

American Lutheran Church
Worthington, MN

Weddings

A Guide to Planning Your Special Day

Revised Date:
06/16/09



Have you not read that He who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, "For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and the two shall become one."

Matthew 19:4-5

Table of Contents

General Notes for Your Wedding	p. 3
Initial Tasks	p. 4
The Wedding Date	p. 4
Pre-Marital Counseling	p. 4
The License	p. 4
Number of Guests	p. 4
Planning the Ceremony	p. 5
Wedding Music	p. 5-6
Scripture Readings	p. 6
Bulletins	p. 6
Wedding Vows	p. 7
Organist / Pianist	p. 8
Fellowship Hall Usage	p. 8
“Appreciation Gifts” & Fees	p. 9-11
The Day Before the Wedding	p. 12
Rehearsal	p. 12
Decorating	p. 12
The Day of the Wedding	p. 13
Pictures	p. 13
Reception	p. 13
Building Use	p. 13
Appendix A—Congregational Hymns	p. 14
Appendix B—Scripture Readings	p. 15
Appendix C—Church Building Rules	p. 15

General Notes



A wedding service is a worship service. The same guidelines which apply to Sunday morning worship apply to weddings.

We want your wedding service to be one that celebrates your love, and also one in which every detail glorifies our Lord!

We are pleased that you want to have your wedding at American Lutheran Church. We view the church as the sacred house of God's people -- to be treated with respect and sanctity.

Marriage does not belong exclusively to the church. While marriage is ordained by God and supported by the church, it is also a social contract. Marriage is governed and regulated by the state for the purpose of lending order to society, protecting individuals, and providing stability to the social order. But to the Christian, marriage is more:

We believe that God instituted marriage also to provide happiness and fulfillment.

We believe that God's intention for marriage is that it be based on the promise of faithfulness for a life time.

We believe that God's self-giving love and faithfulness toward us is the model for the relationship between wife and husband. As God is toward us, so should we be toward each other.

We believe that God, along with the church, desires marriage to be full of faithfulness, joy, love, growth, and fulfillment.

Because you are asking to be married at American Lutheran Church of Worthington, your marriage service will be consistent with the Christian understanding of marriage as expressed in the Order of Marriage on pages 286-291 in the *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* hymnal.

Initial Tasks

The Wedding Date

Please contact the pastor as soon as possible to reserve the day and hour for your wedding and the rehearsal. This should be done to avoid any conflicts on the church schedule. It is suggested that you have an alternate day and/or hour in mind when you call. [**NOTE:** Please do not consider a date confirmed until you have made contact with the pastor.]

Pre-Marital Counseling

The officiating pastor will require 2-3 premarital counseling sessions. These sessions are to plan the ceremony, help the couple appreciate the privilege and responsibility of Christian marriage, and to see marriage as an institution ordained by God.

The License

Minnesota law requires couples to secure a license to marry. It must be applied for a minimum of five (5) days before the wedding at any Clerk of Courts office in the state. Only one person need apply, but he/she must have proof of age for both persons. There is a fee for the license. It is recommended that the license be given to the pastor before the day of the wedding.

Number of Guests

The American Lutheran sanctuary can seat approximately 500 guests, which is usually more than enough space for a typical wedding. If more guest space is required, special arrangements must be made with the pastor at least two weeks before the wedding.

Planning the Ceremony

Wedding Music

Wedding music, like music used in other worship services, should be selected with emphasis on a meaningful worship experience. Couples should consult the pastor before finalizing musical selections. The use of amplifiers, other than the church P.A. system, is discouraged. If exceptions are made (in consultation with the pastor) use will be from the balcony area.

Guidelines in Selecting Music

The Marriage Service is an order of worship where we offer praise and thanks to God for the gift of marriage and for God's ever-present support in marriage.

A worship guidebook entitled *Manual on the Liturgy* reads: "...the music therefore must be carefully and discriminatingly chosen. It should embody high standards of quality and the texts 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... [the music] should be of a high quality and not cloud the mood of the service with triteness or sentimentality. It should moreover be within the ability of the performers at hand to play or sing with assurance."

Music used in the service may be instrumental and/or vocal. It may be organ music or other instrumental music, such as strings, brass, or woodwind, performed by a soloist or an ensemble. It may be music with text sung by a single voice, duet, small ensemble, full choir, or congregational hymns.

While there are appropriate contemporary songs, it should be remembered that recordings of such music are made under ideal conditions in a studio with sophisticated electronic equipment and mixing devices. Renditions of these selections on an organ or by

the most talented amateurs, especially in a non-studio setting, will not sound like the recorded selections.

In summary, if you can answer “yes” to any of the following questions, the music is probably appropriate:

- a. Do the music/lyrics text specifically reflect praise and/or thanksgiving to God?
- b. Is it based on, or does it reflect, a Scriptural theme?
- c. Is this piece of music appropriate for use in a Sunday morning service of worship?

Congregational Hymns

Because the wedding service is a worship service, it is perfectly acceptable to have congregational hymns. Hymns may be sung in place of other vocal music. Please see Appendix A (p. 14) for some hymn ideas.

