Anyone recording or streaming must follow the Photography and Videography Policy, which can be found under “Facilities Policies” below.

Flowers

You or your florist may bring flowers for your wedding. Flowers may be delivered to the parish office during the parish’s business hours, or they may be brought directly to the church during the rehearsal or on the day of the wedding itself (up to one hour before the ceremony begins).

Please consult with our Wedding Coordinator for questions about where floral arrangements may be placed. After the ceremony, you are welcome to donate the flowers to St. Gabriel or take them with you.

Wedding Liturgy Guide

St. Gabriel will prepare and print the Wedding Liturgy Guide. Please note that we do not customize the design of the Guide for individual preferences.

Schedule & Checklist for Rehearsal & Wedding Day

Rehearsal

The rehearsal may last up to 90 minutes. For the purposes of the church staff and your own dinner plans, the wedding rehearsal must begin and end on time. Please make sure your family and friends show up on time and refrain from unnecessary conversation during the rehearsal.

IMPORTANT: Please bring your MN marriage license to the rehearsal. St. Gabriel staff will submit the completed marriage license to the county after the wedding ceremony.

Wedding Day

The church will be unlocked and open one hour before the wedding ceremony begins. Couples are welcome to take pictures in the church up to 30 minutes before or after the ceremony.

IMPORTANT: The entire wedding party including the Bride should be present at least 30 minutes before the wedding ceremony begins.

Policy on starting late

Due to the very busy schedule of St. Gabriel's parish and staff, if the wedding ceremony begins more than 15 minutes after the scheduled start time because a member of the wedding party (including the bride or groom) is late, the following protocols will be followed:

- The couple will be assessed a fee of \$500.
- Musicians may not be able to stay for the entire wedding, but they still receive full pay for their time.

Facilities Policies

Food and Drink

You may have refreshments available for your wedding party, but it is recommended to keep them to a minimum. Food or drinks which may possibly stain clothing are not recommended. Food, drinks, and gum are never permitted anywhere in the church or narthex. Anyone who will be receiving Holy Communion at a Wedding Mass must fast from food and beverages for at least 60 minutes prior.

Cellular Telephones

Cellular telephones may not be used in the church. Please silence cell phones before the ceremony begins.

No Smoking Policy

St. Gabriel is a smoke-free and vape-free campus.

No Alcohol and Drugs Policy

No alcoholic beverages or drugs are permitted on St. Gabriel's premises before, during or after the wedding or rehearsal. This includes the parking area. Should alcohol or drugs be discovered, or if any member of the Wedding Party is under the influence of alcohol or drugs before the wedding ceremony, the ceremony will be canceled.

Cleanup Policy

Ushers or other members of the wedding party are to make sure the church and commons are cleaned up after the ceremony.

Photography and Videography Policy

Photographers and videographers may begin to set up one hour before the wedding ceremony.

The sanctuary is a sacred space; cameras are not permitted within the sanctuary (the raised area in the front of the church where the altar is) — there are no exceptions. Photographers may pose the wedding party and families on the sanctuary stairs in front of the altar, but nowhere else in the sanctuary.

St. Gabriel respectfully requests that the photographer/videographer:

1. Cooperate with the spiritual nature of the wedding celebration and remain respectful of the sacred environment.
2. Work within the guidelines presented here.

Before the Wedding Ceremony:

3. Photographers and videographers may set up in the church 1 hour before the ceremony. Set up may not begin before this time.
4. If the wedding party is taking their photos before the ceremony rather than after, photos must be completed at least 30 minutes prior to the ceremony.

During the Ceremony:

5. Flash may be used during the processional and recessional only.
6. Flash photography during the ceremony is prohibited.
7. During the ceremony, the photographer(s) must remain behind the seated guests, and they are asked to refrain from obtrusive or disruptive movement during the wedding.
8. Videographers are asked to remain stationary during the wedding.
9. Any questions regarding these protocols should be directed to the Wedding Coordinator.

After the Ceremony:

10. Before pictures are taken following the ceremony, the witnesses (Best Man/Maid of Honor), the bride and groom, and the Pastor sign the marriage license in the sacristy.
11. All photography in the building must be completed no later than 30 minutes after the end of the ceremony. Photography outside of the building may continue as long as necessary.

APPENDIX 1 – Options for Wedding Readings

For your wedding, choose either a reading from the Old Testament or a reading from the New Testament (or both), as well as a Gospel reading.

Old Testament options

(popular options are highlighted)

Genesis 1:26-28, 31a

Then God said:

“Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.
Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea,
the birds of the air, and the cattle,
and over all the wild animals
and all the creatures that crawl on the ground.”

God created man in his image;
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.

God blessed them, saying:

“Be fertile and multiply;
fill the earth and subdue it.
Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air,
and all the living things that move on the earth.
God looked at everything he had made,
and he found it very good.

Genesis 2:18-24

The LORD God said: "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a suitable partner for him."

