



Faith Lutheran Church
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Wedding Guide



Note: The idea for the format and basic content of this Guide must be attributed to the Pastor and members of St. John's Lutheran Church, Monett, Missouri.

To the bride and groom,

Congratulations! What a blessing it is to have found the person with whom you plan to share the rest of your life.

Thank you for giving us at Faith the opportunity to be a part of this special day . A Christian wedding is always a special event that requires careful preparation and planning. It requires much more in building a Christian marriage. We pray that Christ provides you both with the strength to accomplish the work ahead.

This guide and the support we provide are there to help you prepare for life together as husband and wife in Christ! Please read through this guide carefully, complete the application for marriage and return it to the church office as soon as possible. Bring any questions that you may have with you.

May God richly bless you with a special wedding day and many years together that are filled with His wonderful love and forgiveness.

In Christ's everlasting love and peace,



- Initial visit with the Pastor.
- Develop Pre-Marital session schedule with the Pastor.
- Pay fees at or before first Pre-Marital session.
- Identify date and time for the wedding and reception.
- Fill out application for wedding and return it to the Pastor.
- Identify organist and singer(s)

2-3 Months before the wedding

- Develop rehearsal schedule.
- Work with organist, singer(s), and Pastor to select music and plan arrangements.

1-2 Months before the wedding

- Provide materials for the church bulletin (if appropriate).
- Make arrangements with church staff for custodial and sound equipment support.
- Finalize all the information on wedding application.

2-3 Weeks before the wedding

- Apply for the marriage license

1 Week before the wedding

- Ensure the marriage license has been picked up and is correct.
- Conduct final coordination with all parties at the church. This includes the Pastor, custodial staff, ushers, organist, etc.

2-3 Days before the wedding

- Conduct a Rehearsal

Following the wedding

- Ensure church facilities have been cleaned.

ation of the expense incurred for utilities, bulletins, custodial, etc. All fees must be paid in advance.

Weddings in the Sanctuary (includes rehearsal)	\$100.00
Receptions in gym (includes kitchen use)	\$150.00

It is customary that gratuities be presented to the persons who commit time to help make your wedding a special event. Typically, the Pastor should receive an honorarium commensurate with the time spent during counseling, the rehearsal and the wedding. The amount of \$50 is suggested for the organist and custodial (sound system) person.

Marriage License Requirements

Because Faith Lutheran Church is located in Missouri, a Missouri marriage license is required. The pastor is licensed to perform marriages in Missouri.

The requirements for a Missouri Marriage License include:

1. *Must be 14 years old or older*
2. *If under 18 years old must have parent or custodial parent to sign*
3. *Signed affidavit saying that you're not behind on child support*
4. *Marriage License is good for 30 days and must be turned in within 72 hours after the wedding.*
5. *Must answer "NO" to the following questions:*
 - a. *Have you been divorced in the last 30 days?*
 - b. *Are you married?*
 - c. *Are you related by blood or adoption?*
6. *Cost periodically increases, but was last known to be about \$30.*

Schedule for Events

3-4 Months before wedding

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Premarital Sessions

As soon as a couple decides to marry, they should contact the pastor to discuss their proposed marriage. Premarital preparation with the Pastor of Faith Lutheran Church is a prerequisite for a marriage to be performed by the Pastor of Faith. The purpose of these preparation sessions is to help a couple form a solid base upon which they may build their life together, and to help them become better equipped to accept the responsibilities of marriage. There are usually one or more premarital sessions lasting approximately one hour each.

Weddings for Non-members

Faith Lutheran Church exists to bring the message of salvation in Jesus Christ to all people ... especially those in this area. We welcome members and non-members alike to our worship services, and encourage guests and visitors to take advantage of all the aspects of our ministry, including membership.

While we do not want to be thought of as a wedding chapel, we recognize the needs of those who are actively involved in our ministries,

and yet for legitimate reasons are not members of Faith Lutheran Church. Certain people who are members of other Lutheran Churches in our area, but who are actively involved in the ministries here, may be considered and treated as members in regard to these policies. Other non-members may be married at Faith at the discretion of the Pastor and Board of Elders.

Church Property Use Policy & Procedures

The kitchen and gym area (fellowship hall) are available to those wishing to use it for wedding showers and receptions. Be sure to check with the Pastor or church secretary to see if it is available for the date and time desired. See fees and gratuities section.

No use or throwing of rice or birdseed, etc. will be permitted inside the church.

Birdseed can be used outside the church.

At no time are alcoholic beverages to be brought into the reception in the gym.

Please leave gym and any areas used clean. The altar area and sanctuary should be cleaned *immediately* following the event. If the church property is not clean, a fee will be assessed.

Plan your wedding with the Pastor at least 3 months ahead of the scheduled wedding so as not to interfere with other planned church activities.

Pastoral Requirements

You will need to complete the enclosed wedding application form and return it to the church office or the Pastor. The Pastor will review the application and contact you to set up the time for your first pre-marital session. If the Pastor is unavailable for the date you have selected for the wedding, you may want to reschedule your wedding for a date

Decorating the Church

Because the sanctuary is the place where God's people gather to worship and because a Christian wedding is a worship service, all decorations used during the wedding must be appropriate and fitting for such an occasion and location. Therefore we would ask that the following guidelines be followed:

- No decorations may be tacked onto any of the furnishings in the sanctuary. Limited use of tape to secure items to pews may be approved when coordinated in advance.
- Candles (Altar, Unity, Pew) are permissible as long as precautions are taken to ensure that the carpet and pews are protected from dripping wax. (i.e., plastic should be placed under each candelabra, etc.)
- The view of the altar is not to be obstructed (however an arch is acceptable).
- Flowers are very appropriate. However, it is recommended that only live flowers and plants, not silk, be placed on the altar itself.
- The color of the altar hangings is determined by the season of the church year and may not be changed for the wedding service.
- The permanent altar furnishings (i.e., the altar, pulpit, lectern, etc.) may not be moved or removed for the wedding.
- Wedding banners are available to be hung in the sanctuary during the wedding. Contact the Altar Guild for more information.

