

Wedding Policy

Weddings and Marriages done at the St. John's will be done only at the pastor's discretion. Members of the congregation seeking a wedding should seek out the pastor as soon as possible to make sure there are no conflicts with the church or the pastor's schedule. If church building is to be used, please let the pastor know and he/she will bring it before the council. While no fees are required for members of the congregation, donations will be appreciated to help offset supplies, electricity, heating/cooling, and time spent for the wedding.

For non-members of the congregation, if the church building is to be used, you will need to write a letter to respective councils and seek permission. We ask for a donation of a \$150 to cover the costs of supplies, electricity, and heating/cooling. There is also a \$300 pastoral fee to cover time, supplies and mileage of the pastor. Both are due at the time of the wedding.

All couples must meet with the pastor a minimum of two times for premarital counseling with the possibility of more sessions depending on the situation. These sessions are meant as a get-to-know-you time. We typically meet over dinner to talk about marriage and you. The pastor reserves the right to decline a marriage if he/she feels that the couple is not ready or there is a legal reason why the marriage cannot take place.

There are a number of rules that the couples must follow:

- No outside clergy may lead a wedding service unless they have the permission from the pastor. Only those church-bodies that the ELCA is in full-communication will be considered as a part of our governing constitution.
- The service that Pastor uses comes from the Evangelical Lutheran Worship. This is the hymnal that our parish uses for worship. No other service may be used. The ELW has many different options that you may choose for use within the marriage rite. The pastor will provide you with those options at the first counseling session. If you wish to add elements to the liturgy, please speak with the pastor to discuss those options. However, the service's words and prayers cannot be changed, removed or altered.
- If you wish, you may have other readings such as poems read at your wedding. Because this is a Christian service, you must have at least one reading from the Bible. The pastor has a list and will provide you with it at your first session.
- Because the wedding is a worship service, we ask that couples, those in the bridal party, and guests of the wedding treat the service with respect. Couples that show up intoxicated will not be allowed to be married (it is also against the law for the pastor to marry anyone who is impaired). Members of the wedding party should also show respect. Please speak with your party about this before the wedding day. Writing on the bottom of the groom's shoes or other little pranks really only bring embarrassment to both the bride and groom and will not be permitted.
- No flash photography during the wedding ceremony and photography should be limited within the rite itself. This is a worship setting and it is distracting and very disrespectful. Please speak with your photographer before the ceremony about this request. If your photographer has an issue with this, please have them contact the pastor directly.
- If your wedding is being held at the congregations and music is desired, the couple is responsible for contacting the organist. Outside organists are only permitted at the organist's discretion. Please speak with the pastor about music requests so that all arrangements can be made.

Bride

Pastor

Groom