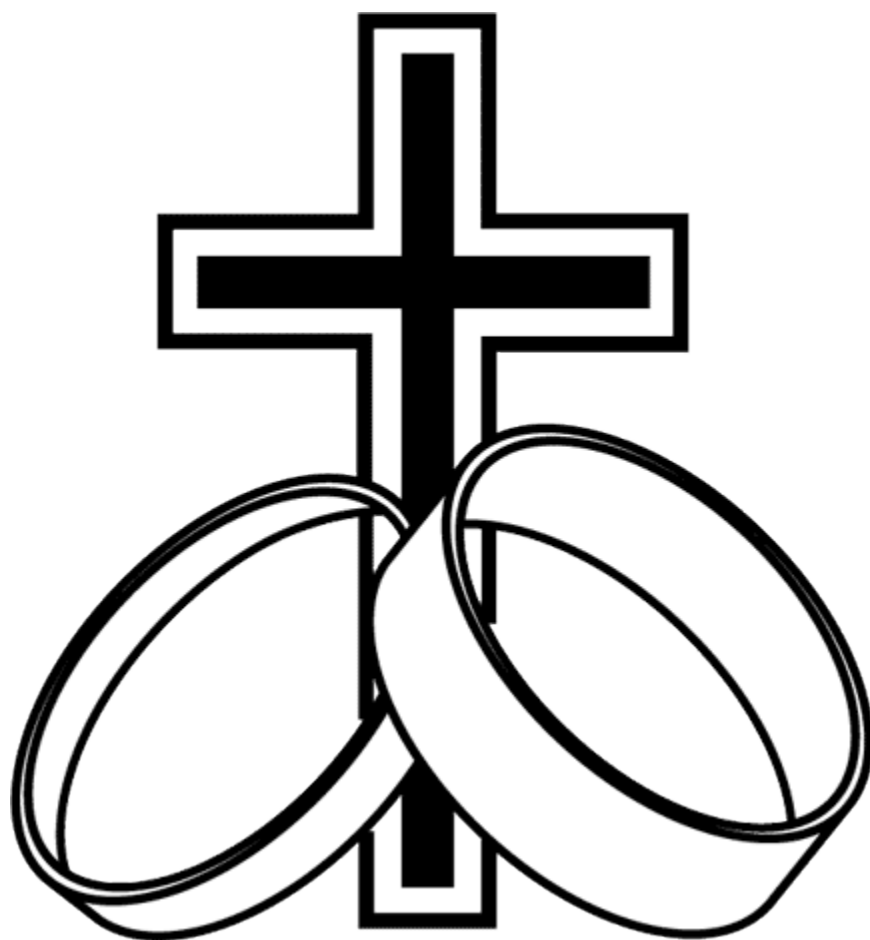


A Wedding at Immanuel Lutheran Church



Immanuel's Wedding Guide

Immanuel Lutheran Church

1400 N. Texas Blvd.

Alice, Texas 78332

(361)-664-6691

You're getting married!

Congratulations on your upcoming wedding. We're so glad you're considering Immanuel Lutheran Church as a place that can help prepare you for the journey ahead! We view marriage as something much bigger than just a ceremony . . . it is the start of a lifelong commitment and the celebration of a relationship between a man and a woman that is both unique and sacred.

Although marriage can be the most rewarding of relationships, it can also present many challenges. It is our desire to invest into your lives at this significant time in your life - equipping you with biblical wisdom, helping you to plan a meaningful ceremony, and providing you with some practical tools that will help you build a solid foundation for a dynamic and lasting relationship with Christ at the center.

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.

God's View of Marriage

The relationship of marriage is a gift from God and is intended to bring joy, companionship, intimacy, and family into the lives of a man and woman who choose to become husband and wife. The Bible teaches that when a couple is joined in marriage, two become one. It is within this experience of relational oneness that a couple can discover the deepest joys of marriage.

Oneness

Relational oneness can be experienced when a husband and wife dedicate themselves fully to God and to the well-being of each other. Within the context of an intimate, committed, exclusive relationship a man and woman can know the security of being truly loved and accepted. Together they can enjoy the significance of making a substantial, lasting, positive impact on one another and in the world around them. This oneness demonstrates the highest ideal for relationship and powerfully illustrates God's purposes for the world He's created.

