

# Wedding Manual and Policies

Immanuel Lutheran Church  
2 Michigan Street NE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49503  
(616) 454-3655

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Special Word to Bride and Groom	Page 3
Suggested Resources and Reading Materials	Page 3
Wedding Service	Page 4
Wedding Fees with Explanation	Page 5
Church Use and Policies	Page 7
Suggested Readings	Page 9

## A SPECIAL WORD TO THE BRIDE AND GROOM

Dear Future Bride and Groom,

What rich blessings are yours as you prepare to get married! Marriage is a high estate in God's creation. It was God, Himself, who instituted marriage, and He promises to bless it. Pray for His blessing, and He will give it.

Your coming marriage will mean many hours, perhaps even weeks and months of careful preparation on the part of both of you. Therefore, it is important that you take time now to do some serious thinking and planning for the wedding itself. Both of you, together with your church, want your wedding to be the significant Christian event that you are anticipating.

Since you plan to have your marriage before God's altar, Immanuel Lutheran Church has planned this booklet to help you. We hope that it may serve to answer some of the questions you may have as you plan the important steps and fine details of your wedding. But more than this, we hope that it will help you and those who attend your wedding to express your faith in God in a worshipful and deeply meaningful way.

May this booklet be a help and a blessing as both of you prepare for this very important day in your lives.

God loves you,

Pastor Craig Bickel

### **SOME SUGGESTED READING MATERIALS**

There is a great wealth of helpful reading material explaining the nature of the Christian marriage generally and specifically.

***Unity in Marriage*** by W. J. Field, Concordia Publishing House

***In the Presence of God*** by Otto W. Toelke, Concordia Publishing House

***Making Your Marriage Succeed*** by Tho F. Adams, Harper and Brothers Publishers

***Homemade Happiness*** by Wayne Behoney, Broadman Press

***Come Prepared to Stay Forever*** Dr. James E. Hine, The Interstate Publishers

***Love for a Lifetime*** by Dr. James Dobson

## **YOUR WEDDING SERVICE**

Here are five fundamental and very important theological understandings about a Christian wedding service which the church considers primary.

1. A CHRISTIAN WEDDING SERVICE IS A SERVICE OF WORSHIP.
2. A CHRISTIAN WEDDING SERVICE IS A PUBLIC SERVICE.
3. A CHRISTIAN WEDDING SERVICE IS A CORPORATE SERVICE.
4. A CHRISTIAN WEDDING SERVICE IS A TIME OF CLEAR PROCLAMATION.
5. A CHRISTIAN WEDDING SERVICE IS A TIME OF CELEBRATION.

## **THE ORDER OF SERVICE**

When you meet with the Pastor, he will go through the service to best fulfill your wishes for your special day. The following is a guideline we use at Immanuel for all Weddings.

THE PROCESSIONAL

INVOCATION

PRAYER

EXHORTATION

SCRIPTURE READINGS – You are asked to select three readings you desire to be used for your special day. (See Page 9 for some suggestions.)

WEDDING ADDRESS

SOLO OR HYMN BY THE CONGREGATION (optional)

RITE OF MARRIAGE – CEREMONY OF MUTUAL CONSENT

EXCHANGE VOWS

EXCHANGE OF RINGS

PRONOUNCEMENT OF MARRIAGE

WEDDING BLESSING

MARRIAGE PRAYER

LIGHTING OF THE UNITY CANDLE

PRAYER FOR ALL THE FAMILIES OF THE WORLD

LORD'S PRAYER

BENEDICTION

INTRODUCTION

RECESSIONAL

## Wedding Fees

	<b>MEMBERS</b>	<b>NON-MEMBERS</b>
Sanctuary Use	\$250	\$500
Pastor	Discretion	\$200
Wedding Coordinator	\$200 \$50/hour for extra services	
Custodial	\$50	
Organist/Pianist (wedding rehearsal & ceremony)	\$150	\$150
Organist/Pianist (other rehearsals as requested)	\$25/hour	\$25/hour
Sound Tech	\$50	\$50
Unity Candle	\$25	\$25
Production of Bulletin	\$20/first 100 \$10 for each 100 thereafter	
Security Deposit	\$250	\$500

### **EXPLANATION OF WEDDING FEES**

#### **SANCTUARY USE**

If neither the bride or groom is a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church before the wedding plans begin, non-member rates will apply. For members in good standing, member rates will apply.