So the LORD God formed out of the ground
various wild animals and various birds of the air,
and he brought them to the man to see what he would call them;
whatever the man called each of them would be its name.
The man gave names to all the cattle,
all the birds of the air, and all wild animals;
but none proved to be the suitable partner for the man.

So the LORD God cast a deep sleep on the man,
and while he was asleep, he took out one of his ribs
and closed up its place with flesh.
The LORD God then built up into a woman the rib
that he had taken from the man.

When he brought her to the man, the man said:
"This one, at last, is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
This one shall be called 'woman,'
for out of 'her man' this one has been taken."
That is why a man leaves his father and mother
and clings to his wife,
and the two of them become one body.

Tobit 8:4b-8

On their wedding night Tobiah arose from bed and said to his wife,
“Sister, get up. Let us pray and beg our LORD
to have mercy on us and to grant us deliverance.”
Sarah got up, and they started to pray
and beg that deliverance might be theirs.

They began with these words:
“Blessed are you, O God of our fathers;
praised be your name forever and ever.
Let the heavens and all your creation praise you forever.

“You made Adam and you gave him his wife Eve
to be his help and support;
and from these two the human race descended.
You said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone;
let us make him a partner like himself.’

“Now, LORD, you know that I take this wife of mine
not because of lust, but for a noble purpose.
Call down your mercy on me and on her,
and allow us to live together to a happy old age.”

They said together, “Amen, amen.”

Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31

When one finds a worthy wife,
her value is far beyond pearls.
Her husband, entrusting his heart to her,
has an unfailing prize.
She brings him good, and not evil,
all the days of her life.
She obtains wool and flax
and makes cloth with skillful hands.
She puts her hands to the distaff,
and her fingers ply the spindle.
She reaches out her hands to the poor,
and extends her arms to the needy.
Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting;
the woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.
Give her a reward of her labors,
and let her works praise her at the city gates.

Song of Songs 2:8-10-, 14, 16a, 8:6-7a

Hark! My lover – here he comes
springing across the mountains,
leaping across the hills.
My lover is like a gazelle or a young stag.

Here he stands behind our wall,
gazing through the windows,
peering through the lattices.
My lover speaks; he says to me,
“Arise, my beloved, my dove,
my beautiful one, and come!
“O my dove in the clefts of the rock,
in the secret recesses of the cliff,
Let me see you, let me hear your voice,
For your voice is sweet, and you are lovely.”

My lover belongs to me and I to him.
He says to me:
“Set me as a seal on your heart,
as a seal on your arm;
For stern as death is love,
relentless as the nether-world is devotion;
its flames are a blazing fire.
Deep waters cannot quench love,
nor floods sweep it away.”

Sirach 26:1-4, 13-16

Blessed the husband of a good wife,
twice-lengthened are his days;
A worthy wife brings joy to her husband,
peaceful and full is his life.
A good wife is a generous gift
bestowed upon him who fears the LORD;
Be he rich or poor, his heart is content,
and a smile is ever on his face.

A gracious wife delights her husband,
her thoughtfulness puts flesh on his bones;
A gift from the LORD is her governed speech,
and her firm virtue is of surpassing worth.
Choicest of blessings is a modest wife,
priceless her chaste soul.
A holy and decent woman adds grace upon grace;
indeed, no price is worthy of her temperate soul.
Like the sun rising in the LORD's heavens,
the beauty of a virtuous wife
is the radiance of her home.

New Testament options (popular options are highlighted)

1 Corinthians 12:31-13:8a

Brothers and sisters:
Strive eagerly for the greatest spiritual gifts.
But I shall show you a still more excellent way.

If I speak in human and angelic tongues
but do not have love,
I am a resounding gong or a clashing cymbal.
And if I have the gift of prophecy
and comprehend all mysteries and all knowledge;
if I have all faith so as to move mountains,
but do not have love, I am nothing.
If I give away everything I own,
and if I hand my body over so that I may boast
but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind.
It is not jealous, is not pompous,
it is not inflated, it is not rude,
it does not seek its own interests,
it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury,
it does not rejoice over wrongdoing
but rejoices with the truth.
It bears all things, believes all things,
hopes all things, endures all things.
Love never fails.

Ephesians 5:2a, 21-33

Brothers and sisters:

Live in love, as Christ loved us
and handed himself over for us.

Be subordinate to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Wives should be subordinate to their husbands as to the Lord.

For the husband is head of his wife
just as Christ is head of the Church,
he himself the savior of the body.

As the Church is subordinate to Christ,
so wives should be subordinate to their husbands in everything.

Husbands, love your wives,
even as Christ loved the Church
and handed himself over for her to sanctify her,
cleansing her by the bath of water with the word,
that he might present to himself the Church in splendor,
without spot or wrinkle or any such thing,
that she might be holy and without blemish.
So also husbands should love their wives as their own bodies.
He who loves his wife loves himself.
For no one hates his own flesh
but rather nourishes and cherishes it,
even as Christ does the Church,
because we are members of his Body.

