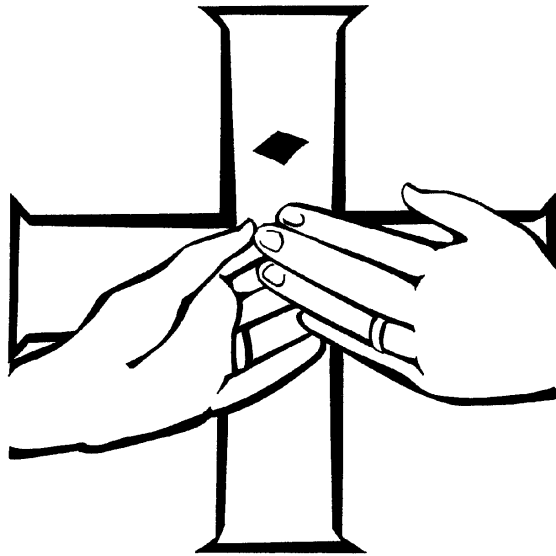


A Wedding at Immanuel Lutheran



WEDDING MANUAL

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C4.01.01. MARRIAGE AND THE CHURCH

Marriage is many things. Marriage is a legal agreement arrived at between two people and witnessed by a representative of the state. Marriage is a social event to which family, relatives, and friends are invited. Marriage is an emotional bond of love between two people which is professed publicly. Marriage is a glad occasion overflowing with joy. Marriage is a serious commitment that the man and the woman make to each other.

Marriage is also, and most importantly, a relationship instituted by God, entered into by two persons of faith. It is significant that you have chosen to be married in the church. By so doing, you have indicated that you want your wedding to be Christian. It is also a witness of your mutual faith and trust in God.

The Christian wedding is an act of worship. The wedding party is not present to put on a show. The invited guests are not mere spectators. Rather, everyone is there to participate in a worship service in which a man and a woman make their commitment to each other.

Your wedding is a service of worship. Keep this in mind as you plan. As a service of worship, your wedding can be a celebrative, joyous, and beautiful event. Your first priority is to plan a service which will allow you and the congregation assembled to give praise, thanks, and glory to God. God is your creator. He has formed you and brought you into this relationship, and it is God who will bless and sustain you in your life together.

It is with all of this in mind that this wedding policy booklet was prepared. It is based upon the ideas which you have just read, and hopefully it will help you make plans for your Christian wedding. It contains information regarding the policies and practices established by the congregation. Please read it carefully.

C4.01.02. CLERGY

The clergy person who officiates at weddings in Immanuel Lutheran Church shall be at the discretion of the current pastor and/or the church council.

It is understood that the current pastor of Immanuel Lutheran Church is to be asked to officiate at all weddings taking place in our church. Previous pastors and other clergy may assist our pastor as arranged with our pastor and the church council. If our pastor is not available, the clergy person to officiate must be approved by our pastor and the church council. If there is no current pastor, the clergy person to officiate must be approved by the church council.

The use of our church by non-members for weddings at which someone other than our pastor officiates will be allowed only by special request to meet the needs of one of our sister ELCA congregations or a Christian church in the community. That request must be sent by the church council (or equivalent board) of the requesting church, to the church council of Immanuel at least a month prior to the date of the wedding, provided the request is not due to

an emergency situation, in which case appropriate action may be taken by the pastor and the president of Immanuel Lutheran Church.

C4.01.03. FEES

Permission for the use of the church building will be granted by the pastor and church council. All fees as per **C9.01.04.03** in the Continuing Resolutions are required from non-members upon securing the use of the church facilities. All fees must be paid in full by the last counseling session with the pastor; make checks payable to "Immanuel Lutheran Church."

Members:

Weddings in the sanctuary	no charge
Showers	no charge
Receptions	no charge
Custodial fee	no charge

Organist fee/by agreement between you and the organist.

Vocalist fee/by agreement between you and the vocalist.

Non-Members:

Weddings in the sanctuary	\$150.00
Utility fee	\$100.00
Custodial fee	\$ 50.00
Use of Parish Hall (reception)	\$100.00
Utility fee	\$ 50.00
Custodial fee	\$ 50.00

Organist fee/by agreement between you and the organist.

Vocalist fee/by agreement between you and the vocalist.

Exceptions to fees by approval of the pastor and/or church council.