#### **THE OFFICIANT**

One of the Pastors of Immanuel will conduct the wedding. While we aim to satisfy requests for one or the other, which Pastor will perform the ceremony comes down scheduling. The Administrative Assistant will discuss with the Pastors the upcoming wedding season schedule and the Pastors will decide who will take each wedding. However, if a close relative or friend of either the bride or groom is the Pastor of a sister Lutheran (LCMS) congregation, the couple may request permission to have him officiate at the wedding. **Non-Members** pay a fee of **\$200.00** for the Pastor's service. The Pastor reserves the right to withdraw his consent to conduct a marriage.

#### **WEDDING COORDINATOR**

The Wedding Coordinator's services are mandatory for all weddings. Courtney Squanda will meet with the couple once before the wedding rehearsal to discuss wedding details and walk through the desires of the bride and groom. If the couple desires more meetings, there will be a \$50/hour charge added to the invoice. Courtney will also run the wedding rehearsal, which typically runs for an hour. She will be at the church building TWO HOURS before the wedding ceremony to open the building and allow any vendors into the church. She will direct members of the wedding party and then ensure the ceremony runs smoothly. Courtney will be available for ONE HOUR after the wedding ceremony to help pick up any remaining items and to ensure that the building is left in the same condition it was in before the

wedding ceremony began. If personal items are left at the church, Courtney will contact the couple who will be responsible for picking up those items with TWO WEEKS following the wedding. The charge for the wedding coordinator's regular services is **\$200.00**.

#### **CUSTODIAN**

The custodian will do general cleaning, but you are responsible for making sure things are put back and picked up following the service. **There is a \$50.00 custodial charge** for all weddings.

#### **THE ORGANIST/PIANIST**

The organ/piano in Immanuel Lutheran Church is a delicate and expensive instrument and should be used only by capable organists/pianists. For this reason, our organist/pianist is directly responsible for the organ/piano. We charge a fee of **\$150.00** for the Organist/Pianist. An additional fee of \$25.00 per rehearsal (other than wedding rehearsal) will be charged.

#### **SOUND TECH**

If you wish to have special music other than the organist/pianist that requires extra work with the sound board, there will be a **\$50.00** fee charged for a sound tech. It will be up to the Wedding Coordinator's discretion as to whether a Sound Tech will be necessary. The office will arrange for the Sound Tech if needed. The person running the sound board will be present at the Wedding Rehearsal and will arrive an hour before wedding ceremony.

#### **UNITY CANDLE**

Immanuel Lutheran Church has a Unity Candle stand available for use at all weddings. You may furnish your own set of Unity Candles or the church will provide simple candles for **\$25.00**. The Wedding Coordinator will ensure that the candelabra is set up and ready for the wedding ceremony.

#### **WEDDING BULLETIN**

Many people wish to have a bulletin containing the order of worship. The bulletin covers can be ordered through the church office. The layout and printing of the bulletins can be done by the Administrative Assistant for a fee of **\$20/first 100 and \$10 each hundred after**. The Administrative Assistant will send a proof of the bulletin at least TWO WEEKS before the wedding. The printing of the bulletin will take place the week of the wedding. The Wedding Coordinator will ensure that the bulletins are available at the ceremony.

#### **SECURITY DEPOSIT**

The Security Deposit is the only refundable fee. The purpose of the Security Deposit is to cover the cost of any damages or any extra time the Wedding Coordinator put in to clean up after the wedding ceremony. The Security Deposit may also be forfeited if there are any violations made to the church use policies as outlined in the following pages.