Fees & Gratuities

There are no fees for use of the church facilities for a wedding by members of Faith Lutheran Church. This includes preparation of the bulletins. Clean-up of the gym after the reception can be performed for a fee of \$100, or can be performed by someone designated by the wedding party for both members and non-members. In either case, a deposit of \$100 will be required for the use of the gym.

Non-members will be assessed a fee for use of the church in consider-

Wedding Participants

One of the things that makes a wedding day special is the participation of family and friends in the wedding. We want to encourage you to include your family and friends - as groomsmen, bridesmaids, ushers, Candle lighters, soloists, ring bearers, flower girls and so on. Yet we would also like to make the following suggestions:

- You may ask as many friends as you like to stand up at your wedding. However, if you have more than 4 standing up on each side at our altar, it begins to get very crowded.
- We would strongly recommend that flower girls and ring bearers be no younger than 5 years old.
- We would also recommend that candle lighters be no younger than 12 years old. It is permissible to have your ushers light candles too!

Ushers

An usher should be present at the wedding rehearsal in order to be aware of where all facilities are located and to be aware of the order of the wedding service. The ushers are expected to arrive 30-minutes prior to the wedding service. The ushers may be responsible for the lighting of the candles.

If the ushers know of those who might be inclined to use flash cameras during the ceremony, such individuals are to be asked to leave their equipment in the narthex. Opportunities will occur later for pictures. Following the recessional, the ushers so designated are to return at once to escort the parents from the sanctuary, and then the congregation.



At least one usher will be available and alert during the ceremony for the comfort and aid of the guests should the need arise.

when he will be available.

- If you wish to ask another pastor to perform your wedding service, then the Pastor must be an ordained minister of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, and you must first get permission from the Pastor of Faith Lutheran Church. All other policies described in this guide, including the requirement of pre-marital sessions, must still be followed.

Music

Since a wedding in the church is considered a Christ-centered service of worship, all music should be selected appropriately. All vocal music must be approved by the Pastor prior to officiating at the wedding. There are many beautiful songs, but not all are suitable for a Lutheran worship service. The music should reflect God's love and care, and His blessing of marriage. This includes all music, including pre-service music, the processional, music during the service, the recessional and music after the service. For this reason, we do not recommend the use of Wagner's "Bridal Chorus" from Lohengren or Mendelssohn's "Wedding March" from A Midsummer Night's Dream. However, if you especially want these pieces used at your wedding, we do not ban them.



You may want to use the following guideline in selecting music. If you can answer "yes" to at least three of these questions, the music should be suitable for use in your wedding:

- Does this song glorify God?
- Does this song express your faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior?
- Is this song an expression of your joy in God's love and goodness to you?
- Is this song an expression of the Christian faith as you have learned it in this church?
- Is God, or any person of God, mentioned in the song?

This would likewise eliminate from consideration as solos such secular compositions as “Because, I Love You Truly,” and “O Promise Me.”

The inclusion of congregational hymns in a wedding is strictly up to your discretion. The organist or the Pastor will be happy to suggest appropriate hymns for this joyful occasion.

If you have a question regarding the selection of music, we would encourage you to talk to the Pastor. He is ready and willing to help you select both traditional and contemporary music.

Organist

There are organists within our Church who may be able to serve as the wedding organist, depending on scheduling. It is permissible to have an organist of your own preference. If you have a friend or relative whom you would like to play, make sure he or she has the technical ability and experience necessary to operate and play our organ. A person who has “taken a few piano lessons” or “played an organ a few times before” will probably be overwhelmed by the complexity of the instrument. Please check with the Pastor or the organist when using an outside organist. Practice time should be scheduled through the church office.

Soloist/Instrumentalist

A soloist (s) or instrumentalist (s) of your choice is welcome to participate in your wedding. The text of all vocal solos should follow the guidelines under “Selection of Music.” It is best if the soloist/instrumentalist would attend the rehearsal, especially if he/she is unfamiliar with our church and/or wedding service. If he/she is to be accompanied by the organist, practice time must be scheduled.

Photography, Video, and Sound

Your wedding is an important event and you will want to remember it with pictures. However, since the wedding is first and foremost a public worship service honoring Christ and asking His blessing upon your marriage, the photographer’s activity must be clearly defined. For this reason the following rules will apply to all weddings held at Faith Lutheran Church.

Pictures may be taken during the processional and the recessional, however, flash pictures are not permitted at any time during the service. A note to this effect should be included in the bulletin and ushers should be instructed to remind family and friends attending the wedding of this rule should the need arise.

Natural light pictures from the rear of the church will be permitted during the service. Pictures after the ceremony are permitted, and should be conducted in a timely manner. Photographers and/or others are not permitted beyond the first step of the chancel area. The Pastor is to be consulted if any pictures are to involve him and should be taken first.

To help keep the wedding on schedule, it is highly recommended that as many pictures as possible be taken prior to the ceremony. However, no more posed pictures may be taken in the sanctuary 30-minutes prior to the start of the wedding. An example of these would be individual pictures of the bride and groom with their attendants and family.

The photographer should contact the Pastor prior to the wedding, and should be present at the rehearsal (if possible).

- Any use of the sound equipment will require guidance from the Faith Lutheran Church sound custodian. This person will determine sound availability for the wedding and rehearsal. Coordination between the sound person and organist is necessary. See schedule section.