

## St. Paul Lutheran Church Wedding Guidelines

To the future Bride and Groom – Congratulations! We are delighted with your plans to be married! We look forward to working with you on your wedding plans. If you have questions or ideas that are not covered in this brochure, please call the church office for guidance (725-3961).

### Mission Statement

The Mission of St. Paul Lutheran Church is to:

*Gather Joyfully, Grow Spiritually, and Go Faithfully,  
Sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ!*

Our primary purpose is to reflect the light, love, and life of Jesus in who we are and what we do, so that we may deepen our faith and may bring others into a lasting relationship with the living Lord Jesus and Christ's church.

This mission and purpose are part of what we are about at St. Paul Lutheran. Our ministry to couples planning to be married is to provide relationship support within the light, life, and love of Jesus. We therefore invite couples into pre-marital counseling, worship participation, and personal reflection as their wedding approaches.

Christian marriage is a life-long covenant of mutual support and affection between two people who are in relationship with God. Couples being married at St. Paul understand that a church wedding is a worship service for those who seek God's public blessing upon their union.

One of the ways God blesses and strengthens marriage is through the gifts of God's Word and Sacraments. Regular worship is encouraged and expected both before and after the wedding ceremony.

### Wedding and Rehearsal Dates and Times

Your wedding and rehearsal dates and times will be scheduled in consultation with one of the pastors.

Contact one of the pastors as soon as it is practical, *at least six months in advance*, in order to reserve the date and time for the use of the church and to discuss your plans. Note that the church prohibits weddings on certain dates, including Holy Wee (the week before Easter), Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and other anniversary festivals. Weddings on or around holidays may be problematic for our staff to arrange, as are weddings offsite. Contact the church before you make other wedding plans. Since we must occasionally schedule multiple weddings for the same day, we suggest one of the following times for the ceremony: 10:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m., or 5:00 p.m. These times allow different wedding groups time to set up beforehand and take pictures afterwards.

The rehearsal date is typically the evening before, but other arrangements may be made. Be sure to invite to the rehearsal all people who have active roles in your wedding ceremony. In addition to the members of your wedding party, these people include readers, ushers, and flower-strewers/ring bearers. Be sure to designate a separate adult as a responsible person for each small child in your wedding party.

## Officiating Pastor(s)

St. Paul has a policy of alternating assignment of their pastors for wedding celebrations so that each one is able to share equally in these times of great joy. The pastor you initially contact may not be the officiant at your wedding.

If you desire to invite a friend or family clergy member to participate in your wedding ceremony, discuss this with the officiating pastor as soon as you are aware of it. Most pastors know that they cannot participate in a wedding as an 'outside' clergy person unless they are invited to do so by the host congregation. However, being your relative or friend, they may be reluctant to let you know that.

## Readings

You may have a few as one Bible reading and as many as you can enjoy for the service. The words should reflect your understanding of marriage and the sacred commitments involved. Selecting scripture texts for your service is an opportunity to discuss your spiritual life together. Lists of suggested texts are available from the pastors. Other significant readings and poems are best suited for the reception.

## Music

Music for the wedding reflects the grace and joy of a worship service. You may borrow CDs from the church office of suggested titles for processional, recessional, and vocal selections. All music should be discussed with the officiating pastor and the church organist, Marillyn Freeman, well in advance of the wedding. Contact Marillyn (725-3961) at the time you schedule your wedding to discuss your wedding musical plans. Also inform her if you plan to have a soloist or other musician participate in your wedding.

## Premarital Counseling

St. Paul asks that all couples participate in premarital counseling. This counseling is intended to provide you with the tools for building stronger relationships. Also included is a discussion of spiritual growth and church membership. We hope that couples planning a St. Paul Church wedding are committed to their personal growth and membership in a Christian community.

## License and Witnesses

Arrange for your wedding license at the County Clerk's office well in advance of your wedding date. Bring your license in to the church office at least one day before the rehearsal.

For your license to be legal and valid, you must have two witnesses. They must be at least 18 years of age in order to sign the marriage certificate. They need not be members of your wedding party. Traditionally, the signing witnesses are the Maid/Matron of Honor and the Best Man. If you intend to use other witnesses, be sure to notify the officiating pastor.

## Candles and Decorations

You may provide your own wedding (unity) candles.

Two seven-fold candelabra are available if desired. They generally make an already warm sanctuary even hotter. Also available on request are 18 pew hurricane lamps. The hurricane lamps look best for evening weddings. They will be placed on the outer sides of the aisles, both for safety

and visibility reasons. There is an extra \$25 fee for using the candelabra and an extra \$50 for the pew hurricane candle lamps.

