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# PREPARING FOR YOUR WEDDING

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**LUTHERAN CHURCH**

*"Make Disciples, Live Faithfully, Serve Others."*

4686 East Walnut Street

Westerville, OH 43081

(614) 882-7601

[www.stpaulwesterville.org](http://www.stpaulwesterville.org)



# St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church

Make Disciples, Live Faithfully, Serve Others

Greetings to the Prospective Bride and Groom,

The “*Preparing For Your Wedding*” booklet is intended to help you get ready for one of the most important days of your lives. This is the day you promise before God, family and friends your love for each other as you are united as husband and wife.

You have requested the privilege of being united in marriage at St. Paul Lutheran Church. We view weddings in the context of worship in a Christian church. In other words, the worship and praise of God is what is central to the marriage service. The spiritual significance of this worship service should be the focal point of your wedding day. Secular fads that seem important have no place in a Christian worship service. The presence of God, the thoughts in your hearts and prayers, the scriptures read and your promises to each other are the things that matter. As we prepare for your wedding day together, let us prepare a service of worship as we celebrate the promises you will make to one another.

Since your wedding is a once-in-a-lifetime event, let us plan carefully that our worship reflects the solemnity and meaning you anticipate. Use this booklet as a guide to help you understand some of the principles of worship at St. Paul. I hope this will enable us to plan a service that will reflect the reverence and dignity appropriate for your wedding.

God’s blessings be with you. I look forward to working with you as we prepare for your special day.

Go with God,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jonathan D. Bull". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jonathan D. Bull  
Senior Pastor

## *What is a Wedding?*

It may seem like a silly question, but what is reasoning behind it? Why do we do it? A wedding is the coming together of two lives to be joined, married.

That is what a wedding is, but is that the same as marriage? Not by a long shot! Marriage is "a gift of God which can only become real in the lives of two people," as one phrase has it. The wedding is "only" the outward sign of an inward union of hearts, bound together by God.

A wedding is an event, but marriage is a process. A marriage begins before the wedding takes place even before the engagement ring goes on. Some time ago, after you had known each other for a while, the two of you gradually came to realize that you loved one another. When you thought of your individual futures, you discovered you were already thinking of the other one in that future. At some point you began to explore the subject of marriage gingerly and indirectly, at first. Then like a person standing on the high-diving board for the first time you swallowed and courageously leaped into the subject. By the time you were officially engaged, you were, in many ways, already "married" emotionally.

Is your wedding day the date you are married? Yes, and no! Marriage is a process. You will really be married when you realize more deeply than you could possibly know on your wedding day, that this is truly "an inward union of hearts" which at its best does indeed resemble the unity between Christ and the church.

Still, when it comes to dealing with others, we need specifics — dates — to use for social and legal purposes, and to publicly announce our holy commitment to one another. So we have wedding days. That is what this book is all about.

Your wedding is a contract, of sorts. To apply for a marriage license, you must go to the probate court of the county in which one or the other of you lives. If neither of you is an Ohio resident, you must apply in the county where the marriage will be solemnized. Ohio establishes minimum ages for marriages, demands credentials from people who solemnize weddings, places certain requirements on couples who plan to marry, and requires you to sign documents, which are filed by the clerk of the courts.

Sounds very legal? It is.

Marriage, the "union of two hearts" is also a civil institution, a legal relationship governed by law and established by the state legislature. A wedding, then, is the legal ceremony in which two people publicly associate themselves in a legal contract of marriage. So it could be done by a judge, or by a licensed minister in a church office or at your home.

But that doesn't sound like much of a wedding, does it? You want your wedding at St. Paul Lutheran Church. Why? You want your wedding to reflect something of your feelings for one another. But you want it to be even more than that.

You are planning your wedding at a church because you want to ask God's blessings on your marriage, not just on your wedding. You want to worship God at this special time To celebrate God's love toward both of you in Jesus Christ and for God's gift of love through each other.

Your wedding should be special. This is a time to publicly pledge your love for each other. This is a time in which you begin your home and family. You are no longer two separate individuals, but two people with the same identity, no longer your parent's families but your own family. And because you are being married here at a church, you are proclaiming that God, through Jesus Christ, has a great deal of importance in your relationship. If that is not the case, then maybe this is not the place to be married.

You should make your wedding as special as your marriage. You should plan the worship service in which you will be married with as much love and care as you arrange for flowers, pictures and wedding cake.