C4.01.04. PRELIMINARY ARRANGEMENTS

Please complete the following arrangements before making further plans for the wedding:

Date - Call the church office and set the date for your wedding as far in advance of the wedding as possible. Holy Week (Palm Sunday to Easter) is the one week of the year when marriages are out of place.

Premarital Counseling - All couples being married are required to participate in several sessions. These sessions will be scheduled at a time agreeable with you and the pastor.

Rehearsal - If the wedding party consists of more than four people, a rehearsal is necessary. This should be arranged with the pastor. Rehearsals are usually held the day before the wedding. Rehearsal starts on time as set by couple. The later you start, the later you arrive

at your rehearsal meal. Please give yourself about an hour and a half for rehearsal. All members of the wedding party, including parents and ushers, should be present. In order for the rehearsal to proceed smoothly, please make all decisions, with the pastor's consultation, before the rehearsal if possible.

License - The State of Texas requires that a valid marriage license be obtained from the county clerk's office before a marriage may be performed. This license should be given to the pastor at least one day prior to the wedding.

C4.01.05. PLANNING THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

Since marriage is the occasion for a service of worship and praise, the focus is on God, and hopefully you will consider this as you plan your service with the pastor.

The Order for Marriage in the Lutheran Book of Worship (LBW) is not a rigid form, but rather one which offers flexibility. The specifics of your wedding service will be worked out with the pastor.

As Christians planning a marriage service, you may request that your marriage be set in the context of Holy Communion. It must be open to the congregation and not limited to the bride and groom or the wedding party. The sacrament is always for the gathered congregation. If circumstances prevent including the congregation, the bride and groom can instead receive the sacrament at a regularly scheduled service of the congregation.

C4.01.06. MUSIC

"Music selected should embody high standards of quality and, in general, reflect the praise of God, God's steadfast love in Christ as the foundation of and model for marriage, and the asking of God's presence and blessing." (Manual on the Liturgy, page 347.) Solos should be selected carefully, and should be appropriate for a worship service.

If a popular secular song is desired, you might consider having it sung instead at the beginning of the reception, which would add to the beauty of that event.

An excellent way to encourage congregational participation is through the singing of hymns. Congregational singing can greatly enhance the spirit of community and celebration.

Musicians - The organist of the church should be consulted where organ music is desired. If the organist is not available to play, or if an outside organist is desired, that person should be approved by the pastor and must be under the supervision of the church organist.

C4.01.07. RECEPTION AT CHURCH

The Parish Hall is available for your wedding reception and should be reserved when your wedding date is placed on the church calendar. The hall can accommodate approximately 200 guests. You will need to contact the chairman of the Kitchen Committee. The kitchen is supplied with coffee pots, punch bowls, glass plates and cups and eating utensils. These items may be used, but if anything is broken it must be replaced. You are responsible for washing and putting away all dishes and other items used from the kitchen. The custodian will come in after the reception and clean the building.

C4.01.08. ALTAR GUILD WEDDING COMMITTEE

Once you have spoken with the pastor and started your arrangements, you will need to speak with a representative of the Wedding Committee of the Altar Guild. This person will be able to help you with the arrangements at the church and will let you know what is available and what is allowed. This person will be present both at the rehearsal and at the wedding to assist you. The Altar Guild Wedding Committee is here for your advice and assistance. Check with the church office for the name of the current representative.

C4.01.09. DECORATIONS

Only fresh flowers, greenery, or plants should be used. Flowers may be placed in the altar vases or brass standing vases (which will be used inside the altar rail). Other flowers may be placed outside the altar rail and in other areas of the church. The Altar Guild will make sure that liners for the vases are delivered to the florist. **No greenery is allowed on the brass candelabra nor on the altar rail. Flowers, bows and candle torches are allowed on the end of the pews, but they may not be attached with tape. If screws are used, something must be placed under them to protect the pews.**

All arrangements and cost for flowers will be made between you and your florist. You will be paying the florist "wedding flower prices" for all wedding flowers including the altar and standing vase arrangements. Flowers may be left for Sunday's worship service but will be left as "Special Flowers" which will be placed outside the altar rail. Wedding flowers cannot be used as altar nor standing vase flowers for Sunday morning worship services.

Please let the wedding committee know where you would like the flowers to go, otherwise they will be taken to the ill or shut-ins. Flowers in the altar area may not be used at the reception. All other flowers and decorations are to be removed immediately after the service. Assign someone to be responsible for taking all decorations and any other items brought to the church (see section on dressing areas). The wedding party and those employed by them will be responsible for any damages incurred through decorations.