In order to attach festive decorations to the aisles, use bow ribbon or small wires. Family members may use the rehearsal time to affix these decorations.

### Pictures

No flash pictures are allowed during the wedding ceremony, that is, from the time the Invocation is spoken at the beginning of the service until after Benediction is declared. Be sure that your photographer and friends are aware of this.

The sanctuary will be available 1½ hours before and 1½ hours after your ceremony. Plan to complete your photography during these periods in consideration of other groups using the building.

### Alcohol and Other Drugs – Security

The entire building of St. Paul Lutheran Church is a smoke-free zone. An ash tray receptacle is located outside the main entrance for any necessary tobacco breaks. Except for communion wine during Holy Communion, no alcoholic beverage consumption is allowed on church property or grounds.

St. Paul Church assumes no responsibility for the security of unattended gifts, purses, and other personal objects. Assign a personal attendant for this important task.

### Outdoor Weddings

Member of the pastoral staff may be available to perform local outdoor weddings. You will need to arrange for a 'back-up bad-weather' site, which may include the church building, if available.

### Fees

There is no building use fee charged for active St. Paul congregation members. Active members are those who have:

- Communed and contributed during this past year, and
- Are participating regularly in the life of this congregation.
- Thus, active members are those who have been participating at St. Paul at least 12 months prior to the wedding date.
- If a couple joins the church and actively participates at St. Paul for at least 12 months following the wedding date, their fee for use of the sanctuary shall be refunded to them.

Fees for the officiating pastor, organist, custodian, soloists provided by the church, and candles are listed below. Please write separate checks for the pastor, organist, custodian, (and soloist, if that applies), made out directly to them, not the church. Their names are listed below. Other fees are payable to St. Paul Lutheran Church. Fees should be paid at the church office at least 1½ weeks before your wedding. Regular office hours are M - F, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.; summer hours, 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Call to make other arrangements. Requests for reduction or waiver of fees may be discussed with the pastor.

**Deposit: \$200.00** This is due within two (2) weeks of scheduling. The deposit is required of members and non-members alike to hold your wedding date on our calendar. This will also function as a Damage and Cleaning Deposit if there is any damage to the premises or if additional cleaning is required. If the church is left in good order, this money will be returned to you after the wedding. Please make out a check in the amount of \$200.00 payable to "St. Paul Lutheran Church."

**Building Use: \$300.00 for non-members and inactive members.** Please make a check in the amount of \$300.00 payable to "St. Paul Lutheran Church." This is due 1½ weeks before the wedding.  
**Building Use: \$0 for active members of St. Paul.** Because our members are already supporting the church through tithes and offerings, there is no charge to them for use of the sanctuary.

**Premarital Counseling Survey: \$35.00** This is a one-time scoring fee for the Prepare / Enrich Marriage Survey and workbook. There is no other charge for the counseling sessions with the pastor. Premarital counseling is required of all couples married at St. Paul, including those who have been married previously. At the time you take the survey, you will send a check in the amount of \$35.00 payable to "Prepare / Enrich."

**Pastor's Honorarium: \$150.00** Please make a check in the amount of \$150.00 payable directly to "Paul Holte" or "Clarence Harms," whichever pastor is serving as your officiant. This is due 1½ weeks before the wedding.

**Organist's Honorarium: \$125.00** Please make a check in the amount of \$125.00 payable directly to "Marillyn Freeman." This is due 1½ weeks before the wedding.

**Soloist's Honorarium: \$75.00 (if applicable)** If St. Paul provides a soloist, please make a check in the amount of \$75.00 payable directly to that person. This is due 1½ weeks before the wedding. If the bride and groom secure their own soloist or additional musicians, it is expected that they will make separate arrangements for compensation to those singers / musicians.

**Church Custodian: \$50.00** Because St. Paul has a part-time custodian, any special services require extra hours for set-up, cleaning, and locking up. Please make a check in the amount of \$50.00 payable directly to "Richard Tucker." This is due 1½ weeks before the wedding.

**Additional Candles (if desired): Pew Candles (Hurricane Lamps): \$50.00 Candelabra: \$25.00**  
This is an optional fee which can be added to the building usage check. If a couple desires a unity candle, it is their responsibility to provide the pillar candle and lighting tapers.

**Reception Hall use: \$200.00 (if at church)** This is an optional fee which can be added to the building usage fee if the couple desires to use our basement Fellowship Hall for their wedding reception.