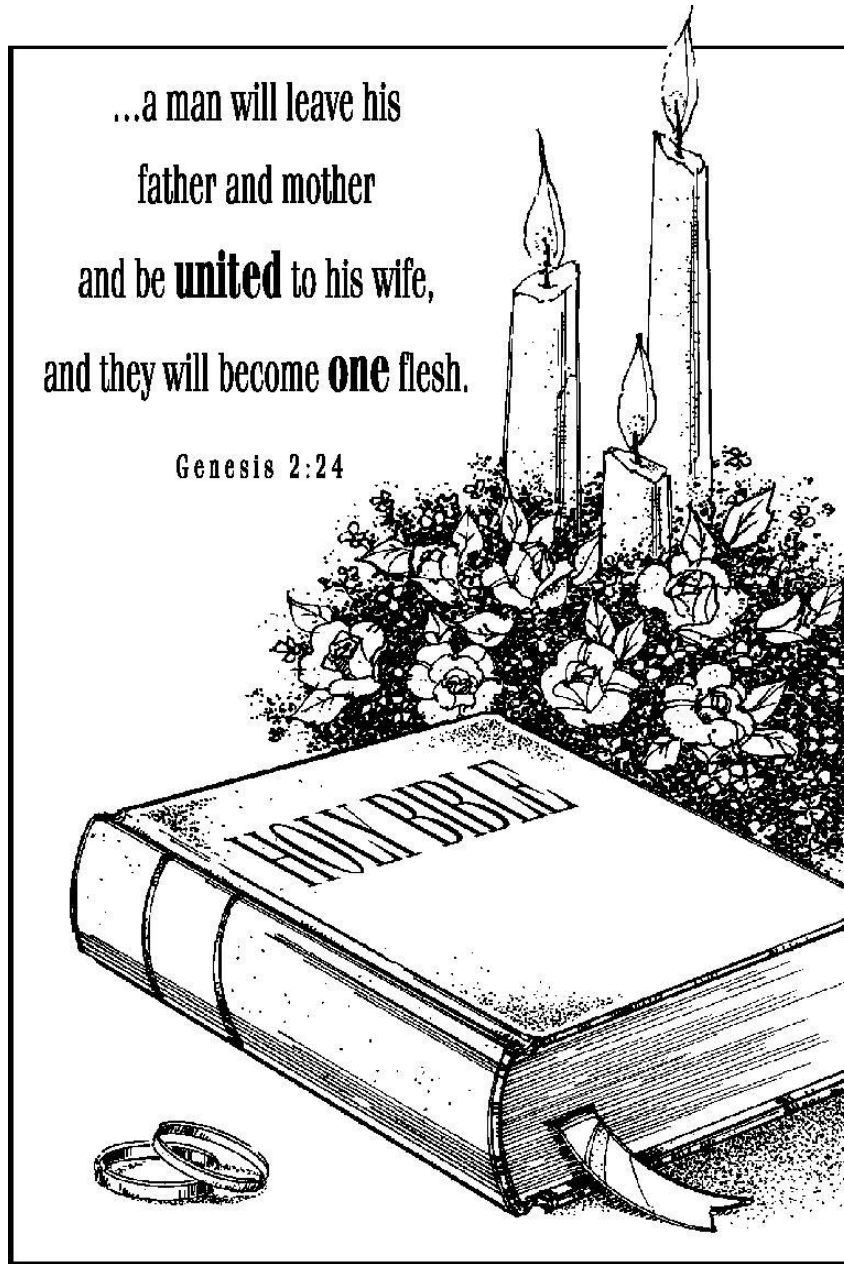


...a man will leave his
father and mother
and be **united** to his wife,
and they will become **one** flesh.

Genesis 2:24



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Planning a Wedding at St. John's Lutheran Church

So, you've decided to get married! Congratulations!

Marriage is a holy and special bond. The wedding celebration is an act of joyful worship. It is a reflection of your relationship with the God of love and an occasion for asking God's blessing on your life together.

You are, "By your promises" planning to bind yourselves together in the presence of God and the congregation as husband and wife. This is a wonderful experience that you are planning for your family and friends. The information in this booklet is intended to give you all the information necessary to make this occasion a meaningful one and assure you that the wedding and surrounding tasks run smoothly.

Setting the Date

All weddings are scheduled at the discretion of the pastor. Weddings may occur during regularly scheduled worship services or at other times that will be scheduled around regularly scheduled worship services. Weddings will not be scheduled during Holy Week (Palm Sunday through Easter Sunday - the dates of which change each year).

