



## Marriage Preparation

Congratulations on your upcoming marriage.

Often couples spend time working on their wedding day, making it all it can be. The focus in marriage preparation is preparing for your life together in marriage, the wedding day is only part of that.

### Why a church wedding?

First and foremost, a wedding in the church is a worship service.

Having a church wedding implies more than the fact that a wedding ceremony takes place in a church building or with a pastor present. It implies

- involvement with a Christian community or a desire to begin or rekindle such involvement.
- recognition that human energy and will power, even at their most sincere, are insufficient to overcome the inherent difficulties in pursuing an intimate, trusting, life-long relationship.
- appreciation of the fact that the grace of God is the only thing sufficient to sustain us in our weakness.
- a desire to give and receive support from other Christians, placing the family that a couple creates through marriage in the wider context of the Christian family.

It is inviting God into the marriage, on the wedding day, and every day after that.

### The Process of Scheduling your Wedding

To schedule your wedding, please contact Pastor Julie Bailey, who will then check her availability and the availability of the church building.

Premarital sessions are expected with a church wedding at Ascension. Pastor Julie uses the system "Prepare-Enrich." The first step is the completion of an inventory on-line, in which a credit card is required for a cost of \$35. If that presents a problem, please let Pastor Julie know. The following sessions will include discussions on marriage expectations, families of origin, communication, conflict, financial planning, and goal setting. The number of sessions will vary, dependent on scheduling and what needs to be discussed. It is recommended that these sessions begin at least six (6) months prior to the wedding date.

### The Use of the Church Building

Couples may use the church building for the wedding and rehearsal, both which need to be scheduled. In some cases, another church activity may be scheduled at the same time as the rehearsal in a room other than the sanctuary.

If you desire the fellowship hall for a dinner or anything else following the rehearsal, you will need to arrange that with the church office, as that is considered a church rental and the rental agreement and costs apply.

Security cannot be guaranteed, so valuable items should not be left unattended at any time.

The use of rice or birdseed is prohibited (bubbles are often a good alternative).

The use of alcohol is not permitted on the property. Smoking is not permitted in the church building. The pastor reserves the right not to perform the wedding if anyone in the wedding party is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

#### Custodian

A custodian from Ascension will be on site during the rehearsal and while the wedding party is at the church the day of the wedding. They will arrive at the church two (2) hours prior to the start of the wedding. If additional time over the two (2) hours is desired, the cost will be \$50 per hour.

#### Flower Delivery

If you plan on having flowers delivered the day of the wedding, please ask the florist to deliver them during the time someone is present.

If you utilize the florist the congregation has on contract, they will be able to deliver the flowers without having someone present at the church. We contract with Faber's Greenhouse and Floral, 7010 S. Graham Road, St. Charles, MI 48655, 989-865-9351.

#### Photography

Any photographs or videos during the ceremony are to be done unobtrusively. Flash photography should be kept to a minimum. Any questions regarding photography should be addressed to the pastor.

#### Bulletins

The church does not provide bulletins for weddings.

#### Children

Children bring joy to any occasion and are welcome at Ascension Lutheran Church. All children need to have a responsible adult to supervise them during the rehearsal and the wedding. The pastor and staff cannot be expected to entertain or serve as supervisors. For safety, children will not be allowed to run around the church, primarily in the worship space.

## Music

The wedding is a worship service, in which we honor God. Music is intended to speak the same message of inviting and welcoming God into the relationship. It is the responsibility of the couple to arrange for a musician. If you need names of musicians, including the music director serving with Ascension, the pastor can provide you with that information. It is recommended that the musician be secured as soon as possible.

At times, the pastor (or musician) will suggest you not use a particular song. This is done rarely, but it has happened. Some music is more appropriate for the reception than the wedding service, and consideration is appreciated in planning. It is best to clear any secular music with the pastor prior to the rehearsal so that any alterations can be made if necessary.

If a soloist will be singing, clarify this with your musician and arrange for a rehearsal time if necessary. The musician can provide several recommendations for worship music for the wedding. If the musician does not own a piece of music you desire, it may be your responsibility to find this music for the musician.

Some couples choose to have recorded music. This music should be on a CD that can be played through the church sound system and available for rehearsal. No extra fee.

We require a member of the sound board team of Ascension to run the sound system.

### STANDARD FEES:

<u>Member</u>	<u>Non-member</u>
Pastor: \$175	\$300
Use of Church: none	\$175
Musician: \$100-200	\$100-200
Custodian: \$150 standard +\$50/ each additional hours	\$150 standard +\$50/each additional hours
Sound Board: \$50	\$50

All fees must be paid prior to the wedding service.

\*A one-time fee of \$35 will be charged when you do the initial premarital inventory. This you will pay directly to the inventory provider (Prepare-Enrich) when you take the inventory.

WEDDING SERVICE—You may use this for the outline of your bulletin.

Procession

Greeting

Declaration of Intent

Prayer

One or two readings from Scripture

Homily may follow

Vows

Exchange of Rings

Marriage Proclamation

(Unity Candle)

Blessing of Couple

Prayers

The Lord's Prayer

Blessing

## Suggested Scripture Readings

### Genesis 1:26-31

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."

And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so.

And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, a sixth day.

### Genesis 2:18-24

Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." So out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him.

So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; and the rib which the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh.

### Ruth 1:16-17

Ruth said, "Do not press me to leave you or to turn back from following you! Where you go, I will go; Where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die, I will die—there will I be buried. May the Lord do thus and so to me, and more as well, if even death parts me from you!"

