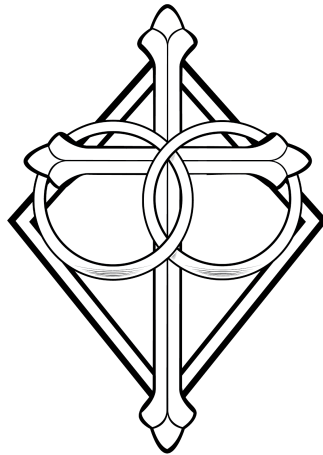


# Christian Marriage

## Planning Guide



**FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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Oregon, WI 53575

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## INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on your engagement! You are at the beginning of an important journey, one that reflects the love that Christ has shown to us. We are honored that you want Faith Lutheran Church to share in your joy on your wedding day.

This booklet serves as a summary of the policies and procedures for marriages at Faith Lutheran Church or performed by her pastor. We ask you to read through it prior to submitting the marriage request form.

This booklet also serves as a workbook for your marriage preparation and planning. Bring it with you for the premarital counseling sessions you will have with a pastor. It will be referenced often.

Ultimately, we pray the time you spend preparing to be married at Faith will further impress upon you that the most important thing about your wedding day is not the flowers, the clothes, the pictures, or the party. It is how God himself comes to you in his Word of the Gospel to bless those who receive him in humble, penitent faith. What God brings to your wedding is something you can build your lives together upon.

If you have further questions, feel free to contact our pastor. We want your wedding to be a joyful, Christ-centered occasion, and we are here to support you as you prepare. Thank you for inviting us to share this important day in your life.

# MARRIAGE REQUEST FORM

Faith Lutheran Church

Thank you for your interest in holding your wedding at Faith Lutheran Church. Requests for marriages performed by our pastors are subject to approval by the congregation's board of elders. To make your request, please complete this form and submit it to a pastor. He will present it to the elders and inform you of their decision within the month.

Groom: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell / Home

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Faith Member: Yes / No

Bride: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell / Home

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Faith Member: Yes / No

Requested Wedding Date[s]: \_\_\_\_\_

## AGREEMENT

We have read through the Wedding Planning Guide for Faith Lutheran Church and we pledge to plan our wedding accordingly with a pastor's assistance.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

# MARRIAGE APPROVAL FORM

Faith Lutheran Church

Bride and Groom: \_\_\_\_\_ having  
consulted with the pastor and submitted a marriage request form to the Board of Elders is  
hereby given permission to schedule their wedding on: \_\_\_\_\_

The Board of Elders has review the marriage request and has given its approval:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

*Elder Signature*

I commit to perform the above cited marriage in accord with the policies in the Wedding  
Planning Guide and the doctrine and practice of Faith Lutheran Church.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

*Groom Signature*

# MARRIAGE PLANNING FORM

Faith Lutheran Church

Approved Wedding Date & Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ cell / home      Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ cell / home      Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Bridesmaids as appearing in the bulletin:

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Groomsmen as appearing in the bulletin:

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Ushers:

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Junior Bridesmaids, Flower Girls, Ring Bearers as appearing in the bulletin:

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Rite: CW pg. 140 ELH Handbook pg. 26 with Matins / Vespers

Processional \_\_\_\_\_

Recessional \_\_\_\_\_

Hymns \_\_\_\_\_

Special \_\_\_\_\_

Processional / Dismissal / Seating Instructions

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## CHECK LIST & TIMES

License \_\_\_\_

Flowers \_\_\_\_

Unity Candle \_\_\_\_

*(This is not something our church provides. If you desire it, you will need to purchase or rent the candles yourself)*

Photos during service \_\_\_\_

*(please see photo/video policy later in this booklet)*

Video during service \_\_\_\_

*(please see photo/video policy later in this booklet)*

Group Photos \_\_\_\_ Time(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Rehearsal Date/Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Wedding Date Doors Open Time: \_\_\_\_\_

## THE BASICS

### PRELIMINARY ARRANGEMENTS

All who wish to be married at Faith, or be married by her pastor are asked to fill out a “Marriage Request” form. This document is taken by the pastor to the board of elders for their approval of the pastor’s officiating at the wedding and the wedding date.

