

Planning your Wedding at Hosanna Lutheran Church

CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

Marriage is one of the most important decisions you will ever make. We are happy that you have chosen to be married at Hosanna Lutheran Church. Our Pastors will work with you to make your wedding meaningful and enjoyable. It is a joy for us to help you in your planning and to share this experience with you. We would like to help you prepare for *marriage*, not just a wedding. That's what this packet is about - to provide you with the information you need to grow your relationship with one another and in Christ. In the Bible, Psalm 1:22 says, "I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord." Even today God's people come to God's house for worship, prayer and the meaningful experiences in their lives. It is by the Word of God and through prayer that you sanctify and establish your home and marriage through the Christian wedding service.

Why the Church?

A first question you should ask yourselves : Why the church for a wedding? Perhaps it is because your faith leads you in this direction or because you think you "ought to" get married in a church. What are you seeking? When you turn to the church, realize it is a group of people—the Body of Christ, not a building. We come together because we need Jesus Christ our Savior, and because we need forgiveness in Jesus Christ. When we face challenging times, we are there for each other, to love and support on another and to remind each other of our shared hope in Christ. If you are not a part of a church, we encourage you to become involved here or in another Christian fellowship. Marriage is a lifetime process, and you need all the support you can get. The church provides a most appropriate setting for a marriage service. In the church, God's people come together ask God's blessing on the marriage and give thanks for that blessing.

ADVANCED PLANNING

Marriage is an estate instituted by God which signifies for us the mysterious union between Christ and his church and is therefore not to be entered lightly, but with reverence for God and for one another. Only marriage between one man and one woman who promise life-long fidelity under God will be performed and blessed at Hosanna Lutheran Church.

Hosanna Lutheran Church is available for weddings for only members of the congregation. *A member must have been a baptized member for at least one year prior to wedding date.* Use of the facilities is on a first-come, first-served basis. This means that the earlier you reserve a date and time, the more likely you will be able to reserve the date that you choose.

This packet has been designed to assist you in the planning of your wedding service. It is the couples' responsibility to contact the Pastor to set up appointments to meet. These appointments should be made a few months in advance of the wedding date. Generally, three to four meetings (between one to two hours per time) are sufficient for planning and premarital counseling.

Meeting Schedule: **First Meeting:** Discuss Wedding Policy/ begin work on worship service

Take Prepare/Enrich Test

Homework: Choose Vows, Scripture, Worship Items

Second Meeting: Begin to go over Prepare/Enrich Results

Organize Order of Worship

Begin Preparing Bulletin

Third Meeting: Finalize Worship Details

Check Bulletin

Complete Prepare/Enrich Results

Unfinished Business

THE WEDDING DATE AND TIME:

Please contact the Pastor before you make final wedding arrangements. A wedding date can be confirmed only by the Pastor. This will help insure that the church facilities are available and that the Pastor will be able to perform the ceremony on your chosen date. Please set this date as early as possible. A wedding date and time will be reserved only after you have confirmed the date and time with one of the Hosanna Pastors. Sounds and Music personnel must also be contacted at this time. The wedding committee at Hosanna should be notified when the date of the wedding is set. The bride and groom will meet with a committee member to discuss the availability of certain items provided by the church for use during the wedding.. Please contact the Wedding Coordinator assigned to your wedding for more information. We ask that you be mindful that the Wedding and Serving Team Groups are volunteers.

PASTOR(S):

The called and ordained Pastor who is currently serving Hosanna Lutheran Church will officiate at all weddings. You may also invite other Pastors to participate in the service along with the Pastor from Hosanna Lutheran Church. However, **before** you extend such an invitation, please discuss this with the Pastor from Hosanna. The Pastor will make the final decision regarding participation of any other clergy.

CUSTODIAL COURTESIES:

We request that no rice, bird seed, confetti, glitter or bubbles be used at weddings at Hosanna Lutheran Church either inside or outside the building. Please speak with the Pastors and Custodians concerning this matter. Please be careful not to leave litter scattered around the parking lot or around the church. Cigarette butts can also be messy and we ask that there BE NO SMOKING on church property. NO PETS ARE ALLOWED INSIDE THE CHURCH BUILDING.

LICENSE:

Marriage licenses are obtained at any County Court House in South Dakota. You must apply together at the office of the Register of Deeds. There is no waiting period for you to receive a marriage license. The license fee is \$40 and is to be paid in cash. You will need to take proof of your age along with you (a

driver's license is sufficient). Please note: The marriage license is only valid for 20 days after you purchase it!! Don't buy it too early! The marriage license should be given to the officiating Pastor the night of the rehearsal. You should give the Pastor both copies that you received from the Register of Deeds.

Costs: For members, no cost to use the building. Donation can be made and are encouraged. Remember, there are a number of people who will staff the church and wedding and we recognize their valuable time and efforts. These checks should be given to the Pastor *prior to the wedding or at the rehearsal.*

Suggested gifts for services:

Keyboard/Music: \$125 (for rehearsal and wedding)

Sound Technician(s): \$100 each (for rehearsal and wedding)

Janitor: \$125 (for rehearsal and wedding)

Pastor: \$200 (wedding planning, premarital counseling, rehearsal and wedding)

PREPARE/ENRICH

We ask that each couple take an inventory called, "Prepare/Enrich". This is a list of questions that are answered individually and then analyzed by category to assist in the process of premarital counseling. There is a fee of \$35.00 paid to Hosanna that goes directly to the company (Life Innovations, Inc.) to cover computational costs. Neither the Pastor nor the church receives any of this fee. Checks can be made out to Hosanna Lutheran Church and the Pastor purchases the process online. Since 1977, PREPARE/ENRICH has helped over 1,000,000 couples, and is a highly recommended resource. It is not a test whether or not you should marry. *It is a tool to lift up your strengths, as well as your growth areas.* Your next two sessions will focus on both strengths and growth areas, and offer some handles for dealing with conflict (an expected part of any relationship).

WEDDING REHEARSAL TIME:

The rehearsal time is to be set with the officiating pastor. Frequently, the parents of the groom provide a rehearsal dinner, and the time should be scheduled with such a dinner in mind. In addition, the time should also be set in consideration of having all the members of the wedding party (the parents, ushers, organist, and soloist) present at the appointed time. Please urge all who are to be present to be prompt so that your rehearsal can begin on time. Allow approximately one hour for the rehearsal and allow travel time to the Rehearsal dinner venue when setting the rehearsal time with the Pastor.

WHO SHOULD ATTEND THE REHEARSAL?

Everyone who participates in the wedding ceremony should be present. This includes the bride and groom, the best man and maid/matron of honor, all bridesmaids and groomsmen, the ring-bearer and flower girl, all ushers and candle-lighters, and the parents both the bride and groom. It is also important that the organist and sound/audio personnel be present. It is helpful if the soloist can attend rehearsal, not to practice but to learn where their solos are to be performed. Soloists and organists should practice at other times.

By rehearsal time the bride and groom should know:

1. How many pews to be reserved in front for parents, grandparents, and relatives. These persons should be notified that they are to be seated in a reserved section so that they can inform the ushers when they arrive for the service.
2. Which ushers will usher the parents of the bride and the parents of the groom.
3. The order of the wedding party---where they will stand and who will be matched with whom in the processional and recessional.
4. Whether the bridesmaids and maid/matron of honor will walk down the aisle alone or with the groomsmen and best man.
5. The location of the receiving line.
6. Who will sit in which pew if either the parents of the bride or groom have been divorced and/or remarried.

PHOTOGRAPHY:

No flash pictures will be taken during the wedding service. The photographer and videographer **must** contact the Pastor for *Guidelines*.

FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS:

All flowers, candelabras, and candles, other than those which are a part of the décor of the sanctuary, are to be provided by the bridal couple. Please use drip-less candles or arrange to protect the altar or the floor from dripping wax. Only REAL flowers or plants may be placed on the upper level of the altar area. These details will be worked out with the Wedding Committee prior to the wedding.

The Altar candles, Sanctuary candle, and Paschal Candle are part of the normal furnishings of the church and are not to be moved or removed for a wedding. Please plan your decorations around these permanent fixtures.

Any pew decorations shall be the responsibility of the bridal party. No tape or wire (wire ribbon or fish line) can be used on the pews. Only ribbon, thread or string or rubber bands can be used on the pews. The use of candles as a pew decoration is not recommended because of the danger to guests and the bridal party. Use of SCOTCH TAPE or MASKING TAPE, NAILS, THUMB TACKS, or PINS in NOT PERMITTED.

Glitter (hair or body, on fabric or in flowers) is not allowed due to the difficulty in removing it from the upholstery and carpets.

Bulletins – Couple is in charge of printing bulletins.

Only the Church Council and the Property Committee of Hosanna are authorized to make physical changes in church property. Please ask the officiating Pastor/wedding coordinator when it will be possible to decorate the church and fellowship hall for your wedding and reception. Normally, you will be allowed the evening before the wedding. No flowers are to be placed directly on the altar. Please use the flower stands. If you wish to leave flowers for the Sunday worship service, please sign up on the calendar in the narthex or notify the church office. This will allow the church to properly recognize your gift.

GIFTS/CARDS:

Families are responsible for any gifts, cards and other personal items brought to the church. Arrangements should be made for the protection of the gifts and cards before and during the service and for taking them from the church following the wedding or reception.

THE WEDDING:

Our sanctuary will seat approximately 350-400 people without undue crowding. The church is not responsible for personal belongings left in these rooms during the wedding or reception. We suggest that you assign someone to secure personal belongings, during the time pictures are being taken and during the wedding so that nothing is stolen. All items must be removed from the church property at the conclusion of your wedding.

FOLLOWING THE MARRIAGE SERVICE:

When the wedding has concluded, please be sure that all decorations, flowers, and candles that you have provided are removed from the sanctuary. In addition, check to see if any person has left any clothing or valuables in the church. It is the responsibility of the wedding party to leave the church following the wedding looking the same as when they entered it.

CONDUCT:

Members of the wedding party are asked to conduct themselves respectfully and with reverence both at the rehearsal and at the wedding and reception. Please remember that this building is a place of worship and we ask you to treat it in this manner. No alcohol or tobacco is allowed in the church building. The Pastor reserves the right to not allow someone to participate in the ceremony if they have been drinking prior to the worship service. Once the wedding is over and everyone has moved into the fellowship hall for the reception, we ask that children not be allowed to play in the Sanctuary.

INVITATION TO THE PASTOR & Church Staff:

It is not necessary to invite the Pastor and spouse to all your festivities. But, if you would like to invite them to be present at the rehearsal and reception, it is expected that you send an invitation.

ALCOHOL POLICY

No alcohol can be consumed on church property. *We do not allow the consumption of alcohol on the church premises.* We trust that you will respect the solemnity of the event and respect the church

itself that you will make sure that no drinking occurs before or during your rehearsal and wedding. Anybody who has consumed alcohol may be prohibited from participating in the rehearsal or wedding ceremony itself. If the Pastor feels that someone has been drinking so as to interfere with the worship service or even show obvious disrespect for the bride and groom and/or the service, we will not allow them to participate. This includes both the bride and groom.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Marriage is not solely a Christian Institution. But when two Christians enter a LIFELONG commitment in the presence of God and witnesses—a service held in the church and presided over by a Pastor, it is appropriate and desirable to frame the marriage service in a context of worship with readings from God’s Holy Word, the Bible. We have listed some suggested Scripture passages for you to consider. The Word of God is the best source of readings for a Christian wedding ceremony. The Scriptures say little about weddings, but they do say a great deal about marriage, about covenant relationships, and about Christ-centered living. We encourage you to first read these Scripture passages individually, and then discuss them together, as you choose which passages you want to use for your worship service. These are merely suggestions and if you choose other passages besides these, please discuss them with the Pastor. You may choose one from the Old Testament, one from the Gospels, one from the Epistles and/or a Psalm if you wish. If you choose to only have one Scripture reading we ask that it is a Gospel text.

Old Testament:

Genesis 1:26-28; 2:18-25

Song of Songs 8:6-7

Joshua 24:14-15

Ruth 1:16-17

Proverbs 18:22

Proverbs 31:10-30

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8; 4:9-12

Epistles:

Romans 12:1-3, 9-12

Romans 15:1-2, 4-7

1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13

Ephesians 3:14-20

Ephesians 5:1-2

Ephesians 5:21-33

1 John 4:7-1

Philippians 2:1-11; 4:4-9

Colossians 3:12-17

Ephesians 4:15-29

Ephesians 6:10-18

Galatians 5:22-26

Gospels:

Matthew 19:1-12

Mark 10:6-9

John 2:1-10 or John 15:9-17

A Psalm may also be used if you wish. These may be read, chanted, sung to a familiar hymn tune by an individual or the congregation. Again, this is not an exhaustive list but some suggestions.

Psalm 33 Psalm 100 Psalm 117 Psalm 127 Psalm 128 Psalm 136

There may be other readings you want to use in worship, and we ask that all non-biblical materials be placed in the proper context of worship. They may only be used if they reflect the Christian understanding of love and marriage and if they have been approved by the Pastor. General rule of thumb: if you would do this in worship on Sunday morning then it will most likely be acceptable for the wedding service.

WEDDING MUSIC

Music is a powerful way to express God's love for us and the blessings we ask God to grant upon your marriage. To convey this message, careful attention should be given to the selection of processional, recessional, solo music and/or hymns you consider. Use of one or more hymns is an excellent way to involve the entire congregation in your special service. Be sure to look at both text and tune. We have a list of hymns available that are appropriate for weddings to use at your request.

You will need to hire an organist/Pianist. The minimum you should consider paying them is \$125.00. Many organists have a set fee for weddings. We can suggest individuals who you may contact. As with secular readings, we ask that music be carefully selected, appropriate for worship on Sunday morning, and appropriate for your wedding. Your selections must be approved with both the Pastor and the organist. The Sound technician will also need to be contacted at the time of securing the wedding date. The minimum fee is \$ 100 for both rehearsal and wedding.

HOLY COMMUNION

We encourage you to consider Holy Communion at your wedding. The Sacrament of Holy Communion celebrates both the intimacy of your vows and the celebration of Christ's presence in your marriage and lives. If you choose to have Communion as part of your service, it must be available for all the gathered people. We can include a welcome similar to this: "If you are baptized and believe that Christ is present with us in this bread and wine, you are welcome to join us in Communion". This would enable people to feel comfortable to come forward if they wish. We encourage you to discuss this with family members long before the wedding, particularly those who are non-Lutheran.

THE MARRIAGE VOWS

The vows you will make to one another are the core of the ceremony. It is by and with these promises, made before God and the gathered community, that you pledge your lifelong faithfulness and commitment to one another. If you would like to write your own vows or use vows from another source, it must be discussed and/or written with the Pastor's approval, since it is our responsibility to maintain the integrity of the vows and certify that the marriage has taken place. Some people want to memorize their vows, but we do not encourage it. The moment can overwhelm you and we feel that too much emphasis is placed on memorization and remembering, rather on the promise itself.

FORM 1 I, take you, _____, 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.

FORM 2 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 to better understand ourselves, the world and God, through the best and worst of what is to come, until death parts us.

FORM 3 I take you, _____, to be my wife/husband, I promise before God and these witnesses to be your faithful wife/husband, to share with you in plenty and in want, in joy and 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.

FORM 4 _____, I take you to be my wife/husband from this time onward, to join with you and to share with you all that is to come, to give and to receive, speak and to listen, to inspire and to respond, and in all circumstances of our life together be loyal to you with my whole life and with all my being until death parts us.

FORM 5 I take thee, _____, to be my wedded wife/husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part, according to God's holy ordinance; and therefore, I pledge thee my faithfulness.

FORM 6 I, _____, take you, _____, to be my wife/husband, my constant friend, my faithful partner and my love from this day forward. In the presence of God, our family and friends, I offer you my solemn vow to be your faithful partner in sickness and in health, in good times and in bad, in joy as well as in sorrow. I promise to love you unconditionally, to support you in your goals, to honor and respect you, to laugh with you and cry with you, and to cherish you for as long as we both shall live.