Sexual Intimacy

One of the most beautiful expressions of intimacy in a marriage relationship is experienced through sex. A gift from God, sex provides us joy in relationship and fulfillment through family. Because of its importance, sexual intimacy is to be carefully safeguarded by the parameters of the marriage relationship. It is for this reason that we strongly urge couples to abstain from sexual intimacy until their wedding day. Those who are physically intimate or are living together are asked to move apart and covenant with God to abstain from their sexual relationship until they are married.

Preparing for your wedding and marriage at Immanuel Lutheran Church

If you are going to be married by a Immanuel Lutheran Church pastor, we ask that you begin the process about six months before your wedding date. You will then schedule an interview with that pastor, after which you will meet with your pastor at least three times for counseling before your wedding.

Frequently Asked Questions

What topics are covered during your meetings with the Pastor?

When meeting with a pastor, many topics that are critical to a healthy marriage will be discussed. These subjects often include: marital roles and responsibilities; skills for communicating and resolving conflicts; realistic management of finances; sexual expectations; family of origin; and each individual's spiritual journey. Relationship strengths will be discussed, as well as areas for potential growth. The goal of these sessions is to better prepare you for a rich and wonderful marriage relationship.

Can I have my reception at Immanuel?

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 maybe 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.

Who will help us plan and perform our Wedding?

The Pastor will help you with most of your planning. Our Altar Guild will also be involved. 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.

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.

Is there a place for the wedding party to relax and dress before the service?

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. Please assign someone to make sure that everything is removed and clean immediately after the service.

Can we decorate with flowers and candles?

All arrangements for flowers and the costs of them will be made between you and the florist of your choice. 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. 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.

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 drip less candles. For safety reasons, runners are not allowed on the center aisle.

What are the policies regarding photographers?

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, work with the Pastor regarding logistics.

What color will the paraments be when I get married?

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 may be placed in the front of the church or in the narthex.

What do I need to know about the music for my wedding?

"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 and praise songs. 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.

Policies regarding the Wedding rehearsal and ceremony

- A Immanuel Lutheran Church pastor will be in charge of all rehearsals and Weddings. Other clergy may participate, please work with our pastor in planning this. If our Pastor is not available, please make arrangements with our Pastor on the clergy you would like to lead you.
- 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 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.
- All rehearsals will begin promptly at the scheduled time
- All music to be played or sung must be cleared with the pastor performing the ceremony
- Smoking and the use of alcohol is not permitted anywhere on our campus.
- All formal Photography may be taken prior to or following the ceremony. Flash photography is not permitted during the ceremony until the recessional begins. Videographers (and photographers) may discreetly work from the sides of the church or from the balcony.
- Furniture and candles may not be moved without the consent of the Wedding Coordinators.
- Cell phones must be in the silent mode during the service.
- Men are not to wear hats or caps in the church building.
- Neither rice nor confetti is to be thrown inside or outside the buildings

What costs are associated with our wedding preparation and ceremony at Immanuel Lutheran?

Members:

Weddings in the sanctuary	no charge
Showers	no charge
Receptions	no charge
Custodial fee	\$50.00
Wedding Coordinators	\$100.00
Organist fee	Per agreement with Organist
Vocalist fee	Per agreement with vocalists and pianists.
Pastor / Counselor	Suggested honorarium of \$200

Non-Members:

Weddings in the sanctuary	\$300.00
Utility fee	\$300.00
Wedding Coordinators	\$ 150.00

Use of Parish Hall (reception)	\$300.00
Utility fee	\$ 300.00
Custodial fee	\$ 50.00
Organist fee	Per agreement with Organist
Vocalist fee	Per agreement with vocalists and pianists.
Pastor / Counselor	Suggested honorarium of \$200

How do I get started? See the APPLICATION TO USE THE FACILITIES OF IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH FOR WEDDINGS at the end of this document

APPLICATION TO USE THE FACILITIES OF IMMANUEL LUTHERAN FOR WEDDINGS

The facilities of Immanuel Lutheran Church are made available to members and their families under the following conditions:

- Date availability is determined by the church calendar. Weddings are scheduled on a first-come basis, but ministry events have precedence.
- No alcohol or smoking is permitted in the buildings.

Printing of Wedding program (optional) no fee

*Payment in full must be submitted with this application. Checks made payable to Immanuel Lutheran Church.

BRIDE & GROOM: _____

Contact Info: (Bride) _____

(Groom) _____

WEDDING: Date: _____ Hour: _____

REHEARSAL: Date _____ Hour: _____

Officiating Pastor: _____

Reception at Immanuel Lutheran Church? (yes) ___ (no) ___

Signed _____ Today's date: _____