Couples are asked to read the contents of this wedding planning guide as a prerequisite for making a request. Typically couples arrange a preliminary meeting with the pastor to walk through how weddings are done at Faith, select possible dates, and to ask questions prior to submitting a marriage request form.

### REQUIREMENTS

We receive many inquiries asking, “Do you have to be a member of your church in order to get married there?”

The short answer is no. You must, however,

1. Desire a Christian Marriage and not just a “church wedding.” Part of beginning your new life together as a Christian couple means faithful church attendance. You should be willing to consider our congregation as a possible church home.
2. Or, already be a member of a sister Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) or Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) congregation in a different community.
3. Meet the Scriptural prescription for marriage, found in Genesis 2:24, and quoted by Jesus in Matthew 19:5, and by Paul in Ephesians 5:31: “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”
4. Fulfill the premarital counseling sessions as dictated by our pastor.
5. Complete the Good News 101 course prior to your wedding date if either you or your fiancée is not a confirmed member of Faith or the ELS or WELS.
6. Agree to plan your wedding service according to the policies and procedures detailed in this guide and the direction of our pastor.

### SUGGESTED FEES

The wedding fee is **\$300** for members and **\$500** for non-members. The member fee for weddings conducted offsite without the use of our organist is **\$50**. The non-member fee is **\$100**.

The member wedding fee will apply when one or both parties getting married are Faith members. The wedding fee rate will be set based upon membership status one month prior to the wedding date.



The wedding fee covers premarital classes, a stipend to the janitor and the incidental costs. The non-member fee also includes a pastor stipend. The fee also covers use of one of our organists and a music planning consultation, attendance and playing for the rehearsal, playing for the service itself.

To include visiting musicians or clergy in your service, Faith's pastor must consult with you and give approval. Generally, our congregation's organist and pastors perform the weddings in our facility. (For much more information on the use of guest musicians and clergy see the **Music Guidance** and **Visiting Clergy** sections.)

The janitor fee portion of the wedding fee covers the custodial costs of preparing the building for your rehearsal and wedding, and preparing it for regular use after your wedding. Excessive mess requiring additional cleaning hours beyond the norm for a wedding your size will incur additional charges. Typically it is good practice to place trash in receptacles and put things back where you found them. Repair costs of damage to the facility and its furnishings caused by behavior deemed reckless and disrespectful of the Lord's house will be billed to you.

When you receive a signed Marriage Agreement from the board of elders you may secure the approved date by remitting a **\$50** non-refundable deposit payable to "Faith Lutheran Church." The receipt of this deposit finalizes the reservation of the date. The deposit is credited toward the wedding fee. The balance is due when you deliver the wedding license to the church office no less than one week prior to the wedding date.

## MARRIAGE COUNSELING

Marriage has been instituted by God (Gen 2). As such, we treat it with respect. Faith Lutheran church does not perform “church weddings” but “Christian marriages.” In order to help couples learn what a Christian marriage looks like, Faith Lutheran Church offers Christian Marriage Counseling. All couples are required to complete these sessions prior to their wedding at Faith.<sup>1</sup> Those who are not communicant members of our fellowship will also be required to take our Good News 101 course.

### GOOD NEWS 101

Good News 101 is a short, regularly offered course designed to introduce people to the Biblical and Lutheran Faith. Upon completion of this five-session course, participants may continue on to our Good News 201 course. After both courses, those who find themselves in agreement with what they have been taught are invited to join our congregation as communicant members. Those completing the 101 course, but having not begun 201 or deciding Faith is not the church for them will still have their marriage service conducted at Faith as agreed upon in the “Marriage Agreement” form. You are to complete the 101 course prior to your wedding date, so plan accordingly and arrange your schedules. Couples have reported this to be a wise investment not only in their faith lives, but also their relationship.

### PREMARITAL COUNSELING

A minimum of six premarital counseling sessions with our pastor is our standard expectation. During these sessions you will work on service planning, examine what the Bible says about the origins and purpose of marriage, learn the God-given roles for husbands and wives, and apply Scripture to a variety of practical issues. These sessions also serve to develop the relationship between you and Pastor.

One note about our Pastor: Our Pastor is neither a clinical counselor nor therapist. He is a shepherd of souls who uses the Word and Sacraments to care for the sheep entrusted to him. The counsel he will give you is not only Bible-based, it is Gospel-oriented. This will make these sessions an important part of your marriage preparations.