Pre-Marriage Counseling

A wedding is just the beginning of your marriage, the beginning of living in a life-long relationship with one another and with Jesus Christ and the Church. Couples being married at St. John's are **required** to participate in marriage preparation activities. This may include one or more of the following options:

1. Complete the nine-week Financial Peace University. The number one source of conflict in relationships is money, so there needs to be discussion about money. Completing this nine-week class together will help you to put all your cards on the table, learn to talk about money together and develop a plan for how to handle money in your life together. When you do that, you'll also learn a lot about that person's habits and develop better communication skills. Please visit www.daveramsey.com to find a class that works for you. Plan to share your learnings with the pastor at St. John's.

2. Complete a pre-marriage retreat or class. You are welcome to find resources on your own that work better logistically or use one of the following organizations: **Happily Ever After** (<https://happilyeverafter.org>). This is on-line, so you can do it at your own pace and at times that work for you. Plan to share your learnings with the pastor at St. John's

Marriage Encounter (Marriage Encounter - Helping Married Couples Thrive -Marriage Encounter). This organization provides both in-person and virtual (podcast series) marriage enrichment education. It can be done by engaged or married couples! Plan to share your learnings with the pastor at St. John's

Forest Springs Camp & Conference Center (Home - Forest Springs Camp & Conference Center - Westboro, Wisconsin). This organization has in-person marriage

enrichment retreats for married couples. Plan to share your learnings with the pastor at St. John's

3. If you are unable to complete one of the above options, it may be possible to complete the pre-marriage requirement with the pastor at St. John's. This will normally involve multiple hour-long sessions and potentially taking a premarital inventory assessment. The formal assessment may include an additional cost of \$50 or so. Be prepared to make room for weekday and/or early Sunday afternoon times for these sessions.

The purpose of the pre-marriage preparation is to help you establish a solid foundation for your marriage and your lifetime together. These options are designed to help you be prepared for the commitment that you are making. Marriage preparation can help couples avoid some of the pitfalls of marriage and create a more satisfying and long-lasting relationship. Now is the time to establish a pattern of open, honest, and effective communication that will bring a lifetime of joy and understanding to your marriage. We want to stack the deck in your favor :).

Planning the Wedding Service

A wedding is, first and foremost, an act of worship to our loving God who calls two people together in marriage. Therefore, only those actions appropriate to worship are permitted. The following is the standard order for marriage.

Seating of the Parents

The service general begins with the parents of the bride and groom being seated. If there will be a unity candle as part of the service, this is generally when the mother's light the taper candles.

Processional

- The groom enters. This is the musicians signal to start the processional music.
- The groomsmen and the bridesmaids enter from the rear doors and process down the aisle to the front.
- The pastor asks the congregation to stand and the bride, generally escorted by her father or another family member, follows.
- **Generally one piece of music is chosen for the entire procession.**
- After everyone is up front the pastor will ask the congregation to be seated and continue with the worship service.

Invocation

"In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen."

Please be seated...

Welcome

*Wedding Party is seated in the front pews for the scripture reading and sermon message.

Optional: **Special Music if desired.**

Scripture Readings

- You should choose two or three scripture readings to be proclaimed.
- This is an appropriate place to include others in your wedding service as scripture readers, perhaps baptismal sponsors (godparents) or friends or family that have good speaking voices.
- See the suggested scripture readings list

Optional: *Special Music if desired.*

Sermon Message

Optional: *Special Music if desired.*

The Wedding Party returns to the front

Intentions

*Now is the time we've all been waiting for in which you have the opportunity to commit your faithfulness to each other. I ask you groom/bride, in the presence of God and this assembly: Will you have groom/bride to be your wedded wife? Respond: **I will.** Will you live with her/him according to God's Holy Word, love and honor her/him in both good and difficult days, and keep yourself only unto her/him until death separates you? Respond: **I will.***

[bride hands flowers to bridesmaid]

Vows

- You will be asked to join hands and declare your promises to each other.
- The standard wedding vow is as follows: *I, groom/bride in the presence of God and these witnesses, take you, groom/bride, to be my husband/wife, 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, and I promise to be faithful to you until death separates us."*
- You may also choose to write your own vows. They should be consistent with the biblical understanding of marriage and should make clear that the promises are a life-long commitment.

Exchange of Rings

Unity Candle or something similar (optional)

Optional: *Symbols of oneness in marriage may be used such as a unity candle.*

- You are responsible to provide your own unity candle along with two tapers (side candles). There is a stand available for you to use.
- **Special music** is recommended during this time
- Two witnesses will be asked to sign the marriage license during this time

Prayers for the couple

Lord's Prayer

- The congregation will be invited to join in praying the Lord's Prayer. The words to the prayer should be included in your wedding bulletin:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen

Benediction

Announcement of the couple

Kiss

Recessional

-Music is played as the wedding group processes out.

Receiving Line

-Generally the Bride and Groom along with their parents greet the wedding guests in the entry way. The rest of the wedding party is not usually a part of the receiving line. It is suggested that you stand near the offices so that guests can easily get to the bathrooms or the coat racks on the other side of the entry area.

