

# Planning Your Christian Wedding at Christ Lutheran Church



# Planning a Christian Wedding

You have asked about getting married at Christ Church, and we are privileged to be part of this great day in your life. After an initial session with one of the pastors, and after a date has been placed on the church calendar, you will probably have questions about the many details of your wedding at the church. These guidelines are meant to give direction to your planning but may not cover every possibility. These are general answers to often asked questions. Please ask for clarification of specific requests, either in conversation with the pastor or minister of music officiating.

A wedding is a service of worship celebrating the commitment the two of you make to each other, and inviting Christ to be a constant partner in that relationship. As such, marriages are typically arranged when at least one partner is a member of Christ Church. Weddings for non-members may be considered at the discretion of the pastor. Most of all, our desire is for the church in which you are married to be not only a special place for you, but an important fellowship in which the two of you grow in faith and love.

## PLANNING

Wedding ceremonies are conducted at Christ Church only in consultation with and the supervision of one of the pastors.

The date for the wedding is planned in consultation with the pastor who is performing the ceremony; it is especially important to do this **as early as possible** in order that an available date may be secured on the church's calendar and the pastor's calendar.

The pastor will want to meet with the two of you for several pre-marital sessions (about one hour in length). These meetings will include planning the ceremony and discussing pre-marital counseling options.

In the event there are 2 wedding ceremonies scheduled on the same day, a minimum of four hours between services is required.

## OFFICIATING PASTOR (S)

One of the pastors of Christ Lutheran will officiate at your wedding. Guest pastors are welcome to participate. When the couple desires to have another pastor participate in the service, they are to get the consent of the pastor of CLC. It is customary that the host pastor will invite the assisting pastor.

## WEDDING CEREMONY

Altar, pulpit and lectern paraments (cloths) are required to be the color of the liturgical season during which the wedding occurs. You can find out what the color of the paraments will be on the day of your wedding by calling the church office. Flowers and candles are recommended to be limited to the normal two altar vases and two altar candles. It is permissible to place one single, large arrangement of flowers in the center of the altar. Unity candles and extra candelabra are unnecessary but optional. Arrange for this through your florist. Any additional decorations should be discussed with the officiating pastor early in the planning process. Nothing may be attached permanently to any pews or windows. Please inform the church office as to your intentions regarding leaving altar and/or other flowers for Sunday worship.

## MUSIC

Music is one of the most important considerations when making your wedding plans. All decisions concerning music for weddings at Christ Church are made in consultation with the minister of music at least three weeks prior to the wedding.

A wedding at Christ Church is a service of worship and therefore needs to include the basic essentials of any worship service. Every note of music from the beginning of the prelude, through the processional, including any solos or hymns, and concluding with the recessional, must praise our Creator and Savior. Since secular music is not appropriate at a worship service, you might consider including such music at your reception or at your rehearsal dinner if you have selections you would like to hear. The minister of music stands ready to advise and help you plan your service with music that is beautiful and appropriate. Suggestions can also include potential soloists, instrumentalists, vocal and instrumental ensembles. Again, texts of all vocal and/or choral music sung before or during the wedding itself must glorify God.

Any guest organists must be approved by the minister of music. The tracker pipe organ of Christ Church is unique and requires a trained musician to play it. Practice times for guest organists may be arranged through the minister of music. Likewise, use of all instruments belonging to the church such as the timpani, handbells, and piano should be approved by the minister of music.

## MARRIAGE LICENSE

To remove additional pressures from the events of the wedding day, the marriage license should be given to the pastor *at the beginning of the rehearsal* along with the honoraria envelope (see page 4). The license is a legal necessity of the day and the pastor is charged by the State of North Carolina with this responsibility.

## WORSHIP BULLETIN

We encourage the use of a wedding bulletin for your wedding service. This allows your guests to participate with you in this service of worship. These may be purchased locally and printed professionally. Be sure to discuss this with the officiating pastor.

## WEDDING REHEARSAL

Wedding directors help with the ceremonies but they are always chosen in consultation with the officiating pastor. The pastor is aware of persons who are experienced in directing weddings at Christ Church and will offer suggestions. In any case, it should be understood that the pastor is specifically in charge of the rehearsal and the wedding, and that the director's job is to implement the plans and guide the wedding party in their movements during the big day.

Please instruct your wedding party to be **on time** for the rehearsal. A rehearsal should take no more than 45 minutes and has the purpose of preparing you for a smooth wedding.

To avoid embarrassment, be sure that everyone you want to include in your rehearsal dinner has been properly invited by the family **before** the night of the party!



## **FEES**

You should plan on paying all honoraria **before your rehearsal** begins. Proper etiquette suggests that you either give the officiating pastor or wedding director a large envelope of individually labeled envelopes to distribute for you, or the best man may disburse them individually for you before the rehearsal gets underway. Your wedding party will need to plan on the following expenses related to the church and honoraria for the leaders:

- a. Facility use
- b. Officiating pastor's honorarium
- c. Organist honorarium
- d. Instrumentalists and soloists honoraria
- e. Sexton fee for opening, closing, and cleaning the building.
- f. Wedding director honorarium

## **PHOTOGRAPHER**

Photography during the service is limited to still photography **without flash**. Photographing from the balcony is permitted if the photographer agrees to consult with the organist. (The center view of the aisle may not be obstructed). You should also instruct your photographer to consult with the pastor and the minister of music before the service begins.

## **VIDEO TAPING**

Videographers may also set up their equipment for video taping the ceremony, but **only** from the balcony. Again, he/she must consult with the organist before positioning the camera. Equipment should be in place prior to the beginning of the prelude music (at least one half hour before the procession). A remote camera (unmanned) is permitted from the front of the church, with the location to be approved by the pastor.

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

- + Bird seed may be used outside of the building. Rice or confetti are not allowed.
- + Please remember that Christ Church has a policy that no alcoholic beverages may be present or consumed on the premises (either in the buildings or in the parking lot).
- + Personal articles should be removed from the premises immediately after the service. Due to the lack of storage, we ask that you have the best man or another person take charge of the removal of all items. We cannot guarantee the safety of articles left behind.

Readings from the Bible help us understand marriage in the context of God's creative love for his people. Consider the following suggestions as you select readings for your wedding:

Genesis 1:26-31	Male and female made in God's image
Genesis 2:18-24	God creates male and female for each other
Song of Solomon 2:10-13	Love in the spring
Song of Solomon 8:7	Unquenchable love
Isaiah 63:7-9	God's love for his people
Romans 12:1-2	A living sacrifice to God
1 Corinthians 12:31—13:13	Paul's hymn to love
Ephesians 5:21-33	Marriage reflects Christ's love for the Church
Matthew 19:4-6	One flesh
John 2:1-10	Jesus at the wedding at Cana
John 15:9-12	Love one another

# Fee Schedule

All fees are due at the wedding rehearsal

	<b>Member</b>	<b>Non-Member</b>
Facility	No fee	\$300 (wedding & rehearsal)
Pastor	(At the discretion of the couple)	\$300
Organist	\$200	\$300
Soloist/Instrumentalist (they often negotiate their own fees. Above are typical minimums)	\$100-\$175	\$100-\$175
Wedding Director	\$150	\$200
Sexton	\$150	\$150





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