On the next page is a typical outline of premarital counseling:

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<sup>1</sup> Equivalent counseling may be completed at another church by another pastor or congregation in our fellowship (ELS, WELS, or worldwide CELC). A letter from that church or pastor will be required.

## PREMARITAL COUNSELING SESSION SCHEDULE

1. **INTRODUCTION.** Meet & Greet. Wedding Questionnaire & Bible Knowledge Assessment. “Family Vocation” book is handed out. Read chapter 1 in class (6 pages).  
*Assignment: Read ch. 2-3 and do worksheet.*  
*Complete Questionnaire & Assessment (if not done yet)*
2. **VOCATION & MARRIAGE.** Go over worksheet. Read God’s institution of marriage (Gen 2) and problem of sin and God’s solution (Gen 3). Marriage plan is handed out.  
*Assignment: Read ch. 4-5 and do worksheet (due session #4).*
3. **THE MARRIAGE SERVICE.** Go through wedding service, learning the symbolism and theology behind each part. Talk about practical things about the “big day.” Marriage plan is handed out.  
*Assignment: Continue reading ch. 4-5 (if not completed).*  
*Begin filling out marriage plan.*
4. **THE OFFICES OF HUSBAND & WIFE.** Go over worksheet. Talk about husbandly & wifely things. Questions on marriage plan?  
*Assignment: Read ch. 6 and do worksheet. Continue filling out marriage plan.*
5. **SEX & VOCATION.** Go over worksheet. Review the 10 Commandments from the Small Catechism, especially 1st, 4th & 6th. Questions on marriage plan?  
*Assignment: Read ch. 7 and do worksheet. Finish filling out marriage plan.*
6. **THE CROSSES OF MARRIAGE.** Go over worksheet. Look at Jesus’ teaching on marriage.
7. **(IF NEEDED) CONCLUSION & REVIEW.**

## GENERAL INFORMATION & POLICIES

### PARKING

There are surface parking lots on the church property offering ample space for capacity of the sanctuary. Parking on Washington St. in front of the church is also available. We are a block away from the downtown section of Oregon with even more parking.

### ACCESS FOR THE DISABLED

Only the upper floor is accessible to wheelchairs via an outside ramp. Bathrooms are downstairs. Please consider this when planning your event.

### DRUG & ALCOHOL POLICY

The use of alcohol or any illegal drugs anywhere on the church property during any wedding related activity by those associated with the wedding is prohibited.

### KITCHEN USE

Wedding parties are welcome to use the kitchen for lunches on the day of the wedding. Table service is not included in the wedding fee, however, and wedding parties should bring their own.

### RECEPTIONS

Our fellowship hall downstairs is capable of hosting small receptions either after wedding rehearsals or wedding services. Tables are usually set up for Bible Study. If you desire more, we have additional tables and chairs available. Set-up and take-down of these will be your responsibility.

### MARRIAGE LICENSE

In order to be married in the State of Wisconsin you must have a valid marriage license. Information can be found here:

[https://www.countyofdane.com/clerk/marriage\\_license.aspx](https://www.countyofdane.com/clerk/marriage_license.aspx)

### VISITING CLERGY

Faith Lutheran Church welcomes the participation of visiting clergy of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) or the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) in marriage services. If you have a pastor from a home church, or a family member ordained in these denominations who wants to be involved in the marriage service, we are happy to accommodate you. For confessional reasons we cannot accommodate clergy of other denominations leading our worship services. To do so misrepresents the teachings of Scripture upon which this congregation has pledged to stand.

## WEDDING SERVICE INFORMATION & POLICIES

### THE REHEARSAL

Rehearsals normally take place the day before the wedding from 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm. It is essential that all members of your wedding party be present and on time – including parents, ushers, master of ceremonies. The pastor and organist also attend the rehearsal. The rehearsal is typically the beginning of the weekend's celebration of your marriage. It is an opportunity for members of your wedding party to get acquainted with the worship space and become comfortable with their responsibilities for the coming day. In the case of small weddings the pastor will discuss with you whether or not you wish to have a formal rehearsal the night before.