Suggested Scripture Readings

You should select two or more scripture readings to be read during the wedding service.

*The following is a list of scripture passages couples frequently request. **You do not have to pick from this list.** It is merely suggestions to stimulate your thinking.*

Old Testament Readings:

Genesis 1:26-31

Genesis 2:18-24

Ruth 1:15-18

Ecclesiastes 4:9-11

Psalms 33: 1-5

Psalms 34

Psalms 67

Psalms 100

Psalms 103

Psalms 117

Psalms 128

Psalms 136

Psalms 150

Song of Solomon 2:8-16

Song of Solomon 8:6-7

New Testament:

Matthew 5:1-12

Matthew 19:4-6

Matthew 22:35-40

Mark 10:6-9

John 15:9-17

Romans 8:31-39

Romans 12:1-2, 9-8

1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13

Ephesians 3:14-21

Ephesians 5:2, 21-33

Colossians 3:12-17

1 John 3:18-24

1 John 4:7-19

Guidelines for Music

Whether you are selecting special music or congregational hymns, remember that your wedding is a worship service. Therefore, it is important to choose music that speaks of your Christian commitment to each other and God's presence in your relationship. There is room for personal taste and variety of music styles, of course, but **all music should be appropriate for worship**. Purely secular music is best left to be used at your reception or wedding dance.

If you are wondering about whether or not a music selection is appropriate for your wedding, here is a tip: If you can answer "yes" to any of the following questions, the music is probably appropriate:

- 1. Does the music/text reflect praise and/or thanksgiving to God?**
- 2. Is the song based on, or does it reflect a scriptural theme?**
- 3. Is this song in the form of a prayer?**

If you are not sure your music is appropriate, check with the pastor.

Church Policies

Flowers

Flowers and decorations can add beauty to your wedding. As you consider flowers and decorations for your wedding, please keep in mind that this is a worship service, and that all decoration should enhance rather than detract from that focus. Flowers or other objects may not be placed on the altar, nor should they obscure the altar, pulpit, or cross. There are plant stands available to place flowers behind the altar and to the sides. The chancel furniture (altar, candles, etc.) may not be moved.

Candles

The church has two altar candles which use liquid paraffin. They will be provided for your wedding. If you wish to use additional candles and/or a unity candle, you will need to purchase those candles. A unity candle stand is available for you to use.

Paraments (altar cloths) and banners

These items are designed and used according to the church year. They are not decorations. Thus, they will not be changed for your wedding in order to coordinate with colors you have chosen.

Aisle Runners

Are not allowed. The aisle runner originally had a practical purpose of keeping the bride's train clean when church floors were dirt. That is no longer the case in our churches today. Aisle runners are not only difficult to roll out but have become a hazard for tripping and therefore they will not be allowed.

Other Decorations

Decorations may be placed on the pews; Command® brand hooks may be used; however no other adhesive substances may be used to secure them. No tape is allowed. Any

additional items to be used in the worship space must be okayed by the pastor. **All decorations and personal items need to be removed from the sanctuary the same day as the service.**

Rice, Birdseed, Confetti, etc.

We ask for your cooperation in not scattering rice, birdseed, confetti, flower petals or any other object inside or outside the church building. Please advise your family, wedding party, and guests of this requirement. Should the throwing of any of these items occur, an additional fee for clean-up will be charged.

Building Use

A building use policy must be completed to reserve the use of the building. Contact the parish secretary at sjlcoffice13@gmail.com to reserve the building and receive the proper paperwork. The building is here for the purpose of worship and fellowship. We ask that you respect its sacred nature and the commitment that has made it a beautiful place to worship and to gather. Please take care to leave it as you found it. If you discover that any damage has been done, please report this immediately to the building host or pastor so that it can be repaired promptly. **Please remove all items from your wedding on the day of the wedding.**

Alcohol and Smoking

First and foremost, the church is a place of worship. We ask your cooperation in helping to keep your church holy. Please do not bring alcoholic beverages onto the premises (church or grounds). Also, please advise your family, wedding party and guests that smoking is not allowed on the premises (church or grounds).

Children in a wedding

Children, while cute, can be unpredictable in their behavior especially during a wedding. It is strongly suggested that you avoid having children participate in your wedding service. If you do choose to involve children, please limit the number to one flower girl and one ring bearer. Please note that the church policies do not allow flower girls to drop flower petals on the floor.

Musicians

The church does not provide a musician. You are responsible for making all arrangements with any musicians desired for your wedding. Our church organist is Marsha Martens (715-659-5166). You may ask her if she would be willing to play at your wedding and you are responsible for negotiating the appropriate fee with her or any musician you select. Please inform your musician if there will be any special music and who the singers will be so that the musician can coordinate the necessary rehearsals.

