



WEDDING PRACTICES

115 Central Drive, Amherst, Ohio 44001
(440) 988-4157

Thank you for your interest in a Christian wedding service at St. Paul Lutheran Church and Preschool. To help make your wedding service in accordance with the Word of God, worshipful, God-pleasing, and celebrated with decency and good order, we share the following information.

SPIRITUAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. *Christian Marriage* Since Scripture says “**Do not be bound together with unbelievers ...**” (2 Corinthians 6:14), St. Paul’s pastor will not marry any couple who are not Christians and show no interest in a Christian witness and message within the wedding service.
2. *Pre-Marital Counseling* All couples who desire to be married at St. Paul must participate in 5 – 8 counseling sessions with the pastor or a Marriage Counselor referred by the pastor.
3. *Concerning Living Together Before Marriage* Marriage is a blessing of God’s good creation. We learn from the Bible that marriage is the lifelong, exclusive union of one man and one woman, as husband and wife. God has established marriage as the proper way for a couple to “publicly” demonstrate their love and commitment to one another and to Christ. Men and women are not to live together as husband and wife, unless they actually are husband and wife. The Bible states, “**For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh**” (Genesis 2:24). Living together is sin. The solution for all sin is confessing honestly and sincerely to God the wrongs we have done in our actions and in our hearts, trusting the forgiveness Jesus Christ has won by paying for all sin with His death on the cross, and turning away from sin to live a new life that honors God. Living together as a husband and wife prior to marriage is particularly troublesome because one *intends* to commit the same act daily. When a couple recognizes the truth of what God in His Word the Bible says about living together, some form of repentance or turning from this sin should follow. Seek the counsel of the pastor to discuss this matter, and the manner in which repentance is expressed in your particular circumstance.
4. *Officiating Ministers* Only the pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church or a pastor on the roster of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod may officiate at services in the worship sanctuary. Pastors or ministers of churches not in fellowship with the LCMS may participate, with the St. Paul’s pastor’s approval, through Scripture readings or, at the conclusion of the service, a blessing or greeting.
5. *The Wedding Service as Worship* The wedding service is a congregational worship service in structure and spirit. Therefore, all wedding music, readings, written vows and prayers are to be worshipful and spiritual in nature and are to be cleared with the Pastor or Director of Music Ministry.

FACILITIES USE CONSIDERATIONS

1. *Use of Alcohol and Drugs* The pastor will not marry a couple if either person is under the influence of alcohol or drugs (other than those prescribed by a doctor) on the wedding day.

NOTE: any member of the wedding party who is under the influence of alcohol or drugs will not be permitted to participate in the wedding service. Alcohol will not be consumed on the premises by anyone.

2. *Children in the Wedding Party* All children in the wedding party must demonstrate the ability and willingness to follow the directions of the pastor during the service.
3. *Photography* Because it distracts from the worship, no flash pictures will be taken during the actual wedding service. Flash photography may be used during the Processional and Recessional only. During the service, photos may be taken from the balcony, narthex, vestry, or sacristy with available lights only. After the service, photos may be taken in the chancel (front) of the worship sanctuary.
4. *Decorations* such as flowers and ribbons are acceptable. The use of a runner down the center aisle is permitted, though not recommended. Decorations will not be taped or tacked to pews or other finished wooden surfaces.
5. *Rice, Birdseed, Confetti, Cereal, etc.* The throwing of rice, bird seed, etc., inside or immediately outside the church building is not permitted. Limousines or coaches will be parked in the parking lot during the ceremony and will not park in a fire lane except to pick up or drop off passengers.
6. *Marriage License* The marriage license should be secured from the local municipality and delivered to St. Paul's church office one week before the wedding service.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS TO REMEMBER

7. No real ("living") flowers may be used as petals in the aisle. SILK FLOWERS only for flower girls.
8. The rehearsal takes about one hour from the time we begin. Please have all participants at church on time for the rehearsal, including parents, readers, soloists, etc.
9. A typical wedding service lasts about 30 to 45 minutes, depending on music, special considerations, etc.
10. Please have a logical order of photos for your photographer to speed the process along. Also, please inform any extended family if they are expected to be present for any photos taken in the church.
11. Please inform your best man and maid/matron of honor that they must sign the marriage certificate before they leave the church on the day of the wedding.
12. If you will use a unity candle in your ceremony (optional), please bring the unity candle arrangement, etc., to the rehearsal, unless they are being delivered by the florist.
13. Please make arrangements with the florist and church office for deliveries to be sure that the church will be open. The church will usually be opened about one hour before the ceremony, unless other arrangements are made.
14. Please plan to arrive one hour before the wedding service, unless special arrangements have been made.
15. You may call the church office if you have any questions (440-988-4157).