### DRESSING ROOMS & KITCHEN

Dressing rooms are available for your use on the day of your wedding in the downstairs classrooms. Faith is not responsible for items left in the building overnight. The rooms are to be left in good condition. Any trash should be cleaned up and disposed of properly before the wedding party leaves the building. You may bring snacks, lunches and non-alcoholic beverages to the kitchen either at the time of the rehearsal or on the wedding day. The refrigerator, stoves and microwave are available for your use. Faith does not supply plates, napkins, cups or glasses. It is important to assign a person (who is not in the wedding party) to remove all your belongings from the dressing rooms after the service. This person[s] should also be tasked with putting things back the way they were found and the picking up of any trash and meal leftovers in the kitchen.

### THE SANCTUARY

Faith's sanctuary seats approximately 225 people (can be extended to 250 or more if balcony and transept(s) are used). There are 16 pews on either side of the aisle. The baptismal font will be relocated from the front center aisle to the center of the North transept for weddings.

The sanctuary is decorated with seasonal paraments on the altar, pulpit, and lectern. The pastor also wears a stole corresponding to the color. The parament and stole colors are based on the lectionary and will, under normal circumstances, not be changed for weddings, since a wedding takes place within the life of the church. Please note the following colors of the various seasons of the church year:

Advent – blue

Christmas – white

Epiphany – white

Gesimatide – green

Baptism of Jesus – white

Ash Wednesday – black

Lent – purple

Good Friday – black

Easter – white

Pentecost – red

Holy Trinity – white

Trinity Season – green

Reformation – red

All Saints – white

Last Sunday – white

Festivals of the Church – red

## DECORATIONS

Decorating the sanctuary for your wedding is allowed, but your plans must be approved by the pastor. Often bows will be attached to the end of the rows or on the communion rail. The chancel can accommodate candelabras and other free standing fixtures.

As a general rule decorations can go anywhere in the sanctuary except on or in front of the altar. Flowers can go on the shelf above the altar. It is your responsibility to assign someone to take down the decorations after the wedding service.

## CANDLES

The two altar candelabras will be lit for your wedding. During Advent, the Advent Wreath candles may be lit. During Christmas and Epiphany, the Christ Candle may be lit.

If you desire additional candles such as free standing candelabras, you will need to rent them from your florist or another supplier. You should purchase dripless tapers for the candelabras as you are responsible for any additional costs incurred to clean wax off the flooring in the chancel. If you plan to have a unity candle ritual, you are responsible for providing the large center candle and two long burning, dripless tapers.

## FLOWERS

Flower arrangements are welcome in the chancel. Your arrangements should be in self-contained vases. Flowers may be placed on the shelf above the altar, but not on the altar itself. You are invited and welcome to leave flowers from your wedding in the sanctuary for the Sunday services.

You are welcome to have flower arrangements or candles displayed in honor or memory of loved ones. This information can be included in your wedding bulletin.

## PHOTOGRAPHY / VIDEOGRAPHY

Photographs in sanctuary are normally scheduled two hours prior to the start of the service and should be completed 45 minutes prior to its start. They are also taken after the service.

Once the wedding party, bride and groom have arrived at the chancel during the service, photographs may be taken without a flash from the back of the sanctuary or balcony. Photographers may take pictures from inside the door to the Pastor's Office, but he/she will need to walk through the basement to get there. The door will need to be left open. They may not freely move throughout the sanctuary during the service.

Videographers - only with cameras restricted to tripods and in one place for the duration of the service - may also use Pastor's office or the North or South transepts. They may also use the back of the sanctuary or balcony during the worship service.

## MISCELLANEOUS

Faith does not permit the throwing of plastic confetti, rice, or birdseed either inside or outside the church building. Only fake flowers may be dropped during the processional. Once the wedding party is outside it is permissible to throw flower petals or to blow bubbles. (Note: bubbles and colored flower petals may stain fabric.)

Faith does not permit live animals in the building.

Faith does not permit smoking in the building.

## SERVICE PLANNING

### ORDER OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

The marriage service will follow rites contained either in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod's (ELS) "Handbook of Ministerial Acts" or from the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod's (WELS) hymnal, "Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal." For a more ornate service, the service may also be paired with Vespers or Matins depending on time of day from one of our hymnals.

These rites celebrate God's gracious gift of marriage. The congregation shares the joy of the bride and groom as they publicly promise lifelong love and faithfulness to each other.