Scripture Readings

Couples are encouraged to select Scripture readings for the service that will emphasize desired themes. One, two or three passages are typically chosen. The pastor can assist you in this selection. Please see Appendix B (p. 15) for some Scripture lesson ideas.

Bulletins

The church secretary is available to type and duplicate wedding bulletins. There is a fee if this service is needed (see Fee charts on pages 10-11). The marriage party shall provide their own bulletin covers. All information should be in the church office at least two weeks prior to the wedding date.

Wedding Vows

The vows below are suggested for use in your wedding [*NOTE: You also have the option of creating your own vows.*]

1. [From *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*:]

_____, 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.

2. [From *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*:]

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

3. _____, I take you to be my wife/husband from this time onward, to join with you and to share all that is to come, to give and to receive, to speak and to listen, to inspire and to respond, and in all circumstances of our life together to be faithful to you with my whole life and with all my being, as long as we both shall live.

4. 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.

5. 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 better to understand ourselves, the world, and God; through the best and the worst of what is to come as long as we live.

Organist / Pianist

If the marriage party desires to have organ and/or piano music, they are responsible for contacting that person(s). If you plan on having organ music, we prefer that you use one of our church organists. They are more familiar with our organ and local wedding procedures. It is highly recommended that a guest organist be a professional or a regular church organist.

Fellowship Hall Usage

If the Fellowship Hall will be used for the reception, contact one of the Wedding Committee members to help you plan the reception and explain guidelines for use of the Fellowship Hall. Persons to contact may be obtained from the church office secretaries (507-376-5264).

The seating capacity of the Fellowship Hall is 230. In all, we have 24 round tables (each seating 6-8 people), plus three banquet tables (each seating 8-12 people). There is a fee charged for using the Fellowship Hall—see the Fee charts on pages 10-11.

The wedding party, in consultation with the Wedding Committee, needs to prepare a diagram of chair and table arrangements with the number of anticipated guests and give the diagram to the church office at least four days prior to the wedding. All decorations, food, etc. must be removed by 7:00 a.m. Sunday morning.

You are responsible to set up the Fellowship Hall for your reception. The custodian will be able to help you locate tables, chairs, etc., that you may want to use. The custodian at ALC is Gene Scheidt (727-3323 or 360-8355).

“Appreciation Gifts” & Fees

“Appreciation Gifts”

It is customary for the wedding couple to present monetary gifts to various individuals who help make the wedding day special, to let them know that their efforts are appreciated. If checks are used, they should be written to the specific individuals. The following chart can be used to determine the minimum suggested gifts:

Member of ALC

<u>Gift Recipient</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Pastor	\$90.00
Organist / Pianist	Discuss with musician(s)
Custodian	\$65.00
P.A. Operator	\$30.00
Soloist (** if used)	\$40.00
Video Operator (** if used)	\$30.00

Non-Members

<u>Gift Recipient</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Pastor	\$110.00
Organist / Pianist	Discuss with musician(s)
Custodian	\$95.00
P.A. Operator	\$40.00
Soloist (** if used)	\$55.00
Video Operator (** if used)	\$40.00

Fees

Depending upon the particular needs of your wedding, American Lutheran is able to offer a number of needs options. Because we are a large church that often hosts over a dozen weddings per year, there are some things for which we need to charge a fee to recoup costs.

All fees are due no later than the Monday of the week of the wedding. One check may be written, payable to “American Lutheran Church.”

The following charts list the specific fees associated with various options that can be provided:

FEES for a Member of ALC

<u>Need</u>	<u>Fee Amount</u>
Table Cloth Rental (<i>if used</i>)	\$10.00 each
Table Cloth Cleaning (<i>if used</i>)	\$7.00 each
Bulletins typed (<i>if done by ALC</i>)	\$15.00
Bulletins copied (<i>if done by ALC</i>)	\$10.00 per 100
Fellowship Hall only **	\$10.00
Fellowship Hall + Kitchen **	\$15.00
Wedding Coordinator **	\$35.00
Kitchen Supervisors **	\$25.00 x 2 (x 3 if over 175 guests)

(** Note: *If reception is held at ALC*)

FEES for Non-Members

<u>Need</u>	<u>Fee Amount</u>
Sanctuary Rent	\$125
Table Cloth Rental (if used)	\$20.00 each
Table Cloth Cleaning (if used)	\$10.00 each
Bulletins typed (if done by ALC)	\$20.00
Bulletins copied (if done by ALC)	\$15.00 per 100
Fellowship Hall only **	\$100.00
Fellowship Hall + Kitchen **	\$125.00
Wedding Coordinator **	\$50.00
Kitchen Supervisors **	\$35.00 x 2 (x 3 if over 175 guests)

(** Note: If reception is held at ALC)



The Day Before the Wedding

Rehearsal

Wedding rehearsals typically last approximately 30-45 minutes. It will start promptly at the hour designated (reception details, tux fittings, etc. should be done before or after the rehearsal). Soloists and other ensembles will practice before or after the rehearsal.