### Song of Solomon 2:10-13

My beloved speaks and says to me: "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away; for lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land. The fig tree puts forth its figs, and the vines are in blossom; they give forth fragrance. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

### Song of Solomon 8:6-7

Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm; for love is strong as death, jealousy is cruel as the grave. Its flashes are flashes of fire, a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it. If a man offered for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly scorned.

### Isaiah 63:7-9

I will recount the steadfast love of the LORD, the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD has granted us, and the great goodness to the house of Israel which he has granted them according to his mercy, according to the abundance of his steadfast love. For he said, Surely they are my people, sons who will not deal falsely; and he became their Savior. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

### Romans 12:1-2

I appeal to you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

### 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13

But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends; [as for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away. For our knowledge is imperfect and our prophecy is imperfect; but when the perfect comes, the imperfect will pass away. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood. So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.]

### Ephesians 5:21-33

Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of

the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives also be subject in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. Even so husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever hates his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is a profound one, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church; however, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

#### Philippians 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let all men know your forbearance. The Lord is at hand. Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

#### 1 John 4:7-12

Little children, you are of God, and have overcome them; for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are of the world, therefore what they say is of the world, and the world listens to them. We are of God. Whoever knows God listens to us, and he who is not of God does not listen to us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and he who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God; for God is love. In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No man has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.

#### Matthew 19:4-6

He answered, "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 flesh'? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder."

#### John 2:1-10

On the third day there was a marriage at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; Jesus also was invited to the marriage, with his disciples. When the wine failed, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "O woman,



what have you to do with me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now six stone jars were standing there, for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the steward of the feast." So they took it. When the steward of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward of the feast called the bridegroom and said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first; and when men have drunk freely, then the poor wine; but you have kept the good wine until now."

#### John 15:9-12

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."

#### Possible Vows

1. I take you, (name), 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. In the presence of God and before these witnesses, I, (name) take you (name) to be my wife/husband), to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse; for richer, for poorer; in sickness and in health; in joy and in sorrow; to love and to cherish; and to be faithful to you alone, as long as we both shall live.
3. In the presence of God, and before our family and friends I, (name) take you (name) to be my wife/husband; to laugh with you in joy; to grieve with you in sorrow; to support you in sickness and in health; to grow with you in love; and to be faithful to you alone, as long as we both shall live.
4. I take you, (name) 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 worst of what is to come, until death parts us.
5. I (name) take you (name) to be my wife/husband, knowing in my heart that you will always be my friend, my partner in life and my one true love. On this special day, I give to you in the presence of God, my promise to stay by your side as your husband/wife, in sickness and in health, in joy and in sorrow, as well as through the good times and the bad. I promise to love you without reservation, to honor

and respect you, to provide for your needs the best that I can, to protect you from harm, to comfort you in times of distress, to grow with you in mind and spirit, to always be open and honest with you, and to cherish you for as long as we both shall live.

6. (Name), our miracle lies in the path we have chosen together. I enter into this marriage with you knowing that the true magic of love is not to avoid changes, but to navigate them successfully. Let us commit until death parts us.
7. Before God our Father who has given us the gift of love, I (name) join with you, (name), in the covenant of marriage. I promise to give my faithful, life-giving love to you, and to share my life with you as long as we shall live. May this community of faith witness our love for each other for the rest of our lives.
8. Written by the couple, approved by pastor.

#### Exchange of Rings

1. I give you this ring as a sign of my love and faithfulness.
2. (Name), I give you this ring, that you may wear it, as a symbol of the vows we have made this day.
3. (Name), I give you this ring, as a symbol of our marriage, for today and tomorrow, and for all the days to come. Wear it as a sign of what we have promised and done this day.
4. Today we have moved from "I" to "we". (Name), take this ring as a symbol of my decision to join my life with yours until death should us part. I walked to this place to meet you today; we shall walk from it together.
5. (Name), I bring this ring, shaped in the symbol of completeness and eternity, and I give it to you to wear so we will always to love, honor, and respect each other.

**Ascension Lutheran Church  
Agreement for Weddings**

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The following rules and guidelines have been established for all weddings. It is important that everyone have a clear understanding of their responsibilities to maintain the sanctuary, other rooms in the building, adjacent buildings, and grounds so that all may be able to enjoy a clean and respectful place of worship and fellowship.

**RULES FOR USE OF THE FACILITY:**

1. There will be NO smoking in the building and NO use of alcohol on church property. If smoking outside of the building, please use the receptacles provided by each door for cigarette butts. Pastor reserves the right not to perform the wedding if people are under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
2. The wedding party will throw away any food or large items left in the rooms.
3. Small children must have adult supervision at all times.
4. Any damage to the church or church property will be handled on an individual basis.
5. There will be no use of rice or birdseed (bubbles are a good alternate).
6. Premarital sessions are expected for all weddings at Ascension.

**STANDARD FEES:**

<u>Member</u>	<u>Non-member</u>
Pastor: \$175	\$300
Use of Church: none	\$175
Musician: \$100-200	\$100-200
Custodian: \$150 standard +\$50/each additional hours	\$150 standard +\$50/each additional hours
Sound Board: \$50	\$50

All fees must be paid prior to the wedding service.

\*A one-time fee of \$35 will be charged when you do the initial premarital inventory. This you will pay directly to the inventory provider (Prepare-Enrich) when you take the inventory.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Bride: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print)

Address of Bride: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Groom: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print)

Address of Groom: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of wedding: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of rehearsal: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor Approval: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Approved 11/19/13 by Ascension Lutheran Church Council  
Amended 11/14/17 by Ascension Lutheran Council*