### VOWS

The Vows contained in either of these rites are Biblically based and Christ-centered. The love that the bride and groom share for each other comes only as a result of the love of Christ for them. Therefore, these vows will not be replaced. If the couple desires to say additional personal vows to each other, they are encouraged to do so in letters delivered to each other the morning of their wedding day, or at the reception.

### MUSIC GUIDANCE

The marriage rite is a liturgy of the church celebrating God's gift of marriage. It is part of the ministry of our congregation which offers its witness and support to you and who, with you, seek God's blessing on your marriage. As such, only that which is appropriate for the worship of God is included in the wedding service.

Music chosen on the basis of Christian themes of faithfulness, Christ's self-giving love, and seasonal context are most appropriate. (See the Hymns section on page 23.) Secular music based on the theme of love for one another is appropriate for the wedding reception, not the worship of God Almighty in his house of prayer.

Here's some additional information to make planning music for your wedding an easy task:

1. It is our practice that Faith Lutheran Church organists or instrumentalists lead the music for all weddings held at our church. In rare circumstances visiting musicians may lead the music provided they are competent musicians and understand our liturgical services.
2. The pastor will begin assisting you with music selection issues already in the premarital counseling sessions.
3. Contact the church organist at least two months before your wedding date to schedule a consultation regarding all your wedding music. The consultation is included in the organist portion of the church fee. They usually take less than 30 minutes and often can be arranged for after a worship service.



4. Regarding the selection of music, especially vocal solos: since the wedding ceremony is a worship service of the congregation, selections must be appropriate for use at any service (ie sacred in nature, in keeping with the doctrines of this church). Solo pieces to be included in any wedding service must be submitted to the pastor for his approval prior to arranging a consultation with the organist.
5. Please note that soloist and instrumentalist (other than organist) fees are not included in the Faith fee schedule. It is your responsibility to remunerate these additional musicians directly.

## HYMNS

Our hymnal has a section of marriage hymns (600-604). Below is a list of other suggested hymns from our hymnal, *Christian Worship*. If you desire the use of a hymn or song not appearing in our hymnal, you must submit a copy of it to the pastor for his approval prior to your scheduling a consultation with the organist. If approved, you are also responsible for securing permission from the copyright holder to reproduce the song in the bulletin.

Abide, O Dearest Jesus | **333**  
 All People that on Earth Do Dwell | **233**  
 † Alleluia! Let Praises Ring! | **241**  
 Alleluia! Sing to Jesus | **169**  
 Beautiful Savior | **369**  
 For the Fruit of His Creation | **611**  
 Go, My Children, with My Blessing | **332**  
 Hear Us Now, Our God and Father | **603**  
 How Firm a Foundation | **416**  
 Let All Things Now Living | **260**  
 Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus | **452**  
 Love Divine, All Love Excelling | **365**  
 Love in Christ Is Strong and Living | **490**  
 Love Is the Gracious Gift | **505**  
 Lord, When Your Glory I Shall See | **219** (may be sung to tune of **100**)  
 Now Thank We All Our God | **610**  
 O God, Our Help in Ages Past | **441**  
 Oh, that I Had a Thousand Voices | **242**  
 Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty | **255**  
 Our Father, By Whose Name | **501**  
 Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow | **334**  
 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty | **234**  
 Songs of Thankfulness and Praise | **82**  
 † Wake, Awake, For Night is Flying | **206**  
 We Now Implore God the Holy Ghost | **190**

† These hymns are the “queen” and “king” of chorales, and have been traditional Lutheran wedding hymns for nearly 500 years, both speaking of marriage as a picture of Christ’s marriage to His church.

## **THE HOMILY & LESSONS**

Generally, three or more Scripture texts are read as the Lessons in the service. Among these, Genesis 2:18-24 (God's institution of marriage), 1 Peter 3:3-4 (Christ's instruction for husbands and wives), and Genesis 1:27-31 (God's blessing of marriage).

You will be invited to select an additional passage or passages to be read. One of them will serve as the text for the homily or sermon.

## **BULLETIN**

Most weddings provide a bulletin for the worshippers. The church office will produce your bulletin for you. The pastor will work with you to gather the required information for your wedding bulletin and provide you a rough draft for your approval. Since the worship bulletin is also representative of the church and its ministry, the pastor has final approval on content.