## ***What Is Worship?***

We are glad you asked!

A wedding can mean so much more when it is worshipful. It means more to you on your special day and more to the people who are there to celebrate with you.

Good worship can only enhance and beautify your wedding. It can never detract from the joy of that day. It can give meaning to your wedding because worship brings the special love God has for you to the attention of everyone that celebrates and worships with you.

There are good ways and bad ways to worship, just as there are neat and sloppy weddings. We would like to outline certain principles of worship, things to think about as you plan your wedding service.

1) **Worship is an Encounter with God.** It is our reaction to God's action, our coming to God because God came to us in Christ. Our prayers, songs and thoughts go to God as God comes to us in word, song, blessing, and in the "mystical presence" we experience in church. We draw closer to God and to one another. God is present!

2) **All Worship is Christ-centered.** If it were not for Christ we would be nothing. Christian couples often can see Christ's love for them reflected in their love for each other. Our worship should point to Christ as the focal point.

3) If God is present and Christ is the center. **We Worship Modestly.** In a wedding, that means that Christ is the center of attention, not the bride, not the groom, not the dresses and flowers but Christ. That does not mean the bride and groom and all the other things are wrong and out of place. Not at all! It is a wedding service, after all, and they can all add to the worship that we are giving Christ

4) If God is present and Christ is the center. **We Also Worship Reverently.** We give dignified credit to the One who made all this possible. Worship especially on a good day like your wedding day should be filled with laughter, joy, smiles, flowers, rousing music, the personal touch, colors, brightness, and sunshine. "Reverently" means that we plan and participate in a worship which in all its parts respects and honors our good God, the giver of all that is good!

5) **Wedding Worship should be Liturgical.** In other words, following good church order. Not rigid and dogmatic, but flexibly suggesting good arrangements of songs, words, and your part in the worship ceremony. We have included a variety of possibilities for your consideration in this booklet.

6) **And We Worship Together.** Since we are together, the body of Christ, the family of God, your wedding is for all who attend. Your family and friends attending your wedding become the gathered congregation for our worship. As we talk about what will go into your wedding worship service, we will create a service that is Christ centered and help all give thanks to God for God's gifts to them and you. Include everyone in the worship by having them sing or speak or pray together.

### ***The Marriage Service: An Outline***

Marriage is a gift of God, intended for the joy and strength of those who enter it and for the well-being of the whole human family. In creation God blessed humankind with mutual companionship, the capacity to love, and the care and nurture of children. God's faithfulness, enacted in the covenant with the people Israel, is the promise in which marriage, too, is grounded. Jesus affirmed the covenant of marriage and by the mystery of his self-giving, revealed the height and depth of love. Even as the one Spirit holds the church of God in the bond of peace, so the Holy Spirit sustains those who are united in marriage, that as one they may be a living sign of God's grace, love, and fidelity.

Here is an outline of the wedding service liturgy used at St. Paul Lutheran Church.

#### GATHERING

**Entrance**  
**Greeting**  
**Introduction**  
**Declaration of Intention**  
**Prayer of the Day**

#### WORD

**Readings**  
**Sermon**  
*Hymn of the Day*

## MARRIAGE

**Vows**  
**Giving of Rings**  
**Acclamation**  
**Nuptial Blessing**  
**Intercessions**

*Communion*

## SENDING

**Blessing**  
**Dismissal**  
**Departure**

What do all these titles mean? To give you an idea of what the wedding service components are all about, here is a description of each section.

### *Shape of the Rite*

## GATHERING

**Entrance**  
**Greeting**  
**Introduction**  
**Declaration of Intention**  
**Prayer of the Day**

The marriage liturgy is a service of worship in which the promises of marriage are made before God and the Christian assembly. Those gathered represent the whole people of God and at the same time include people who bring a variety of religious beliefs and spiritual practices. Music and an entrance procession often begin this liturgy, as those who enter symbolize the gathering of all present into worship. After the greeting, a pastoral introduction is an occasion to highlight the church's understanding of marriage and draw the people together in heart and mind. Those to be married are the primary ministers of the wedding; ordained clergy serve as official witnesses and preside during the liturgical celebration. As the assembly gathers, the couple declares their intention to marry. As active participants in the liturgy, the family and the gathered assembly are asked to offer their support and blessing. The gathering rite ends with the prayer of the day, as the assembly prepares to hear the word of God.