**\*\*\*The fees for those assisting with the wedding are subject to change.**

## **CHURCH USE POLICIES AND RULES**

### **MARRIAGE POLICY**

The marriage policy of Immanuel Lutheran Church, a member congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, is and always has been consistent with the Synod’s beliefs on marriage. We believe that marriage is a sacred union of one man and one woman (Gen. 2:24-25), and that God gave marriage as a picture of the relationship between Christ and His bride the Church (Eph. 5:32). The official position of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, as set forth in 1998 Res. 3-21 (“To Affirm the Sanctity of Marriage and to Reject Same-Sex Unions”), is that homosexual unions come under categorical prohibition in the Old and New Testaments (Lev. 18:22, 24; 20:13; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 1 Tim. 1:9-10) as contrary to the Creator’s design (Rom. 1:26-27). These positions and beliefs can be found on the LCMS website, along with other statements, papers and reports on the subject of homosexuality and same-sex civil unions and “marriage.” Our pastors will not officiate over any marriages inconsistent with these beliefs, and our church property may not be used for any marriage ceremony, reception or other activity that would be inconsistent with our beliefs and this policy.

### **ADDITIONAL POLICY**

Immanuel Lutheran Church operates on a strongly held belief that the marriage relationship has been established by God as a union between one man and one woman. (Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5:31). Immanuel further holds that, in accordance with Scripture, sexual intimacy and sexual activity is appropriate only within the marriage relationship, between one husband and one wife. (I Corinthians 7:2; Hebrews 13:4). Immanuel Lutheran Church believes God has created two distinct and complementary genders, male and female, and each person is created in accordance with God’s perfect design (Genesis 1:27; Matthew 19:4). Accordingly, Immanuel Lutheran Church views the following behaviors as inappropriate and contrary to Scripture:

- 1) Any sexual intimacy or sexual act between individuals who are not married to one another.
- 2) Any marriage or civil union that is not between one man and one woman.
- 3) Any attempt to adopt or present as a different gender than that assigned at birth.
- 4) Any other activity, teaching, or behavior that is contrary to a biblical view of marriage, gender, and/or appropriate behavior as outlined in this provision.

All individuals involved in Immanuel operations, activities, and events are expected to uphold the ministry’s perspective on marriage, gender, sexual intimacy, and appropriate behavior as set forth in this provision. Individuals and organizations who desire to use Immanuel’s facilities must also act in accordance with this provision.

### **ALCOHOL**

Alcohol (other than sacramental) is PROHIBITED on church grounds. Any consumption of alcohol on the church property will be grounds for dismissal from the church ceremony and forfeiture of the security deposit.

### **SMOKING**

Smoking is not allowed on the church grounds except in the designated area which is outside the West side of the Ministry Center. Please inform your wedding party as well as your guests.

## **FLOWERS**

There is room for two arrangements to be placed in brass urns furnished by the church and placed on either side of the Raredos (statue). Additional flowers may be placed in the gold vase. Stands rented from the florist may only be placed on the lower level of the Chancel area. The brass urns and the gold vase take a 2-poinnd deli container as a liner that the florist fills and brings to church and may be obtained from the D&W or Meijer delis.

Normal practice is to have **NO** flowers on the Altar. Potted flowers may be placed coming down the steps of the chancel area. **Nothing** may be on or along the Communion Rail.

If you plan to have flower girls throw petals as they walk down the aisle, the wedding party is responsible for making sure that EVERY petal is picked up after the ceremony. While this practice is not prohibited, it is discouraged as it can create a mess on the sanctuary carpet. Any damage to the carpet will result in a loss of a portion of the Security Deposit.

## **SANCTUARY DECORATIONS**

Bows may be placed on the pews with or without flowers, but no tape or wire may be used. Affix bows with rubber bands, additional ribbon or pew clips. The church does not supply pew bows.

All wax candles being used must have a plastic sheet underneath to prevent damage. Following the wedding, please make sure the wax hardens prior to moving the candles.

Aisle runners are not prohibited, but they are discouraged. In the past they have proven to be more of a distraction to those walking down the aisle than a help since we do have carpeting in the sanctuary.

NO rice shall be thrown outside the church building. Bubbles may be used, but please ensure that no bubbles are used inside the church building, especially in the Sanctuary since the bubbles could cause damage to the carpet. Any damage will result in a loss of a portion of the Security Deposit.

