

## **PARENTAL APPROVAL**

Persons under the age of 18 will not be married without the prior approval of their parents or guardians. It is furthermore suggested that all couples intending to marry exercise the courtesy of obtaining parental consent prior to their union.

## **LICENSES**

As specified by the state and county laws, no marriage will be performed unless the marriage license is legally valid on the date of the ceremony and in possession of the one performing the marriage. Therefore, in order for the marriage to be conducted, a marriage license shall be in the Pastor's possession **PRIOR** to the wedding rehearsal and at least one week in advance of the wedding ceremony.



## **PLANNING THE WORSHIP**

### **SCHEDULING FOR WEDDINGS**

The date and time of the wedding shall be set in consultation with the Pastor and the church office. Any date set shall be tentative until such time that the Pastor indicates his approval, generally at the last premarital preparation session.

Generally a rehearsal is recommended in preparation for the ceremony. Scheduling for this arrangement should be made with the Pastor.

### **WORSHIP PLANNING**

The planning of the worship will occur as part of the premarital preparation sessions with the Pastor. Special requests, etc. will be considered at that time.

Normally only organists who regularly play for our services will be used for weddings. If you request another organist, consult with the Pastor. Soloists and other musicians are also subject to the Pastor's approval.

Music selected for the service should reflect the dignity, reverence, and joy of Christ-centered worship. As there is an abundance of such music, the organist and/or Pastor will be happy to assist you in choosing suitable selections for your wedding.

Ordinarily the Pastor of Gethsemane will perform weddings in our church. Any exceptions must be approved by the Board of Elders.

## **AUTHORITY OVER THE SERVICE**

The Pastor, on behalf of the Board of Elders, will have final authority over all weddings performed at Gethsemane. All requests and arrangements for the service including music, order of worship, organist, etc. are subject to the Pastor's prior approval.

An Elder will be present at all weddings as a representative of the congregation. He will assist the Pastor as needed, ensure that all necessary preparations for worship are secured, and, in general, oversee the worship service. The Elder will also guide the ushers and acolytes regarding their duties and responsibilities. However, because of the nature of the usher and acolyte duties, it is strongly recommended that they also attend the wedding rehearsal.

## **HOLY COMMUNION**

The celebration of Holy Communion is generally discouraged during weddings at Gethsemane. Any requests regarding this should be directed to the Pastor.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY**

We regard the wedding as a service of praise and honor to God in which we seek His blessing. Because of this, the photographer shall consult with Pastor prior to the service. Photographs by a designated photographer will be allowed only from the overflow area of the church using only available light after the worship begins (Invocation) and until the Benediction. Pictures of the Processional and Recessional are permitted. No other photos are allowed during the service. However, ample opportunity will be given for any photographs desired after the service.

Videotaping of the service is also permitted if it is set up in advance in an unobtrusive manner and left unattended during the service.



## USE OF FACILITIES

### ***USE OF THE PARISH HALL***

The bride and groom are responsible to make provisions for the cleaning of the Church and Fellowship Hall after the ceremony. Clean-up responsibilities including removing decorations, discarding bulletins, sweeping the sidewalks (if bird seed is used), etc.

Use of the facilities should be scheduled and cleared with the church office well in advance. A copy of our guidelines for use of our facilities is available from the church office.

### ***DRESSING AREAS***

Dressing areas are available in our facility. The Pastor will be happy to outline the various options available for this purpose.

### ***DECORATIONS***

***Special Decorations*** will not be permitted in the chancel area except those relating to the unity candle (e.g. ribbon). Special decorative pieces may be placed elsewhere in such a way as not to mar the wood or other furnishings. Use of adhesives or fasteners should be cleared with Pastor prior to use. Scotch tape is not recommended.

***Flowers*** for use at the altar will be placed on the shelf behind the altar. Other flowers, real or artificial, are permitted in other areas of the chancel. Flowers which are left on the altar after the service will be used in the regular worship of the congregation with deepest thanks. If a rose ceremony is planned, these flowers should also be purchased.

***Altar Paraments*** used for the wedding service are those appropriate for that particular season of the church year.

***White Aisle Runners*** are optional. If desired, this should be arranged for by the wedding party. The length of aisle runners at Gethsemane is 60 feet.

## WHY A CHURCH WEDDING?

God has instituted the holy estate of marriage. Since this estate is a blessing from Him, what better place could there be to celebrate this gift from God than in His Church? When a couple seeks to be married in a Christian church, that couple is making a confession of their Christian faith before God and the entire congregation. In addition, while confessing their love towards God and each other, a church wedding also demonstrates that the Christian couple eagerly seeks God's blessing for their marriage. Above all, Christian couples recognize that to be married in the Lord's House is simply a privilege granted to those who so honor Him.

### ***A WEDDING IS WORSHIP***

Every service held in the House of God is, above all else, a worship service directed to God's glory. For this reason, the wedding service shall be planned and conducted in such a way that our love, respect, and honor for God and His House is paramount. The music, decorations, flowers and, of course, the worship itself, should also reflect the proper respect and reverence for God.

## ELIGIBILITY FOR MARRIAGE

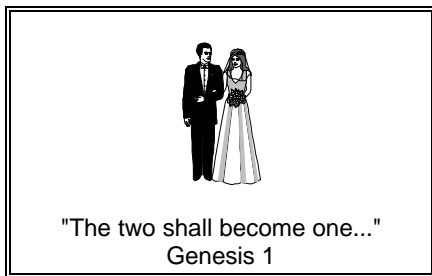
All couples desiring to be married at Gethsemane Lutheran Church must complete a series of premarital preparation sessions with the Pastor. It will be the responsibility of the couple to schedule these sessions with the Pastor as far in advance of the proposed wedding date as possible.