## WORD

### **Readings**

### **Sermon**

### *Hymn of the Day*

Scripture readings declare the steadfast love of God, proclaim the blessings of God, and call the couple to live out God's love within the covenant of their life together. Additional readings from the lectionary may also be considered to reflect themes of covenant and love associated with particular times of the church's year. Members of the family, the wedding party, or the assembly may be invited to proclaim the readings in order to express the corporate nature of this liturgy. Psalms, hymns, and songs provide additional ways to proclaim and respond to the word of God.

## MARRIAGE

### **Vows**

### **Giving of Rings**

### **Acclamation**

### **Nuptial Blessing**

### **Intercessions**

The exchange of vows by the couple and the gift of God's blessing stand at the center of the marriage liturgy. The faithfulness promised in the vows is grounded in God's unfailing faithfulness as expressed in the promise of baptism. The exchange of rings is a visual and tangible symbol reinforcing the words of promise. Any additional symbolic acts should support rather than overshadow the vows and the primary symbol of the giving of rings. The marriage, enacted through word and symbol, is announced and acclaimed by the presiding minister and the whole assembly. In the nuptial blessing the presiding minister thanks God for the gifts of creation and covenant, gives thanks for salvation in Christ, and invokes the Holy Spirit that these same blessings may be made known in and through the newly married couple. The Prayers of Intercession follow the blessing: as God's mercy is invoked for the whole world, the focus of the rite shifts from the couple to the ministry that all share with one another in the world. When the sacrament of Holy Communion is not celebrated, the service continues with the Lord's Prayer, blessing, dismissal, and departure.

### ***Communion***

Marriage and the Eucharist (Communion) are both covenants, characterized by self-giving love. Marriage reveals self-giving love at the heart of a relationship between two people joined as one. Holy Communion makes present the self-giving love of Jesus Christ in his body and blood through the sacrament. The assembly, gathered around two people and their union as one flesh, now gathers around the love of God and the union of human and divine in Jesus Christ. When marriage is celebrated within the liturgy of word and meal, communion is offered to all baptized persons.

## SENDING

### **Blessing Dismissal Departure**

As in other services of worship, this service ends simply. Together with the newly married couple, all receive the blessing of God, are invited to leave in peace, and are sent out to serve in word and deed bearing the good news of the love of God made known in Jesus Christ.

### **OPTIONS**

As previously mentioned, you have some choices as to what you would like to have in your wedding. Below are some options for your wedding. Pick one option for each item below.

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **A**

Dear friends: We have come together in the presence of God to witness the marriage of *name* and *name*, 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, a holy mystery in which two become one flesh, an image of the union of Christ and the church. As *name* and *name* give themselves 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.

#### **B**

*Name* and *name* have come to make their marriage vows in the presence of God and this congregation.

Let us now witness their promises to each other and surround them with our prayers, giving thanks to God for the gift of marriage and asking God's blessing upon them, so that they may be strengthened for their life together and nurtured in their love for God.

We rejoice that marriage is given by God, blessed by our Lord Jesus Christ, and sustained by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, let marriage be held in honor by all.

## **C**

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 the 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.

## **D**

Beloved people of God,  
we have come together in the presence of God  
to witness and bless the covenant of love and fidelity  
name and name are to make with each other.

The union of two persons in heart, body, and mind  
is intended by God for their mutual joy,  
for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity;  
and that their love may be a blessing to all whom they encounter.  
This solemn covenant is not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly,  
but reverently, deliberately,  
and with the commitment to seek God's will for their lives.

## **DECLARATION OF INTENTION**

### ***Couple***

*The minister addresses the couple, asking each person in turn:*

## **A**

*Name*, will you have name to be your *wife/husband*,  
to live together in a holy marriage?  
Will you love *her/him*, comfort *her/him*, honor and keep *her/him*,  
in sickness and in health,  
and, forsaking all others, be faithful to *her/him*  
as long as you both shall live?

*Response:* I will.

**B**

*Name*, will you receive name as your *wife/husband* and bind yourself to *her/him* in the covenant of marriage? Will you promise to love and honor *her/him* in true devotion, to rejoice with *her/him* in times of gladness, to grieve with *her/him* in times of sorrow, and to be faithful to *her/him* as long as you both shall live?  
*Response*: I will, with the help of God.