Thank you for the privilege of being part of your wedding day!

God's rich blessings to you both!



WEDDING SERVICE PLANNING WORKSHEET

115 Central Drive, Amherst, Ohio 44001
(440) 988-4157

BRIDE'S NAME _____
ADDRESS _____

PHONE & EMAIL _____
BIRTHDATE _____
CHURCH AFFILIATION _____

GROOM'S NAME _____
ADDRESS _____

PHONE & EMAIL _____
BIRTHDATE _____
CHURCH AFFILIATION _____

NEW ADDRESS & PHONE _____

REHEARSAL DATE _____
TIME _____
PLACE _____

WEDDING DATE _____
TIME _____
PLACE _____
BRIDE'S ARRIVAL TIME _____
GROOM'S ARRIVAL TIME _____
FLOURIST ARRIVAL TIME _____

RECEPTION TIME _____
PLACE _____

*List the Wedding Party in the order in which they will stand [from the bride and groom]. Please **PRINT!***

MAID / MATRON OF HONOR

BEST MAN

BRIDESMAIDS

GROOMSMEN

6. Bride plan to dress at church? Yes / No
7. Will you use bulletins in your wedding service? Yes / No
 If yes, will church office print them? Yes / No
 Plan to show / email a draft to pastor for approval before printing.
 If using bulletins, who will distribute them? *[Circle one]*
 USHER GROOMSMEN FAMILY MEMBER
8. Are ushers to seat the guests?
 a. Traditional [Bride's side – Groom's side]
 b. Mixed
9. How will bridal party process in?
 a. Groomsmen wait in front and bridesmaids process from back
 b. Groomsmen wait in front and meet bridesmaids half-way down aisle
 c. Couples process from the back. (Groom & Best man wait in front)
10. How would you like bridal party to be arranged in the chancel area?
 a. Traditional [bridesmaids on left, groomsmen on right]
 b. By couples
11. The flower girl and/or ring bearer will
 a. Stand with the wedding party
 b. Sit with someone in the pew (recommended for children 10 yrs old & under)
 MAKE SURE CHILDREN KNOW WHO THEY ARE GOING TO IN THE PEW.
12. What will be said for the Giving of the Bride?
 a. I DO
 b. We do
 c. Her Mother and I
 d. Omit
13. Will the bride be wearing a blusher veil? Yes / No
14. Would you like a family member or relative to participate in the wedding service? Yes / No
 a. If yes, name(s) _____

 b. Will read a Scripture lesson *[Who reads which lesson?]*
 c. Will give remarks of congratulations

15. Scripture lessons chosen to be read: (See pages 13-16 for a list of suggested lessons.)

[Choose a maximum of 3. One should be a Gospel (from Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John)]

16. Choice of Wedding Vows: *[See page 9 for choices of vows]* Vow # ____

17. Will flowers (or other gifts) be presented to the parents? Yes / No

If yes, do you intend it to be a surprise? Yes / No

18. Will you have a receiving line at the church? Yes / No

If yes, It will be a. In the Narthex (lobby)

b. Outdoors if weather permits. *[Please do not throw rice or birdseed].*

19. Do you wish to use St. Paul's Wedding Banner? Yes / No

20. How many floral arrangements will need special stands? _____

21. Are any flower arrangements being left at the church? Yes / No

If yes, which one(s)? _____

22. Who is going to take your flowers after the service? _____

[Please assign that to someone]

23. Name of Florist and Phone number _____

[Ask florist to provide clips or ribbons for any flowers placed on any church furniture.

No tacks or nails are to be used.]

24. Will an aisle runner be used? Yes / No

a. Who will unroll it down the center aisle?

b. When will it be unrolled? *[Traditionally it is unrolled immediately before the bridal party processes in.]* _____

25. Will one or two rings be exchanged in the service? (circle:) Single Ring / Double Ring

26. Who will have the ring(s)? _____

Music is an important part of the wedding service. Like any worship service, the music is to convey the message of God, which is found in, or paraphrased from, Scripture. Love songs that are not clearly conveying a message from God's Word in the Bible, are to be saved for the wedding reception. Please see page 11 for help in selecting music, and take time to explore the web sites listed in selecting music.