Since a Christian wedding is a testimony of faith in Christ and an opportunity to seek Christ's blessings upon the marital union, all couples desiring to be married at Gethsemane, members and non-members, will, in consultation with the Pastor, receive instruction in the Christian faith prior to the wedding ceremony.

### ***SANCTITY OF MARRIAGE***

As God has presented His Son, Jesus Christ, to the Church "to make her holy...and to present her to Himself...without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish" (Ephesians 5:25-27) so also it is our response or love to conform to God's will in upholding the holy estate of Christian marriage.

For this reason divorce, adultery and pre-marital pregnancy will be candidly but confidentially discussed with the Pastor. Though the church must condemn such actions, it is also the purpose of the Christian church to bring about repentance and offer forgiveness for those who repent. When evidence of such repentance is given, forgiveness will be extended and the marriage will not be hindered. Thus, the Pastor, during such discussions, will urge couples to seek God's forgiveness and insofar as possible, conform to God's will for holiness and purity in marriage.



*Our sincerest congratulations on your upcoming marriage.*

*No doubt, you have many questions on your mind as you prepare for this most important occasion.*

*Gethsemane Lutheran Church wants to do everything possible to make your marriage a meaningful blessed act of love to God and to each other.*

*It is with this in mind that we offer the following policies as guidelines for your wedding.*

*If you should have any questions, please do not hesitate to call the Pastor with your questions or concerns.*

*God's blessings to you as you prepare to pledge your lives to each other before God's altar.*



**Candles** for the Unity Candle, if used, are to be purchased by the wedding party. Candles needed for this include a 3" diameter wedding candle and two 1" diameter side candles. These candles may be purchased at religious supply or specialty stores.

Any questions regarding decorations or altar furnishings should be directed to the Pastor.

### **RICE**

Rice and confetti are not allowed for use after the wedding ceremony. However, bird seed may be thrown by the wedding guests outside the building. For the comfort of the wedding party, bird seed should not be thrown until after the pictures are taken .



"... and the two shall become one ..."  
Matthew 19:5

## FEES

### TESTING

A \$50 fee is payable to Gethsemane Lutheran Church (check only), for the cost of materials used in the Personality Profile assessment given by Pastor.

### FACILITY USAGE

Member	Gift determined by the couple
Non-member	\$100

Payable to Gethsemane Lutheran Church (check only).

### ORGANIST'S FEE

The Organist's Fee is \$50, paid directly to the organist by cash or check.

### WEDDING COORDINATOR FEE

The Wedding Coordinator Fee is \$ , paid directly to the coordinator by cash or check, one week prior to the wedding.

### WEDDING BULLETINS

Wedding Bulletins, if desired, may be printed by our secretary at your request. A \$10 fee, payable to the Church Secretary by cash or check, is charged for these services. Couples may select and purchase their own bulletin covers (available at Christian Bookstores) or check with the Church Secretary for available bulletin covers. The bulletins, along with a clearly printed order of worship (approved by the Pastor), shall be returned to the church **no later than one week prior** to the wedding. Please clearly specify the number of copies desired for printing. If you desire a proof draft of the service prior to printing, please indicate this to the Secretary in writing and submit your bulletin information at least two weeks prior to the wedding.

### PASTOR'S FEE

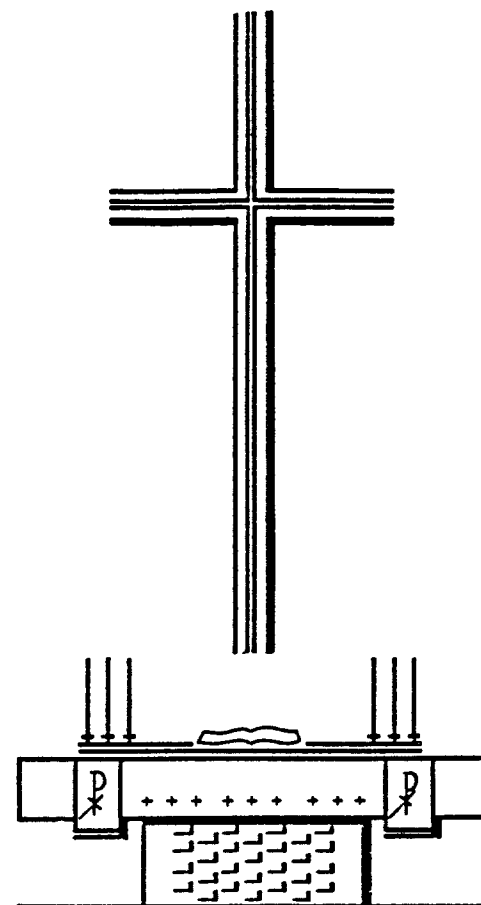
Member	Gift determined by the couple
Non-member	\$150 plus any additional amount determined by couple

Please take into consideration the time spent in premarital sessions, service preparation, the wedding rehearsal and his important role in the ceremony. Any fee should be payable to the Pastor directly by cash or check.

*May God Bless Your Marriage!*

## PLANNING YOUR WEDDING

### A Manual of Policy and Procedures



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*Rev. Thomas F. Fischer, Pastor*