**C**

*Name*, living in the promise of God, joined to Christ in your baptism, will you give yourself to name in love and faithfulness? Will you share your life with *her/him*, in joy and in sorrow, in health and in sickness, for richer, for poorer, for better, for worse, and will you be faithful to *her/him* as long as you both shall live?  
*Response*: I will, with the help of God.

**DECLARATION OF INTENTION**  
***Assembly***

*The minister says to the families:*

**A**

Will you, the families of name and name, give your love and blessing to this new family?  
*The families respond*: We will.

*The minister says to the assembly:*

Will all of you, by God's grace, do everything in your power to uphold and care for these two persons in their life together?  
**We will.**

**B**

*When pastorally appropriate, one or both of these questions may be used when children are brought into the family of those to be married.*

*The minister may ask the couple:*

*Name* and name, will you be faithful and loving parents to name/s?  
*Response*: We will, with the help of God.

*The minister may ask the children:*

*Name/s*, will you help name and name in their marriage?  
*Response*: We will, with the help of God.

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

*The presiding minister leads the prayer of the day:*

### **A**

Let us pray.

Eternal God, our creator and redeemer,  
as you gladdened the wedding at Cana in Galilee  
by the presence of your Son,  
so bring your joy to this wedding by his presence now.  
Look in favor upon name and name  
and grant that they, rejoicing in all your gifts,  
may at length celebrate the unending marriage feast with Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

### **B**

Gracious God,  
you sent your Son Jesus Christ into the world  
to reveal your love to all people.  
Enrich name and name with every good gift,  
that their life together may show forth your love;  
and grant that at the last we may all celebrate with Christ  
the marriage feast that has no ending;  
in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

### **C**

Eternal God, creator and sustainer of us all,  
give your grace to name and name.  
Grant that in the years ahead  
they may be faithful to the vows they make this day,  
and that in the strength of the Holy Spirit  
they may grow together in the love, joy, and peace  
of our Savior Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

## **READINGS and RESPONSES**

*Two or three readings are proclaimed*

### **OLD TESTAMENT**

Genesis 1:26-28 *Woman and man created in the image of God*

Genesis 2:18-24 *Companionship rather than loneliness*

Proverbs 3:3-6 *Loyalty and faithfulness written on the heart*

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 *The blessing of partnership, the bond of God's love*

Song of Solomon 2:10-13 *The voice of the beloved*

Song of Solomon 8:6-7 *Many waters cannot quench love*

Isaiah 63:7-9 *God's steadfast love lifts up the people*

Jeremiah 31:31-34 *The new covenant of the people of God*

### **PSALM**

67 *May God be merciful to us and bless us*

100 *We are God's people and the sheep of God's pasture*

117 *The steadfast love of the Lord*

121 *The Lord keeps watch over you*

127 *Unless the Lord builds the house*

128 *Blessed are those who walk in the Lord's ways*

150 *Let everything that breathes praise the Lord*

### **NEW TESTAMENT**

Romans 8:31-35, 37-39 *If God is for us, who is against us*

Romans 12:1-2, 9-18 *A living sacrifice and genuine love*

1 Corinthians 12:31—13:13 *The greatest gift is love*

Ephesians 3:14-19 *The breadth, length, height and depth of Christ's love*

Ephesians 5:1-2, 21-33 *Walk in love, as Christ loved us*

Philippians 4:4-9 *Rejoice in the Lord always*

Colossians 3:12-17 *Clothed in compassion, kindness, meekness and patience*

1 John 3:18-24 *Let us love in truth and action*

1 John 4:7-16 *Let us love one another for love is of God*

### **GOSPEL**

Matthew 5:1-10 *The beatitudes*

Matthew 5:14-16 *You are the light, let your light shine*

Matthew 7:21, 24-29 *A wise person builds upon the rock*

Matthew 19:3-6 *What God has united must not be divided*

Matthew 22:35-40 *Love, the greatest commandment*

Mark 10:6-9 *They are no longer two but one*

John 2:1-11 *The wedding at Cana*

John 15:9-17 *Love one another as I have loved you*

## VOWS

### **A**

In the presence of God and this community,  
I, name, take you, name, 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.

### **B**

I take you, name, 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.

### **C**

I, name, give myself to you, name.  
By the grace of God,  
I promise to support and care for you.  
In the love of Christ,  
I promise to love and cherish you.  
With the Spirit's help,  
I promise to be faithful to you,  
as long as we both shall live.

### **D**

I take you, name, to be my *wife/husband*,  
and these things I promise you:  
I will be faithful to you and honest with you;  
I will respect, trust, help, and care for you;  
I will forgive you as we have been forgiven;  
and I will share my life with you,  
through the best and worst of all that is to come,  
until death parts us.

## **GIVING OF RINGS**

*When rings are to be exchanged, they may be placed on the service book of the minister or held by an assisting minister. The presiding minister may say:*

**A**

Gracious God, by your blessing  
let these rings be to name and name  
a symbol of their unending love and faithfulness,  
to remind them of the vow and covenant they have made this day,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**B**

We give you thanks, O God of grace,  
for your love and faithfulness to your people.  
Bless these rings,  
that they may be symbols of the enduring commitment  
name and name have made to each other;  
through Jesus Christ our Savior.

**Amen.**

## ***Exchange of Rings***

*The couple exchange rings with these or similar words:*

**A**

Name, 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.

**B**

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

## ***Additional Choices for Your Wedding***

**Music:** Music beginning 30 minutes before the service, as you exit the service, and special music during the service can be meaningful, especially if at least one of these selections is a hymn the congregation can sing, too. Generally, two musical selections (not counting processional and recessional) are enough. Music is to be focused on our worship of God.

## **Holy Communion**

For those who share faith and tradition, this is especially meaningful.

## **Unity Candle**

The single center candle with two smaller side candles, lit after the announcement of the marriage. Leaving the side candles lit symbolizes that while you are one, you remain as individuals. You must provide all three candles and a stand for the candles. Please note this is NOT a requirement in the wedding service.

## **Hymns For All**

Allows all that are with you to do more than be mere spectators.

## **Other Pastors**

If you would like to invite another pastor or priest to participate in your wedding, please talk with one of the pastors at St. Paul first! A pastor from St. Paul will be the officiating pastor at your wedding. An invited pastor will be involved in the main service and not simply to step in for an after-service benediction.

## **Readers**

You may ask another person to read one of the scripture lessons. We will provide the lessons so that they can practice beforehand.

## **Worship Bulletins**

We suggest this, especially if you're planning a worship in which all people somehow participate with you. This folder includes the order of worship, the responses, hymns, and prayers; a list of the persons in your wedding party, parents, etc. St. Paul can print bulletins for a nominal fee. If you contact a printer or photocopy establishment for your printing, **the pastor needs to proof the order of service before it is printed.**

**Other Readings** of literature, poetry, etc. from outside the Bible may be appropriate. Following the principles of worship, they should extol Christ rather than the wedding couple, and should illuminate Christ's love for people rather than the idea of romantic love and romance. We are open to your ideas. **The pastor must approve all readings.**

## **What Music Shall we Include in our Service?**

For some people, wedding music is a touchy subject. Here are some guidelines to help us all feel good about the musical choices. **All music must be approved by the pastor & director of music.**

1) God is present and Christ is the center. Music should reflect this. Lutheran Christians have the richest heritage of fine music in all the world. Don't overlook these possibilities! There is very rousing, cheerful, bright -- yes, even "dance-y" -- music from J.S. Bach, and a lot of music from many centuries which you may never have heard or not dream possible.

2) God is present and Christ is the center. Themes from current films and the radio's "Number One" will seldom reflect the Christian character of your wedding worship or your life. You can use these pieces at your reception. Bring your ideas and the music along, and we can talk about it.

Wagner's Bridal Chorus, also know as "Here Comes the Bide" is not permitted at St. Paul. This music has its origin in an opera that ends in divorce. We certainly do not want to begin your wedding day with these overtones!

3) Other instruments are good, too, such as guitar, horn, harp, piano, and hand bells. Again, the music should add to good worship -- it should be well done, "dignified and reverent," and Christ-centered.

4) Choose a good soloist, someone who is a musician and can sing. Sounds logical, but some weddings are tainted by bad singing.

5) Think about letting us all in on the joy of singing! A song or hymn sung by the whole gathering can be a pleasant way of sharing the happiness of your worship.

6) Contact our organist whose phone number is available in the church office.

7) If the praise team is playing for your wedding, there are many "contemporary" pieces in the praise team repertoire for you to choose from that fit our guidelines.

All arrangements with musicians other than the organist or praise team — fees, rehearsal arrangements, etc., are your own responsibility with that person.

Some suggested hymns from Evangelical Lutheran Worship:

Title .....	Hymn Number
Hear Us Now, Our God and Father.....	585
Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee .....	836
Praise to the Lord, the Almighty .....	858
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling.....	631
Beautiful Savior .....	838
Now Thank We All Our God .....	839, 840
Sing Praise to God, the Highest Good .....	871
Oh, That I Had a Thousand Voices .....	833
For the Beauty of the Earth .....	879
Let All Things Now Living .....	881

## We Thought You Would Never Ask!

### **When may we schedule our wedding, if we haven't already?**

Weddings can be scheduled once your desired date has been confirmed with the Church calendar and the pastor's calendar and you have officially met with the pastor. Any time of the day or evening is generally acceptable for your wedding. There will be no weddings at St. Paul during Holy Week. All weddings are first come, first served.

### **What about flowers?**

Altar flowers should not be showy and overly large. You may, if you wish, leave the flowers for our Sunday worship. NO FLOWERS should be placed on the Altar itself.

### **What about changing the altar and other furnishings?**

You may make some adjustments in decor but seasonal decorations will stay in place, such as banners, candles, and altar coverings. The use of tape for decorations is prohibited.

### **What about an aisle runner?**

NO! Aisle runners are not permitted for use at a St. Paul Lutheran Church wedding.

### **How about Candelabras?**

Candelabras are two sets of five candles that are set into stands on either side of the altar. These would take the place of the two individual candles that usually are there. There is a \$20 for the use of the candelabras.

### **Where do we dress?**

Women may dress in women's lounge and restroom on the lower level. Men usually dress at someone's home, but they may dress at the church if they want. We can make those arrangements at rehearsal time.

### **What rules are there regarding the use of the building?**

We request that our "Rules for use of the Buildings" be followed, including:

- You are responsible to clean up the church buildings after yourself.
- No alcohol is permitted on church property. **If alcohol is brought onto the church property, the pastor reserves the right to cancel the wedding, or require those involved to not participate in or attend the service.**
- No smoking is permitted inside church buildings.
- Use of other rooms for a reception or other events must be contracted separately

### **What is a Wedding Coordinator?**

The Wedding Coordinator is your main contact person during the days of the rehearsal and the wedding. She will be present from the moment you enter till the time you leave, and will provide you with anything you might need. She is there to assist you and the worship leaders to make sure everyone is in place, and all details are covered. **This is not an optional item in your wedding day, but a vital part of our service to you.**

### **When is rehearsal?**

Your rehearsal should be the evening before your wedding day. Other days are optional in consultation with the pastor. Everyone who is involved in the ceremony and worship should be there, including the ushers, all the wedding party, and the parents. The soloist doesn't need to be there unless a separate practice is planned. The two factors to consider when planning the rehearsal time, consider when people can arrive, and also when the rehearsal dinner might occur. Plan on the rehearsal beginning about 90 minutes prior to the time of the rehearsal dinner.

***Special Note:*** *Courtesy expects that everyone **will be on time and respectful of both church and participants** in the wedding. If you need to, please remind your friends of this, before the rehearsal begins. Provided there is not a rehearsal dinner on site at the church, after the rehearsal, the building will be closed, locked and secured **½ hour AFTER the rehearsal.***

### **What kind of fees do you expect?**

See the fee schedule in this booklet along with a schedule for payment.

### **When can we have what pictures taken?**

*Before* the wedding is a good time. It gets pictures out of the way and you can proceed to your reception without delay.

During the wedding, pictures can be taken, but must be done from the back of the church. The focus of the wedding is NOT the photographer, but the worship for which we are gathered.

*After* the ceremony and depending on the size of your wedding, figure at least 45 minutes from the time the service ends until you can get *started* on pictures.

**Video Recording?** Yes, let's make arrangements for this at the rehearsal. Please make sure all of your photographers talk to the pastor before the service begins. The Photographer is NOT in charge of the wedding, and will be asked to follow the directions of the pastor.

For a fee, St. Paul Lutheran Church can record your wedding. *Please note, that outside companies cannot plug their equipment into our sound board.*

### **And invitations?**

It's good courtesy to send the pastors an invitation, especially if you're expecting them at the reception. They will not always be able to attend, but if you invite them, they will tell you one way or another.

### **The marriage license?**

Marriage licenses in the state of Ohio are good for sixty days after they are purchased. They must be purchased in the county in which you reside. Once you have received the forms, please turn them in to the pastor so we can process them properly for the church records and the county's records as well.

### **What about premarital sessions?**

Many people think a lot about their wedding and little about their marriage. We feel it is helpful to talk through what marriage is about with you (not at you) and to raise subjects that generally need to be thought over. For example, it is usually helpful for a couple to think about constructive ways to deal with conflicts and disagreements. We will make arrangements with you for the 3-4 sessions together as required in the church's marriage policy.

In preparation for marriage counseling an online premarital inventory is given called Prepare/Enrich. The cost of this inventory is paid by the couple online to Prepare/Enrich. The cost is currently \$35.

### **Throwing Rice?**

This traditional custom is part of an ancient pagan ceremony for fertility. It is not Christ centered and is not permitted at St. Paul Lutheran Church.

## **Wedding Policies of St. Paul Lutheran Church**

*Approved by Church Council, November 13, 2006*

Those persons to be married are expected to be active participants in a Christian congregation. When both individuals are not members of St. Paul, approval must be obtained from the Pastor. **All Weddings MUST be scheduled with the Pastor no later than eight (8) weeks prior to the marriage date.**

All couples will be ***required to attend at least two (2) church services*** at St. Paul before their wedding. The couple shall attend three or four counseling sessions prior to the marriage. A pre-marriage inventory is required.

All details of the marriage service shall be at the discretion of the Pastor. Selection of music shall be made in consultation with the Pastor and the church organist. Non-member, assisting clergy and/or visiting clergy is permissible with the prior consent of the Pastor.

Scheduling a wedding at St. Paul does not guarantee who will officiate. Because of family responsibilities, or any unknown issue that might arise, the determination of who will officiate at the wedding will occur some time after the wedding has been scheduled. A Pastor of St. Paul, or a representative Lutheran clergy designated by the Pastor of St. Paul will officiate at the service.

The couple assumes the cost of materials for the service, as designated by the Pastor and Church Council.

**Member's rates apply when either the bride or groom has been a member of St. Paul for at least six months prior to the day of the wedding, or when either of the parents of the bride or groom is a member of St. Paul for at least one year prior to the day of the wedding.**

A security deposit is required for all weddings (**\$100 for members, \$200 for non-members**). If a wedding is cancelled within one week of the date, the security deposit will not be returned.

**All fees related to the wedding and marriage license must be turned in to the pastor 2 weeks prior to the wedding day.** Checks are to be made out to the person or institution listed on the fee schedule.

You are responsible to clean up the church buildings after yourself or you will be charged a clean up fee.

No alcohol is permitted on church property. **If alcohol is brought onto the church property, the pastor reserves the right to cancel the wedding, or require those involved to not participate in or attend the service.**

No smoking is permitted inside church buildings.

**Use of other rooms for a reception or other events must be contracted separately.**

# Contract for a Wedding at St. Paul Lutheran Church

Name of Bride: \_\_\_\_\_

Member (at least six months) YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Daughter of St. Paul member (at least one year) prior to service? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Groom: \_\_\_\_\_

Member (at least six months) YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Son of St. Paul member (at least one year) prior to service? YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Wedding \_\_\_\_\_

Confirmed by church \_\_\_\_\_

***Please initial each item, and sign and date bottom.***

**We agree** to abide by all guidelines of the St. Paul Lutheran Church Wedding Policies as they are stated in the St. Paul Lutheran Church Wedding Booklet. (B) \_\_\_\_\_ (G) \_\_\_\_\_

**We will attend** at least two worship services at St. Paul Lutheran Church prior to our wedding. (B) \_\_\_\_\_ (G) \_\_\_\_\_

**We will assume** the cost of all materials for the service, as designated by the Pastor and Church Council. (B) \_\_\_\_\_ (G) \_\_\_\_\_

**We have agreed** to the fees for the service, as listed on the back of this form. (B) \_\_\_\_\_ (G) \_\_\_\_\_

**We agree to pay all fees** for the wedding service and submit the marriage license to the Pastor **2 weeks prior to the wedding date.** (B) \_\_\_\_\_ (G) \_\_\_\_\_

**We assume full** responsibility to clean up the building and rooms following the rehearsal and wedding. (B) \_\_\_\_\_ (G) \_\_\_\_\_

**We have read and agree to the NO ALCOHOL** policy, and understand that if any member of the wedding party brings alcohol onto the church property, the pastor reserves the right to call off the wedding immediately and indefinitely. (B) \_\_\_\_\_ (G) \_\_\_\_\_