## **MUSIC**

The music for your ceremony should be reverent and will need to be approved either through the church organist/pianist or the Pastor. If you have questions about whether a piece of music is appropriate, please remember that your wedding ceremony is to be a worship service and then ask either the organist/pianist or the Pastor.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY**

The photographer may take pictures of the processional from the front of the church. Following the processional, the photographer may take any pictures during the ceremony **without the use of a flash** from the back of the church and/or from the balcony. We ask that he/she not be distracting to the worshipers.

The Pastor requests that if you want any pictures with him following the service, they be taken before any other pictures. The couple will have access to the building for ONE HOUR following the ceremony. This hour includes the time it takes for pictures AND clean-up.

## **VIDEOGRAPHY**

If you have your service recorded, the videographer may take a video of the procession from the front of the church, but as soon as the bride and groom are at the altar, the video must be taken from the back or sides of the church in specific locations outlined by the Wedding Coordinator.



## **MARRIAGE LICENSE**

The Pastor must have the license before he can perform the marriage ceremony. In this, as in all other duties of his office, he must comply with the requirement of the Holy Scripture and the laws of the State. The marriage license must be brought into the church office with your wedding fees at least one full week before your wedding.

## **SUGGESTED READINGS**

**Genesis 2:18** The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

**Joshua 24:15** "But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your forefathers served beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you are living. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD."

**Psalms 33:20** We wait in hope for the LORD; he is our help and our shield.

**Ruth 1:16** "But Ruth replied, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. [17] Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the LORD deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me."

**Genesis 12:2** I will bless you and you will be a blessing.

**Genesis 15:1** Do not be afraid, I am your shield.

**Genesis 28:15** I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go.

**Deuteronomy 4:31** The LORD your God is a merciful God; he will not abandon you.

**Joshua 1:9** Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous.

**Judges 5:31** May they who love the LORD be like the sun when it rises in its strength.

**2 Samuel 22:31** God's way is perfect; he is a shield for all who take refuge in him.

**Jeremiah 17:7** Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD whose confidence is in him.

**Jeremiah 29:13** You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

**Jeremiah 30:11** I am with you and will save you.

**Jeremiah 31:3** I have loved you with an everlasting love; I have drawn you with loving-kindness.

**Lamentations 3:22f** His compassions never fail, they are new every morning.

**John 13:34** A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

**John 14:6** I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

**John 15:5** I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit.

**John 20:29** Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.

**Romans 12:9-18** The Christian's duty to love and all that is encompassed by that duty: hope, patience, prayer, compassion, and more. Be sure to compare this passage to the 13th chapter of First Corinthians.

**I Corinthians 13** Perhaps the most famous of all wedding Bible verses, this chapter defines the ultimate gift of the Spirit: Love.

**I Corinthians 14:1** "Make love your aim" in all that you do. (Verses 2-5 go on to discuss the superior gift of prophecy rather than speaking in tongues.)

**I Corinthians 16:14** Be certain that everything you do is motivated by love.

**2 Corinthians 5:14-17** Through Christ's sacrificial love, we have become new creations.

**Ephesians 2:4-10** God's gracious love for us saves us through faith.

**Ephesians 4:25-5:2** Be loving and forgiving, speaking only good and imitating Christ. "...let not the sun go down upon your wrath..." (KJV) Check on more modern translations for a better reading.

**Ephesians 5:21-33** This passage depicting the Christian home is difficult for some because it deals with "submission theology." However, the general thought is *mutual* submission. Understand it from an early church point of view.

**Philippians 2:1-5** Guard against selfishness. Be humble and serve others.

**Philippians 4:4-9** Rejoice and don't be anxious. Live honorably and justly, and God's peace will be a part of your lives.

**Colossians 3:12-17** The Christian life lived in love and harmony. Do all in Christ's name.

**Colossians 3:18-20** More submission theology with the admonition to husbands to love their wives.

**I John 3:1** "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us..." (KJV)

**I John 3:16** Christ's example of sacrificial love.

**I John 3:18-24** Believe in Christ, and keep His commandments by loving one another.

**I John 4:7** Love each other because love comes from God.

**I John 4:16-19** God loves us. If we live in love, it serves as a sign that God lives in us. We are capable of love only because God loved us first.

**Revelation 19:1; 5-9** A glorious celebration in heaven for the marriage of the Lamb of God. The church is depicted as the Bride.