Ushers

A minimum of two ushers is recommended (more if you expect more than 150 guests), in order to seat and dismiss worshipers. Ushers should be mature people, as the nature of their task requires confidence and decisiveness. Ushers should attend the rehearsal.

Photography and Videography

Your pictures should all be taken prior to the wedding service. Your photographer will generally need about 1 ½ hours for this and you should have all pictures completed 30 minutes prior to the service. If you wish to have your service recorded on video, the camera must be mounted on a tripod and started prior to the service. The videographer should check with the pastor for appropriate placement of the camera and should not be moving around during the service.

Rehearsals

A rehearsal is not required. However, if you wish to have a rehearsal, please advise the pastor and all members of the wedding party. The purpose of the rehearsal is to walk through the wedding service. This may also be done earlier on the day of the wedding. Forty-five minutes is ample time for a rehearsal and all wedding participants are urged to be prompt.

Bulletins

Couples generally want a bulletin to handout to their guests with the order of worship and the names of participants in the wedding service listed. **The church does not provide these.** Please have it approved by the pastor prior to printing them. You can often purchase these along with your invitations or bulletin covers can be purchased from office supply stores.

Marriage License

For all but the blessing of a civil marriage, couples must secure a license to marry from the state of Wisconsin. The License may be obtained at the County Clerk's Office of the county where one of you resides 5-30 days prior to the wedding. You will need certified copies of your birth certificates; a social security number; proof of residency (driver's license, state ID card, passport etc.); if previously married, a death certificate or divorce judgment papers. There is a fee and both of you need to be present to apply for the application. The wedding license **should be given to the pastor at the beginning of the rehearsal.**

Sanctuary

The worship spaces holds 180 people comfortably in the pews. We can accommodate additional people with chairs placed in the back or in the narthex (entry area). Chairs may not be placed in the aisles.

Officiant

All weddings at St. John's will be officiated by the pastor of this congregation. If you wish to have another person officiate at your wedding or participate in the wedding service, this must be approved by the pastor in advance.

Invitations

It is not necessary to invite the pastor to the rehearsal dinner or the wedding reception. If you want the pastor to attend, please send an invitation well in advance. This will give the pastor time to respond to your invitation and avoid any surprises. The pastor does not

assume to be invited unless an invitation is received in advance. Please understand that the pastor may not be able to attend due to scheduling conflicts and other ministry responsibilities.

On Your Wedding Day

Since your wedding day tends to be a full day with hair appointments, pictures and all the other preparations, you may want to consider providing food and bottled water for your wedding party to eat for lunch at the church. Often times a family friend is more than happy to help out with this. You don't need a lot of food but some sandwiches, veggies, and water. This way everyone has a chance to get some lunch and stay hydrated.

Fees

A building use agreement and fees paid directly to St. John's Lutheran Church should be paid when you reserve the building for use.

	Fees
Use of the Chapel Includes Fellowship Hall	\$500 Payable to St. John's Lutheran Church
Use of Chapel Only	\$400 Payable to St. John's Lutheran Church
Use of Fellowship Hall Only	\$200 Payable to St. John's Lutheran Church
Pastoral Services	\$200 Payable directly to the Pastor
Organist	\$100 Payable directly to the Organist
Trained Sound System Technician	\$50 Payable directly to the technician
Host/Hostess	\$50 Payable directly to the Host/Hostess
Cleaning Fee Deposit Refunded if no additional cleaning is required following the wedding.	\$150 Cash or check payable to St. John's.

Wedding Information

The following information should be completed and given to the pastor when you meet to discuss final arrangements two to three weeks prior to the wedding.

Bride's Name (first, middle, last) _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Church Affiliation/Membership _____

Date & Place of Baptism: _____

Date & Place of Confirmation: _____

Occupation: _____

Have you been married before? _____ If so, date that marriage ended _____

Parent's Names _____

Any special family concerns that pastor should be aware of?

Groom's Name (first, middle, last) _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Church Affiliation/Membership _____

Date & Place of Baptism: _____

Date & Place of Confirmation: _____

Occupation: _____

Have you been married before? _____ If so, date that marriage ended _____

Parent's Names _____

Any special family concerns that pastor should be aware of?

Date of Wedding: _____ Time of Wedding: _____

Place of Wedding (if other than the church): _____

Rehearsal Date & Time: _____

How many attendants will be in your wedding? _____

How many guests are you anticipating? _____

Scripture Readings and readers: _____

Organist/Pianist/Musician: _____

Soloist/Other Musicians: _____

Music Selections: _____

Will you be using the standard vows or writing your own? _____

Will you be lighting a unity candle? _____

Have you obtained a marriage license? _____

Photographer: _____

Time of pictures: _____

Videographer: _____

What time do you need the building open on your wedding day (if using)? _____

Address after Wedding (include city and zip): _____

Other details: