

### **Possible Suggestions for Music**

Music is an important part of a Christian worship experience. A Christian wedding affords several opportunities to praise and give thanks for God's gift of love to all people. These may include a prelude, a processional, a hymn or song sung by the assembled guests or a soloist, a recessional and a postlude.

There is no definitive list of music appropriate for a Christian wedding in every place or situation. However, when choosing songs with texts, couples should give consideration to what the words are communicating. All music—including the lyrics—will be reviewed by the pastor prior to being deemed appropriate for a Christian wedding service. The list below is a short list of preapproved music.

### **Music for processional / recessional**

Aria—Handel  
Arioso—Bach  
Canon in D—Pachelbel  
Ode to Joy—Beethoven  
Sheep and Lambs May Safely Graze—Bach  
Sinfonia from the Wedding Contata—Bach  
Allegro Moderato—Handel  
Festal Fanfare—Bach  
Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring—Bach  
Psalm XIX—B. Marcello

### **Hymns**

Sent Forth by God's Blessing—ELW 547  
Hear Us Now, Our God and Father—ELW 585  
Heaven Is Singing For Joy—ELW 664  
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling—ELW 631  
Children of the Heavenly Father—ELW 781  
Now Thank We All Our God—ELW 840  
Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee—ELW 836  
Let All Things Now Living—ELW 881  
Here in This Place—ELW 532  
I Was There to Hear Your Borne Cry—ELW 732

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# *A Guide to Your Wedding*



## **St. Mark's Lutheran Church**

*Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

**140 South Green Bay Road**

**Neenah, WI 54956**

**920-725-2828**



# A Guide to Your Wedding



## Marriage—A Liturgy of the Church

### Congratulations on your upcoming wedding!

We rejoice with you and are happy for this time in your life. Our hope is that it will be a time of joy and thanksgiving in the days leading up to and beyond your wedding day.

This booklet has been prepared to help those who desire to have their wedding at St. Mark's Lutheran Church.

These guidelines also apply if your wedding takes place at a location other than St. Mark's with our pastor officiating. If you are interested in using the church fellowship hall for your wedding reception—additional information will be made available.

People from all cultures and all religions get married, so marriage is not the sole possession of the Church. That you have chosen to be married in a Christian Church means your wedding will be an **act of worship**.

**Therefore, as is the case in all Christian worship, our primary focus is on God.**

As you come before the altar to pledge your love and life-long faithfulness to each other, the Church offers what it has been authorized by Christ to give: God's blessing.

### Who May Be Married at St. Mark's

In keeping with the nature of Christian marriage, people who have a commitment to Christ and are actively engaged in the life of the Church are welcome to be married at St. Mark's, or by our pastor.

As you prepare for marriage, couples will be expected to regularly attend worship services, either at St Mark's or

## Possible Options for Scripture Readings

### Old Testament

Psalm 33, 98, 100, 117, 127, 128, 136, 150	
Genesis 1:26-31	Genesis 2:18-24
Genesis 24: 48-51, 58-67	Song of Solomon 2:10-13
Jeremiah 31:31-32b, 33-34a	Lamentations 3:21-23
Ruth 1:16-17	Isaiah 11:6-9
Isaiah 54:5-8	Isaiah 62:4-5

### New Testament

Romans 8:31b-35, 37-39	Romans 12:1-2, 9
Ephesians 5:21-33	1 Corinthians 13
Colossians 3:12-17	Galatians 5:13-15
Philippians 4:1-9	1 John 3:18-24
1 John 4:7-12	1 John 4:19
1 Peter 3:8-9	James 5:7-11
Revelations 19:1, 5-9a	Revelations 21:5

### Gospel

Matthew 5:1-12a	Matthew 5:13-16
Matthew 22:35-40	Matthew 19:4-6
Mark 10:6-9	John 1:1, 4
John 2:1-11	John 15:9-12
John 15:11-17	John 17:20-23

( A listing of these readings in full is also available)

## Sample Order of Worship

- \* Prelude
- \* Seating of Mothers
- \* Processional
- \* Welcome/Greeting
- \* Statement of Intent
- \* Prayer
- \* Scripture Readings
- \* Introduction to the Vows
- \* Exchange of Vows
- \* Blessing of the Rings
- \* Exchange of Rings
- \* Acclamation of Marriage
- \* Blessing of Marriage
- \* Lighting of the Unity Candle
- \* Prayers
- \* Lord's Prayer
- \* Benediction
- \* Recessional
- \* Postlude Music

*The insertion of congregational hymns, special music, and Service of Holy Communion need to be discussed with Pastor.*

another Christian church.

Couples previously married in a civil ceremony are welcome to have their marriage vows blessed at St. Mark's, provided the other provisions are met.

### Preparing for your Wedding

**First and foremost, the Christian wedding is an act of worship.**

It is a time for you as bride and groom to come together to offer thanks and praise and ask God's blessing upon your lives together.

It was God who brought you together and who will unite you as husband and wife. It is God who gives you an example of a complete relationship: the Trinity. And it is that fullness of relationship modeled in God's love in Jesus Christ which we seek in the relationship of husband and wife.

The Christian congregation that gathers with you on your wedding day also has reason to thank and praise God on your behalf. We shall uplift you in prayer, joining with you in asking God's blessing upon this new union.

Since a wedding is worship, this means God should have **first** place, with attention directed to God. You will want to be sure that nothing in your wedding detracts from giving God the place of greatest importance.

You might think of it in this way: at your wedding service God is the honored guest, while at the wedding reception you are the honored guests.

We may be tempted to let things other than God assume the most important place...the music, flowers, wedding gown, or even the way in which members of the wedding party conduct themselves. The question you need to ask in planning any detail of your wedding is: **Does this add or detract from the worship of God?**

## What do we need to know

The date needs to be arranged with the pastor **before making** any decisions regarding reception or signing of contracts.

St. Mark's has one full-time pastor. Because of the time of the year, the demands of the congregation, or other scheduling conflicts, your request for a specific date may not always be available, so contact the pastor early in your planning.

**(Note: Weddings may not be scheduled December 23-26 or during Holy Week of any year.)**

## Contact Information

St. Mark's Lutheran Church is located at:  
140 South Green Bay Road, Neenah WI 54956  
Phone number is: 920-725-2828  
E-mail is: [office@stmarksneenah.org](mailto:office@stmarksneenah.org)

Pastor: Rev. Bob Wilkinson 920-725-2828  
E-mail: [pastorbob@stmarksneenah.org](mailto:pastorbob@stmarksneenah.org)

## Fees

**1. Organist—Wedding Suggested minimum—**  
Non-members or Inactive Members \$150  
Active Members of St. Mark's \$125

**—Rehearsal Suggested minimum—**  
Non-members or Inactive Members \$75  
Active Members of St. Mark's \$50

The fee is payable to the organist by check no later than the time of the rehearsal.

**2. Building Use—Suggested minimum—**  
Non-members or Inactive members \$200  
Active members—No charge

Payable no later than the time of rehearsal directly to St. Mark's Lutheran Church. This helps to offset the cost of cleaning and other facility related costs during the rehearsal and wedding.

everyone is at the appointed place at the appointed time.

- The pastor has final responsibility for the sequence and events of the rehearsal and wedding service. Wedding consultants or others may offer suggestions, but the pastor has ultimate responsibility for the wedding service and other activities taking place at church.
- **Any member of the wedding party who has been drinking alcoholic beverages prior to the wedding will not be allowed to participate in the ceremony.**

## Planning Tips That Bridal Magazines May Miss

1. Make the most of your premarital counseling.
2. Pray together as a couple, and ask others to pray for you.
3. Attend weekly worship together.
4. Remember that a Christian wedding service is first and foremost worship.
5. Songs and readings that focus on human love are best enjoyed at the reception.
6. **RELAX, SMILE, and REJOICE in GOD'S LOVE and GRACIOUSNESS!**

## In Closing

We at St Mark's feel that it our responsibility to God and the Church to do our very best to help couples prepare for marriage.

At this special time when by your vows you declare yourselves "husband and wife," it is our hope that you will rejoice in God's blessings and feel equipped to meet the responsibilities, demands and privileges that marriage offers.

If you do not have a church home, we would welcome you here at St. Mark's Lutheran Church. Ask Pastor Bob for more information.

**Photography before worship must be finished 30 minutes prior to the scheduled starting time of worship.**



If the wedding is to be videotaped, it is important for the videographer to remain in one place during worship. The pastor can give clarification as to the most appropriate place for videotaping.

**Other Helpful Information**

Some other helpful information about the church sanctuary is listed below. Please share this information with your florist and photographer if they are not aware of it.

1. The Sanctuary seats approximately 180.
2. The church is air-conditioned.
3. The Library is available for women to use as a dressing area. The men are welcome to use the Lounge as a dressing area.

**Other Considerations**

- Worship bulletins are the responsibility of the couple to purchase. Plan this with the Pastor.
- All equipment not belonging to St Mark's, such as that from the florist, photographers, etc. should be removed immediately after the wedding.
- There is **NO SMOKING** in any part of the building. We ask that those responsible for the use of the church monitor others in the group.
- No alcoholic beverages are permitted in the building or on the grounds of the church.
- It is the responsibility of the wedding party to arrange for the care of their property before, during and after the wedding ceremony. Leave all valuable personal belongings and gifts in the care of parents, friends, or attendants during the service. The church cannot be responsible for lost or stolen articles.
- The rehearsal is important. It is important that it begin on time. The couple will be responsible to see that

- 3. Officiant (Pastor)—Suggested minimum—**  
Non-members or Inactive members—\$225  
Active members—\$165

Payable directly to the pastor, no later than the time of the rehearsal. Covers the rehearsal, the ceremony, sermon preparation, premarital counseling, etc.

**Pre-marital Counseling**

The guidelines of St. Mark's require all couples preparing for marriage to attend pre-marriage counseling sessions with the pastor, at mutually agreeable times.

These meetings will include:

- a) **accomplish pastoral counseling**
- b) **establish the date/time of the wedding/rehearsal**
- c) **obtain data for records**
- d) **plan the wedding service.**

**The Order of Worship for a Wedding Ceremony**

A sample Order for Worship can be found at the back of this booklet. It includes Invocation, Prayer, Lessons, Homily (sermon or message), Marriage Vows, Exchange of Rings, Blessing, Prayers, Lord's Prayer, and Benediction.

The Marriage Service also includes the opportunity for special music, hymns, and the celebration of Holy Communion. Should you desire Holy Communion, all baptized attendees will be invited to receive since we practice an "open table" for Holy Communion.

Members of the wedding party, family members or friends may be invited to read a Scripture lesson. Use of a Unity Candle or mixing of sand may be included in the ceremony. **Other details and practices must be discussed with and approved by the pastor prior to the ceremony.**

## Vows

We believe your wedding should be special and reflect the investment and individuality of yourselves. It is also important to remember that since a wedding is Christian worship, the vows need to reflect God's activity and love in our lives. The following are options from which couples can choose. ***The first option is what the pastor will use unless otherwise requested.*** Spouses may also choose to write their own wedding vows but they should be reviewed by the pastor prior to the rehearsal.

## Sample Vows

1. In the presence of God and this community, I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you, \_\_\_\_\_, to be my husband/wife from this day forward to join with you and share all that is to come, and I promise to be faithful to you as long as we both shall live. This is my solemn vow.
2. I take you, \_\_\_\_\_, to be my wife/husband. I promise before God and these witnesses to be your faithful husband/wife, to share with you in plenty and in want, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, to forgive and strengthen you, and to join with you so that together we may serve God and others as long as we both shall live.
3. I take you, \_\_\_\_\_, 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 share my life with you; I will forgive you as we have been forgiven; and I will try with you to better understand ourselves, the world, and God; through the best and worst of what is to come, as long as we live.
4. I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you, \_\_\_\_\_, to be my wedded wife/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, till death do us part, according to God's holy ordinance, these things I promise with all my heart.
5. I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you, \_\_\_\_\_, to be my wife/husband from this day forward to join with you and share all that is to come, and with the help of God, I promise to be faithful to you as God gives us life together.

## Scripture Readings

A Christian wedding includes readings from the Bible which are relevant to marriage. Usually there are two or three passages of Scripture read at a wedding (with at least one selected from the Gospels). At the back of this booklet are options you might consider. Suggestions from the bride and groom are also welcome.

## Music Guidelines

Remembering that a Christian wedding is an act of worship. The music should be carefully chosen. It should reflect the praise of God, the steadfast love of Christ for his church as the foundation and model for love and fidelity in marriage, and the invocation of God's presence and blessing. Music for the wedding should be discussed with the organist and soloist as soon as possible. **All music must be approved by the pastor.**

## A Marriage License

Please give the marriage license and certificate from the County Clerk to the pastor at the rehearsal. No marriage can be performed without the license issued by the County Clerk. The license must be obtained at least five days, but not more than 30 days before the wedding.

Call the County Clerk's office for information about office hours and cost. Marriage licenses are obtained from the county in which the service will take place.

## Photography

Since your wedding is worship, all photographers (amateur and professional) are asked to show reverence for the ceremony and the place. The photographer may take time exposures from the rear of the sanctuary. It is suggested that pictures be taken prior to the ceremony.