For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother
and be joined to his wife,
and the two shall become one flesh.

This is a great mystery,
but I speak in reference to Christ and the Church.
In any case, each one of you should love his wife as himself,
and the wife should respect her husband.

Colossians 3:12-17

Brothers and sisters:

Put on, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved,
heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility,
gentleness, and patience,
bearing with one another and forgiving one another,
if one has a grievance against another;
as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do.

And over all these put on love,
that is, the bond of perfection.
And let the peace of Christ control your hearts,
the peace into which you were also called in one Body. And be thankful.

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,
as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another,
singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs
with gratitude in your hearts to God.

And whatever you do, in word or in deed,
do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Options for the Gospel

(popular options are highlighted)

Matthew 22:35-40

One of the Pharisees, a scholar of the law,
tested Jesus by asking,
“Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?”

He said to him, “You shall love the Lord, your God,
with all your heart,
with all your soul,
and with all your mind.
This is the greatest and the first commandment.

The second is like it:
You shall love your neighbor as yourself.
The whole law and the prophets depend
on these two commandments.”

Mark 10:6-9

Jesus said:

“From the beginning of creation,

God made them male and female.

For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother

and be joined to his wife,

and the two shall become one flesh.

So they are no longer two but one flesh.

Therefore what God has joined together,
no human being must separate.”

John 2:1-11

There was a wedding in Cana in Galilee,
and the mother of Jesus was there.
Jesus and his disciples were also invited to the wedding.

When the wine ran short, the mother of Jesus said to him,
“They have no wine.”
And Jesus said to her,
“Woman, how does your concern affect me?
My hour has not yet come.”
His mother said to the servers,
“Do whatever he tells you.”

Now there were six stone water jars there
for Jewish ceremonial washings,
each holding twenty to thirty gallons.
Jesus told them, “Fill the jars with water.”
So they filled them to the brim.
Then he told them,
“Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter.”
So they took it.

And when the headwaiter
tasted the water that had become wine,
without knowing where it came from
(although the servants who had drawn the water knew),
the headwaiter called the bridegroom and said to him,
“Everyone serves good wine first,
and then when people have drunk freely,
an inferior one;
but you have kept the good wine until now.”

Jesus did this as the beginning of his signs
in Cana in Galilee
and so revealed his glory,
and his disciples began to believe in him.

APPENDIX 2 – Wedding Vows

You may choose between the following options for your vows. In the first two options, you simply say “I do” after the priest questions you. In the other options, you repeat the vow out loud, phrase by phrase, after the priest.

Option 1 - Question form (traditional version)

The priest asks the bridegroom:

Joseph, do you take Mary for your lawful 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 do you part?

Joseph: I do.

Then the priest asks the bride:

Mary, do you take Joseph to be your lawful 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 do you part?

Mary: I do.

Option 2 - Question form (modern version)

The priest asks the bridegroom:

“Joseph, do you take Mary to be your wife? Do you promise to be faithful to her in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health, to love her and to honor her all the days of your life?”

Joseph: I do.

Then the priest asks the bride:

“Mary, do you take Joseph to be your husband? Do you promise...?”

Mary: I do.

Option 3 - Spoken form, repeating after priest (traditional version)

The bridegroom repeats after the priest (phrase by phrase):

I, Joseph, take you, Mary, to be my lawful 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 do us part.

And then bride repeats after the priest (phrase by phrase):

I, Mary, take you, Joseph, to be my lawful husband, to have and to hold...

Option 4 - Spoken form, repeating after priest (modern version)

The bridegroom repeats after the priest (phrase by phrase):

I, Joseph, take you, Mary, to be my wife. I promise to be faithful to you, in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health, to love you and to honor you all the days of my life.

And then bride repeats after the priest (phrase by phrase):

I, Mary, take you, Joseph, to be my husband. I promise to be faithful to you...

APPENDIX 3 – Universal Prayer (Petitions)

The Universal Prayer is the time when we bring our prayers and petitions to God. The priest will offer an introduction to the prayer, the lector will read the petitions, and the priest will pray a conclusion. If you have other petitions you'd like to make, please discuss them with the Pastor during your planning meeting.

For N. and N. May God bless and consecrate their covenant, just as he sanctified marriage at the wedding feast in Cana. Let us pray to the Lord. (Lord hear our prayer.)

For all married persons present here today. May the Holy Spirit renew their love and fidelity. Let us pray to the Lord. (Lord, hear our prayer.)

For all of us gathered here. May we know of Jesus' love for us and grow closer to Him each day. Let us pray to the Lord. (Lord, hear our prayer.)

For all who are sick in body, mind, or soul. May God grant them grace and healing according to His loving will. Let us pray to the Lord. (Lord, hear our prayer.)

For all our loved ones who have died. May they rest in the peace of Christ. Let us pray to the Lord. (Lord, hear our prayer.)