

**Guidelines For Weddings at Bethlehem Lutheran Church**

**1121 Georgia Ave.**

**Sheboygan WI 53081**

**(920) 452-4331**

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**1). A CHRISTIAN WEDDING**

A Christian wedding is more than a simple ceremony for the benefit of the couple and their families and friends. A Christian wedding is a service of public worship designed with God as its object and Jesus Christ as its center. Your wedding, then, is a sacred occasion. It has been instituted by God, blessed by our Lord Jesus Christ, and should be honored by all people. It will be most meaningful for both families and friends when

there is careful concern shown for the sanctity of Christ’s Church and its worship, as well as for the dignity and beauty of Christian marriage.

**2). RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PASTOR**

As an Evangelical Lutheran congregation, we expect our pastor to function in conformity

with the solemn vows, which he made at his ordination to conduct his ministry in conformity to the sacred scriptures and the Book of Concord, in preparing couples for marriage and in the conduction of the marriage service.

**3). WHO WILL BE MARRIED**

Those who wish to make God a part of their on-going marriage, not only on their wedding day. This ordinarily means that at least one of the marriage couple will be a member of Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

**4). THE WEDDING SERVICE**

Only liturgical forms, which are faithful to scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, are to be used in weddings conducted at Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

1. The marriage liturgy contained in the Lutheran Service Book Agenda is the official wedding liturgy of this congregation.
2. Our pastor is not at liberty to make changes to the wedding liturgy, however, additional prayers and liturgical forms may be included, if they are in conformity with God’s Word.

**5). OTHER CLERGY**

As the pastor is the rightly called and ordained servant of the word in this congregation, he is responsible for all weddings conducted at Bethlehem. With the consent of the pastor, other clergymen of congregations of The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod may be invited to conduct or assist during the marriage service. Guest pastors will abide by the practices set forth in these guidelines.

**6). HOLY COMMUNION**

At the request of the couple, Holy Communion may be celebrated, with the approval of the pastor.

**7). MUSIC**

Music should reflect a worshipful, God-centered attitude.

1. If you wish to have a musician from outside of Bethlehem, please contact

the church office to discuss, prior to committing to another musician.

1. Bethlehem Lutheran Church has directed that all music used in the wedding service be approved. Please contact our organist to discuss various musical options, including processional, recessional, soloists and instrumentalists. We will attempt to incorporate your ideas in a way that best honors the Savior and helps your guests to worship.

**8). PRE-MARITAL COUNSELING**

Couples desiring to be married at Bethlehem Lutheran Church will arrange for pre-marital counseling with the pastor. The purpose of these meetings will be to look at the Bible’s teachings about marriage, discuss various areas of the couple’s relationship, and plan the wedding service. Approximately 6 hours of counseling will be expected. The sessions will be arranged for the benefit and convenience of all.

**9). REHEARSAL**

The rehearsal usually takes place in the evening, one or two days before the wedding. It gives everyone the opportunity to become acquainted with their part in the service. The wedding party, ushers, and anyone having a part in the service should be present. We ask that all behavior be respectful while in God’s house. Please schedule your rehearsal at a time convenient for everyone. With pre-planning and everyone’s cooperation, the rehearsal should last approximately 30-45 minutes.

**10). SPACE AVAILABLE**

On the day of your wedding, rooms will be available for both the bride and her attendants and the groom and his attendants. We ask that the rooms be returned to the way they were found, ensuring that garbage is taken care of and that all personal

property items are taken with you.

**11). BULLETINS**

Service bulletins may be arranged through the church office or done by the couple. All bulletins must be approved by the pastor prior to printing. We ask that all bulletins include the following statement: *“We request that no flash photography be taken during* *the wedding service.”*

**12). DECORATING**

All decorations should be discussed with the pastor and/or the church office. Normally the church is available in the morning, the day of the wedding, for decorating. Please note that all decorations will need to be taken down immediately after the wedding service to prepare for our regularly scheduled church services. Decorations may include flowers, candles and bows.

**13). PHOTOGRAPHY / VIDEO**

Please refrain from flash photography during the wedding service, both from the photographer and the guests (the photographer may take photos during the processional and the recessional). A video of the ceremony can be made from the church balcony. If there is a request to record the service from another vantage point, it must first be approved by the pastor.

**14). OTHER ITEMS TO CONSIDER**

We appreciate your cooperation in regards to the following:

1. Scattering of fresh flower petals is not allowed.
2. Throwing of rice, confetti or bird seed is not allowed.
3. Consumption of alcoholic beverages on the church property is not allowed.
4. Smoking in the church facilities is not allowed.
5. Leave the dressing rooms, sanctuary, and any other church facilities clean and back to the order in which they were found.

**MISCELLANEOUS DETAILS – EXPENSES & HONORARIA**

Organist Fee: $150.00

*Includes all rehearsals and the service.*

Please make check payable to the organist directly.

Pastor Honorarium: Determined by the couple, as there is no required fee for the Pastor’s service.

Custodian Fee: $50.00

Please make check payable to Bethlehem Church.

Building Usage Fee: $150.00

*For non-members only.*

Please make check payable to Bethlehem Church.