C4.01.10. CANDLES

The church provides the altar candles and those in the brass candelabra in the chancel area. Plastic carpet coverings should be placed under any other candelabra used in the church.

Unity Candle - Unity Candle is most appropriate for a wedding and many couples are using them because of the symbolism of the two becoming one. The church has a couple of different ways the unity candle may be set up. The Wedding Committee will show you what we have and how it may be used. Many florists have unity candle stands that you may rent from them. Many of them now have dripless candles. No unity candles may be placed on the altar because of a fire hazard.

Window Candles - We have oil window candles that may be used. They are placed in wooden candelabra with holders for five votive candles. A special Window Candle Committee are to be contacted if you wish to use them. These arrangements must be made two weeks before the wedding. ILC members and non-members will have to have a committee person present during decoration of the windows. Family members or florist decorations can only be done under the supervision of this committee. All plans must be pre-approved by this committee. No glue or tape can be used. Greenery, silk flowers and ribbon can be used or woven through the candelabra. The charge for these window candles is: ILC members will pay \$35.00 for oil. Non-members will pay a base fee of \$20.00 plus \$1.00 per candle. Total of \$80.00. This fee is due at the last counseling session.

C4.01.11. PARAMENTS

Altar cloths, etc. always remain in the liturgical color for the season of the church year in which the wedding is held. The Altar Guild is responsible for changing the paraments. Check with them to see what color is appropriate for your wedding date. A wedding banner is available that maybe placed in the front of the church or in the narthex.

C4.01.12. DRESSING AREA

We have two places in which the bride and her attendants may dress. One is our conference room with a restroom across the hall and the other is The Parlor which is the room across from the library.

We only provide you with a room, please bring everything you need to dress. Assign someone to make sure that everything is removed immediately after the service.

C4.01.13. SCRIPT

The pastor and couple will work together to set up a script which outlines all details of the wedding service. The script should include the following:

- all members of wedding party and family members
- celebrant, musicians, photographer, sound system operator, deacons, acolytes, wedding coordinator, bell ringer
- exact time at which everyone will arrive at church to dress, take pictures, begin music and songs, open and close wedding book, light candles, and usher guests – list exact time when the service will start
- list the order in which the wedding party will enter the church from the overflow (back of the church), starting with grandparents and parents in the front to the bride and her escort last
- include any extra music during the service, if there will be a unity candle and when it will be lighted (if the mothers will light it and when that will be done in the order of service)
- include order of service, scripture readings, vows and any other special instructions

We have found that using a script makes things much easier.

C4.01.14. WEDDING COORDINATOR

We have found that it is helpful to have a wedding coordinator present at the church. This person will be the one who sees that everything runs smoothly at the church. They will need to be present at the rehearsal because they will be given instructions by the pastor as to what they will be doing on the day of the wedding. This person needs to be someone who is assertive, can give instructions, directions, keep people corralled and help keep things running on schedule. We suggest that it be a female member of the family who knows most of the family and members of the wedding party.

C4.01.15. PHOTOGRAPHY

This information applies to your wedding photographer only. Pictures may be taken in the church before or after the ceremony. Pictures without flash may be taken from the balcony during the ceremony. But since flash pictures are highly distracting, we ask that no flash pictures be taken in the church during the ceremony. The use of audio or video taping is possible, but should have the approval of the pastor.

C4.01.16. MISCELLANEOUS

- Wedding bulletins, if used, are to be provided by the couple.
- The wedding party is responsible for securing its own catering service and for making arrangements for food service and decorations.
- Rice and confetti are not allowed to be thrown in any part of the church building.
- Seating capacity of the nave of the church is approximately 400 - 500 comfortably.

CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS

C4.01

Date 11/01/00

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- Furniture and equipment may not be moved without consent of the Wedding Committee.
- Persons assuming responsibility for the building will be held liable for any destruction and/or defacing of the property.
- No smoking or alcoholic beverages are allowed.
- There will be no hats worn by males in the church. Hats must be removed at all times.
- No cell phones are allowed. Pagers must be turned off or turned to vibrate during the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony.
- Please let members of the wedding party, all family members and guests know that no pictures are allowed during the ceremony. Family may take pictures after the ceremony when the photographer is finished with his/her set up.
- Ushers will need to work closely with the deacons.

- If you have any questions, please call the church office: 361-664-6691. We want you to have a most joyful Christian wedding. May God grant His blessings to this beautiful event in your lives.