Decorating

The following are some important notes concerning the decorating “do’s-and-don’ts” at American Lutheran:

- No decorations are to be placed on the altar. Memorial flowers can be placed on the altar with prior approval from the pastor.
 - Do NOT use tape on any wood surfaces, such as pews or railings—it destroys the finish!
 - The symbols, paraments, colors, etc. of the season of the Church year will be used for your wedding service.
 - Banners, furnishings, materials, etc. are not to be removed without consultation with the pastor.
 - Flowers may be left for use at the Sunday services following your wedding. Flowers will be disposed of after Sunday services unless you arrange to pick them up. If you wish to leave flowers for Sunday, please communicate this in advance.
 - ALC has a wedding banner and a brass unity candle stand for use if requested. Our church does not have any candelabras.
 - When candelabras are used, the church has plastic which should be placed on the carpet underneath them. Removal of melted wax from carpets is the responsibility of the wedding party.
 - Balloons are limited to the Fellowship Hall only. They are prohibited in any other area of the church.
 - Decorating can usually begin taking place on Friday afternoon.
 - If the reception will be held in the Fellowship Hall, and candles are placed on the tables, chimneys must be used.
-

The Day of the Wedding

Pictures

Pictures may be taken during the processional and recessional. Any pictures at other times should be by the professional photographer. Video cameras may be used from the balcony. Other arrangements can be made with pastoral approval. If you plan for a reception following the service, you will want to give strong consideration to taking your pictures prior to the service so your guests will not be kept waiting.

Reception (if held at ALC)

Servers & Waiters/Waitresses

It is the responsibility of the wedding party to select the kitchen workers and waiters/waitresses for the reception. These workers may be ALC members or non-members. The Wedding Committee will have suggestions on how to select workers. It will be up to the wedding party to decide the payment for these workers.

Kitchen Supervisors

The church will arrange kitchen supervisors for your reception. These supervisors are responsible for overseeing the servers and to ensure proper use of the kitchen and supplies. Kitchen supervisors will be responsible for laundering table linens, for which a fee will be charged (see the Fee charts on pages 10-11).

Building Use

“Our house is your house” is ALC’s motto during weddings. We trust that your wedding party, as our guests, will use common sense and show respect for our property. Some specific building rules are listed in Appendix C (p. 15).

Appendix A

The following hymns from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* are suggested as possible hymns to use for congregational singing:

At the beginning of the service:

Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now--No. 527
We Praise You, O God--No. 870
Praise to the Lord, the Almighty--No. 858
Holy Spirit, Ever Dwelling--No. 582
Holy God, We Praise Your Name--No. 414
All Creatures of Our God and King--No. 835
Praise and Thanksgiving--No. 689
When Morning Gilds the Skies--No. 853

During the service:

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling--No. 631
Jesus, Still Lead On--No. 624
Lord, Whose Love in Humble Service--No. 712
Hear Us Now, Our God and Father--No. 585
Lord of All Nations, Grant Me Grace--No. 716
O Holy Spirit, Enter In--No. 786
The King of Love My Shepherd--No. 502
Beautiful Savior--No. 838

At the end of the service:

Now Thank We All Our God--No. 840
For the Beauty of the Earth--No. 879
Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven--No. 865
Earth and All Stars!--No. 731
Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee--No. 836
Let All Things Now Living--No. 881

Appendix B

The following passages are suggested as possible Bible lessons:

From the Old Testament:

Song of Solomon 2:10-13	Love in the spring
Song of Solomon 8:7	Unquenchable love
Jeremiah 32:38-41	God's faithfulness
Psalms:100, 117, 127, 136, 150	Various themes

From the Epistles:

Ephesians 3:14-19	Grounded in love and faith
Romans 12:1-2 or 1-18	A living offering
1 Corinthians 13	Love as the greatest gift
Colossians 3:12-17	Live in love and thanksgiving
1 John 4:7-12	We love others as God loves us
Philippians 4:49	Rejoice and live honorably

From the Gospels:

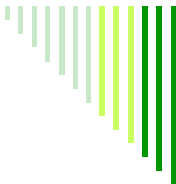
Matthew 19:4-6	Faithfulness in marriage
John 2:1-10	The wedding at Cana

Appendix C

John 15:9-15	Love one another
--------------	------------------

Rules to follow in ALC's building and on its grounds:

1. Any rooms used by the wedding party must be left as orderly as originally found. The church offices are off limits.
 2. Any littering inside or outside must be cleaned up by the wedding party prior to departing for the reception. Rice or birdseed should be handed out outside.
 3. The building is smoke-free. Do not throw cigarettes on the sidewalks or parking lots.
 4. No alcohol is permitted in the church or in the parking lots.
 5. A dressing room & key is provided for the bride and her party.
-



**American Lutheran Church
Worthington, MN**

915 Winifred St.
Worthington, MN 56187

Phone: 507-376-5264

Fax: 507-376-5475

E-mail: aloffice@frontiernet.net