**If any participant of the wedding party is inebriated**, the pastor reserves the right to exclude them from the wedding service. If this is the bride or groom, the pastor reserves the right to call off the wedding immediately and indefinitely. (B) \_\_\_\_\_ (G)\_\_\_\_\_

**We understand** that scheduling the wedding does not guarantee who will officiate (who the pastor will be) at the wedding. (B) \_\_\_\_\_ (G)\_\_\_\_\_

**We understand that** if the organist of St. Paul Lutheran Church is not used, the organ can only be used by a trained organist who is approved by the organist, music director and pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church. (B) \_\_\_\_\_ (G)\_\_\_\_\_

**We understand that if any damage** is done to the property or equipment of St. Paul Lutheran Church, the security deposit will be used to cover the cost. If the cost of any damage is over that amount, we will pay to repair. (B) \_\_\_\_\_ (G)\_\_\_\_\_

**I have read and agree to abide by all statements listed above.**

**Signature of Bride** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Groom** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature of Pastor** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

## Wedding Fees – Non Member

A **\$200 security deposit** is required when the service is booked. When the deposit is received, the contract signed, the service date will be set. The deposit will be held until after the service is completed. If there is any damage, the costs will be detailed, and the deposit will be used toward those expenses. If no damage, the check will be returned to you. **IF the wedding is cancelled within one week of the service, the security deposit will NOT be returned.**

### SET FEES

ITEM .....	AMOUNT .....	CHECK MADE TO:
Pastor .....	\$400 .....	“Jonathan Bull or Rebecca Grate”
Use of Church .....	\$250 .....	“St. Paul Lutheran Church”
Organist (wedding service).....	\$175 .....	“Philip Cordell”
Wedding Coordinator .....	\$225.....	“Karla Kruse”
Custodian .....	\$100 .....	“James Dunlap”
Printing of Bulletins.....	\$50 plus cost of covers .....	“Velda Wise”

**TOTAL SET FEES    \$1150.00**

**Fees to be paid 2 weeks prior to the wedding date, no later than your last marriage counseling.**

### ADDITIONAL FEES

Organist (additional rehearsal – soloist).....	\$50 .....	“Philip Cordell”
Praise Team (eliminates organist fee).....	\$350 .....	“St. Paul Lutheran Church”
Bench Fee (When using another organist. This would eliminate the fees for the organist above).....	\$50 .....	“Philip Cordell”
Candelabras .....	\$20 .....	“St. Paul Lutheran Church”
Pre-Marriage Inventory and Counseling .....	\$30 .....	ON LINE (Price Subject to Change)

### SECURITY DEPOSIT

Security Deposit .....	\$100 .....	“St. Paul Lutheran Church”
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## Wedding Fees – Member

A \$100 security deposit is required when the service is booked. When the deposit is received, the contract signed, the service date will be set. The deposit will be held until after the service is completed. If there is any damage, the costs will be detailed, and the deposit will be used toward those expenses. If no damage, the check will be returned to you. **IF the wedding is cancelled within one week of the service, the security deposit will NOT be returned.**

### SET FEES

ITEM .....	AMOUNT .....	CHECK MADE TO:
Pastor .....	\$300.00 .....	“Jonathan Bull or Rebecca Grate”
Use of Church .....	\$0 .....	
Organist (wedding service).....	\$150 .....	“Philip Cordell”
Wedding Coordinator .....	\$175.....	“Karla Kruse”
Custodian .....	\$75 .....	“James Dunlap”
Printing of Bulletins.....	\$35 plus cost of covers.....	“Velda Wise”

### TOTAL SET FEES    \$700.00

**Fees to be paid 2 weeks prior to the wedding date, no later than your last marriage counseling.**

### ADDITIONAL FEES

Organist (additional rehearsal – soloist).....	\$50 .....	“Philip Cordell”
Praise Team (eliminates organist fee).....	\$300 .....	“St. Paul Lutheran Church”
Bench Fee (if using another organist or musician. This would eliminate the fees for the organist above).....	\$50 .....	“Philip Cordell”
Candelabras .....	\$20 .....	“St. Paul Lutheran Church”
Pre-Marriage Inventory and Counseling .....	\$30 .....	ON LINE (Price Subject to Change)

### SECURITY DEPOSIT

Security Deposit .....	\$100 .....	“St. Paul Lutheran Church”
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