27. Will you use an organist? Yes / No

[If an organist is needed, St. Paul's organist must be asked first to play the wedding service. If the church's organist cannot play for your wedding, you may invite another

organist. It is customary for a guest organist to consult with the primary organist prior to playing the instrument.]

a. Who will be the organist? _____

b. If a pianist is used instead of an organist, who will that be?

28. Will there be a Soloist? If Yes, who? _____

What songs will be sung? _____

29. Will there be special instrumental music? Yes / No

If yes, what music will be played? _____

30. Will music be played from an .MP3 ? Yes / No

Who will be playing the music through the sound system? _____

	Name of Song	Who is Playing?	When?
Processional			
Family			
Bridal Party			
Bride			
Hymns / Songs during service:			
#1			
# 2			
#3			
Recessional			

31. Are there any images, you would like on the screens throughout the wedding service?

a. If yes, what? _____

b. Who will be responsible for running the video projectors to place image(s) on screens? _____

32. Who will be the photographer? _____

a. Will photos be taken prior to the wedding service? Yes / No

b. What time will photos be taken prior to the service? _____

c. Will photos be taken after the wedding service? Yes / No

d. Which photos will be taken after the service? _____

- e. Will video be taken during the wedding service? Yes / No
- i. Where will the videographer be throughout the service? _____

- ii. Are there special microphone requirements for the wedding video?

[Photographers and Videographers are to remain in one place from the time of the Invocation at the beginning of the wedding service, until the benediction at the end. We ask photographers and videographers to be quiet and discrete so that they do not distract the worshippers from giving their attention to the wedding service.]

THE VOWS – *[Select the vows you prefer from the 5 samples below. If you wish to modify the vows below for your wedding, please show / email the modified vow to pastor for approval.]*

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 with the help of God,
 I promise to be faithful to you
 as He gives us life together.

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

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

4. 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 better to understand ourselves,
 the world, and God
 through the best and the worst of what is to come as long as we live.

5. I, _____
 in the presence of God and these witnesses,
 take you _____ 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,
to love and to cherish,
until death parts us,
and I pledge you my faithfulness.

Music for a Christian Wedding

Music at a Christian Wedding is to be worshipful. That means that the words must focus on God, His blessing to you, or His promise to you. Songs that are focused more on us, such as love songs, are best kept for a wedding reception. The *style* of the music is not most important. Classical, Gospel, Country, Contemporary / Rock are all fine *styles*. The *content* of the music IS important.

Most of us are not musicians. The best way for us to select music is by listening to the songs. The websites listed below have Contemporary and Traditional Christian wedding songs that you can click on to listen.

<http://musicplusfaith.com/top-10-christian-songs-for-weddings-and-marriage/>

[http://weddings.lovetoknow.com/wiki/Christian Wedding Songs](http://weddings.lovetoknow.com/wiki/Christian_Wedding_Songs)

Hymns from the Lutheran Service Book:

<i>Holy Spirit, Light Divine</i>	LSB 496
<i>Creator Spirit, by Whose Aid</i>	LSB 500
<i>Praise to the Lord, the Almighty</i>	LSB 790
<i>Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise</i>	LSB 802
<i>From All That Dwell Below the Skies</i>	LSB 816
<i>O Father, All Creating</i>	LSB 858
<i>Oh, Blest the House</i>	LSB 862
<i>Now Thank We All Our God</i>	LSB 895

Fees for a Wedding Service

St. Paul does not have set fees for a wedding service. We ask the couple to recognize the amount of extra time and work a person contributes to make their wedding service a joyful event, and to give a “thank you” gift that the couple believes is appropriate.

Pastors do not charge a set fee, as your wedding is part of his ministry. A “thank you” gift is appropriate.

Organists generally are given between \$75 (average) to \$150 (for an exceptional musician). Please ask your musician for their expectations of the amount paid. Some musicians have set amounts.

Soloists and instrumentalists generally receive up to \$50 per wedding service.

Photographers and videographers will have pre-determined fees. Please speak to them about this.

Custodians have to perform extra work both before and after a wedding service. A \$30 gift of appreciation is appropriate. You leave this gift with the church secretary during office hours (M-Th, 9am-2pm) or place it in the church secretary’s mail slot in the narthex (lobby) of the church worship sanctuary.

Others: Those who serve as sound technicians or run the video screens, and the work of the altar guild in preparing and / or cleaning up following your wedding service are also people you may wish to consider giving a gratuity.

Bible Verses About Marriage

The Bible contains numerous references to the sanctity and beauty of marriage. Often in poetic and eloquent words Scripture describes what it means to be in love and to commit yourself to your significant other for the rest of your life. Bible verses about marriage are the ideal addition to your wedding service. Please select a maximum of 3 Scripture passages for your wedding, with one of those selections from a Gospel (the Bible books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John).

Genesis 1:27-28: "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 heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.' "

Malachi 2:14-15: "But you say, 'Why does he not?' Because the LORD was witness between you and the wife of your youth, to whom you have been faithless, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant."

Isaiah 54:5: "For your Maker is your husband, the LORD of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called."

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 fierce as the grave. Its flashes are flashes of fire, the very flame of the LORD. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it. If a man offered for love all the wealth of his house, he would be utterly despised."

Ephesians 4:2-3: "With all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Colossians 3:14: "And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."

Ecclesiastes 4:9: "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone?"

Ephesians 5:25: "For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her."

Genesis 2:24: "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."

Ecclesiastes 4:12: "Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."

Mark 10:9: "Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

John 2: 1-11: Jesus turns water into wine at the wedding of Cana.

Ephesians 5:25-33: "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, so 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. In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, ..."

Bible Verses About Love

The Bible has a lot to say about the bonds of love and devotion. Bible verses about love speak of the perfect love that everyone should have toward their friends, family and mankind, not to mention the Lord. However, Bible verses about love also offer a revealing look at the strength and hope that romantic love can provide. It can be difficult to put your feelings for one another into words, but these Bible verses about love seem to capture its essence just right.

Romans 13:8: "Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law."

1 Corinthians 13:4-5: "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs."

1 Corinthians 13:2: "If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing."

1 Corinthians 16:14: "Do everything in love."

Song of Solomon 8:7: "Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot wash it away. If one were to give all the wealth of his house for love, it would be utterly scorned."

Psalms 143:8: "Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I entrust my life."

Proverbs 3:3-4: "Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man."

1 John 4:16: "And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them."

Ephesians 4:2: "Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love."

1 Peter 4:8: "Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins."

John 15:12: "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you."

1 Corinthians 13:13: "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love."

Song of Solomon 4:9: "You have captivated my heart, my sister, my bride; you have captivated my heart with one glance of your eyes, with one jewel of your necklace."

Bible Verses About Relationships

There is no relationship manual that tells you how to overcome obstacles and strengthen the ties you have with your loved ones. Thankfully, Bible verses about love serve as excellent guides. These scriptures offer jewels of wisdom that can help you navigate the ups and downs of love, as well as convey your heartfelt thoughts to your future spouse.

Hebrews 10:24-25: "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

Proverbs 30:18-19: "There are three things that amaze me—no, four things that I don't understand: how an eagle glides through the sky, how a snake slithers on a rock, how a ship navigates the ocean, how a man loves a woman."

1 John 4:12: "No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us."

Proverbs 31:10: "Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies."

Ruth 1:16-17: "Entreat me not to leave you, Or to turn back from following after you; For wherever you go, I will go; And wherever you lodge, I will lodge; Your people shall be my people, And your God, my God. Where you die, I will die, And there will I be buried. The Lord do so to me, and more also, If anything but death parts you and me."

Romans 12:10: "Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves."

1 Peter 4:8: "Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins."

Ephesians 5:21: "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ."

Ephesians 5:21-33: "Husbands, love your wife as Christ loved us."

Ephesians 4:32: "Be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you."

Genesis 2:18–25: "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 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 that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man."

1 Peter 3:7: "In the same way, you husbands must give honor to your wives. Treat your wife with understanding as you live together. She may be weaker than you are, but she is your equal partner in God's gift of new life. Treat her as you should so your prayers will not be hindered."



St. Paul

Lutheran Church & Preschool

Where living Grace[d] & Families Cross

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