

Wedding Handbook



Atonement Lutheran Church

Pastor Mari Thorkelson

Pastor John Gabrielson



Atonement Lutheran Church

1144 29th Avenue North
St Cloud, MN 56303
320-252-6203

Dear Couple,

Congratulations on your upcoming wedding day. We are happy and privileged to share this day with you.

We will work with you to plan a wedding ceremony that is meaningful, personal and worshipful. This handbook is designed to help you get started in the planning process. Please contact our Wedding Coordinators or either of us with questions at any point.

Blessings,

Rev. Mari Thorkelson

Rev. John Gabrielson

Steps in Planning for Your Wedding

1. Set the Date and Reserve the Church

As you first begin making wedding plans be sure to check on the availability of the church and the pastor. **In order to reserve the church you will need to fill out and return a Wedding Information Sheet along with a \$200 deposit.** It is still early in the planning process and you may not be able to complete the entire information sheet. Simply fill out the parts you are able to complete. You will have the chance to amend it as your planning progresses.

2. Attend a Marriage Preparation Retreat

Marriage is a big and important step in your life. We believe that pre-marriage care is an important part of preparing for your married life together, therefore Atonement requires couples to attend a pre-marriage workshop. *You have multiple options for pre-marriage workshops. Please consult a pastor before scheduling yours.*

3. Meet With a Wedding Coordinator

Once you reserve the church, you will be assigned to one of our Wedding Coordinators. Your Wedding Coordinator will be a great help in planning the day, answering questions and ensuring that your wedding runs smoothly. You will be contacted by your Wedding Coordinator to discuss decorating, time schedules, and other details.

4. Contact Musician(s)

Music is an important part of the wedding service. Quality music requires quality musicians. Using the church organist/pianist is suggested. Other musicians must be approved by Atonement's Director of Music Ministries. Your Wedding Coordinator can help put you in contact with the director.

Secure the organist and/or special music early. The church Office Administrator and Wedding Coordinator have the names and phone numbers of Atonement's musicians. You will contract with them directly with regard to their fees. Pre-service, processional, recessional, and post service music are all very important to the quality of the event. Special music such as solos and congregational singing can also add to the day. It may be possible to use a musician other than the church musician. Guest musicians must be approved by the Atonement Director of Music Ministries.

5. Plan Service with Pastor

Two or three months before the ceremony you will meet with the pastor who will be conducting the wedding. Details of this meeting are on the following pages.

Planning the Wedding Ceremony

Two to three months before the ceremony you will meet with a pastor to plan the wedding ceremony. The wedding service is a worship service. The officiating pastor will help you plan your marriage rite accordingly and will work with you to make the ceremony personal and meaningful. The officiating pastor has final say on all aspects of the wedding ceremony.

Note that weddings on Saturdays need to begin no later than 2:00 pm if photos are taken after the ceremony or 3:30 pm if photos are taken prior to the service or off site. This accommodates the Saturday evening worship at 5:30 pm.

Suggested Scripture Readings

Matthew 19:6

Song of Solomon 2:10-13

Song of Solomon 8:7

1 Corinthians 12:31-13-13

John 2:1-10

Ruth 1:16

Psalms 100

Psalms 127

Psalms 136

Psalms 112:1

Genesis 1:26-31

Isaiah 63:7-9

Romans 12:1-2

Ephesians 5:21-33

John 15:9-12

Psalms 33:5

Psalms 117

Psalms 128

Psalms 150

Wedding Bulletins

Couples are encouraged to use their creativity to design and produce their own bulletins to uniquely express their thoughts and personalities. Layout and printing is the responsibility of the couple.

Candles

The church has a special *candelabra set available* for your use. This set holds 14 oil filled candles. A *unity candle* or *unity sand* may be used; all materials must be provided by the couple. Consult with the Wedding Coordinator regarding recommended types and sizes of candles.

Paraments

Altar and banner hangings are used according to the season of the church year. The colors are: Advent - blue; Lent – purple; Christmas and Easter – white; Pentecost Sunday – red; Sundays in Pentecost season (summer until Advent) – green. Aisle runners are not used.

Pictures

Professional photographs may be taken either before or after the service, but it is Atonement's recommendation that all photographs be done before the ceremony. Please check with the pastor or Wedding Coordinator for the best time. Remember that the Saturday evening worship service begins at 5:30 pm. Video recording is permitted. For best results video equipment should be set up in the balcony.

Rehearsal

Wedding rehearsals are suggested as they ensure that the wedding day goes smoothly. Rehearsals are typically held the evening before the wedding. Those attending should include the wedding party, parents of the couple, ushers, readers, musicians, soloists, and others with a significant role in the ceremony. The rehearsal lasts about one hour. The officiating pastor and wedding coordinator will conduct the rehearsal.

Marriage License

Marriage licenses are available through the county clerk's office. You will need an ID. Divorcees will also need a copy of divorce decree. Widows/widowers will need the date of spouse's death. The county will mail you the license. Remember to bring the license to the church before or at the time of the rehearsal. The officiating pastor will complete and file the necessary paperwork. Through your pre-marriage counseling you will receive a coupon to discount the cost of the license.

Final Details

- \$200.00 down payment is required to reserve your date.
- Atonement's Sanctuary space can seat up to 300.
- The entire building is air-conditioned.
- Neither rice nor bird seed may be used.
- Alcohol is not allowed in the church or on the church grounds.

List of Costs

Church Fee Includes: Building Usage Fee Pastor's Fee Wedding Coordinator Fee A Deposit of \$200 is required to reserve the church. The remainder of the Church Fee is due before the rehearsal.	\$400 – Member \$600 – Non-member No refunds 90 days prior to event.
<i>Pre-marriage counseling</i>	Varies; often \$185/couple
Musician	Paid directly to musicians