

*Beginning Your Marriage*

*at*



*Our Savior's Lutheran Church*

# *Congratulations!*

You are about to enter into a new and exciting chapter in your lives, and this chapter will last for the rest of your lives. Thank you for inviting the staff and congregation of Our Savior's to be involved in the planning and preparation for your marriage. We are committed to helping you set out on a solid foundation, and provide you with tools that will allow your marriage to flourish and grow in the years ahead. Of course, we will assist you in planning the wedding worship service, but our primary role is in preparing you for marriage itself.

This brochure will guide you through the marriage planning process at Our Savior's. You will refer to it often in the coming months. If you have questions along the way, don't ever hesitate to call the Church Office at 651-439-5704. Most importantly, relax and enjoy this exciting time! You're only going to do this once, and we want to help you make it a wonderful beginning!

*-The Pastors of Our Savior's*

### *Setting the date*

Engagement is probably one of the most wonderful times in a person's life. The joy of finding the one with whom you want to spend your life, the emotions of asking and being asked to share a life together, and the excitement of telling family and friends that you've "found the one!" is exhilarating. Eventually, you will get around to deciding when and where to have your wedding.

One of your first calls will be to the church to schedule the place and the pastor of your choice. At Our Savior's, there are two locations for a wedding; the Sanctuary (which seats approximately 190), and the Community Life Center (which can accommodate up to 500 guests). Seating is not the only consideration, however. While both venues are lovely spaces, the Sanctuary offers a more traditional and intimate environment, while the CLC is lighter, more contemporary and more spacious.

Any of our pastors will be happy to assist you in this marriage journey. One call to the Church Office will allow you to reserve the Church and schedule the pastor. Please remember that a wedding date is not set until it is written in the church master calendar and the pastor's personal planner.

We recognize that the date and time for a wedding is often driven by the availability of a reception location. It would be wise to make sure that the church and the pastor are available before making any binding agreements with a reception hall.

### *Pre-marriage counseling*

It is our expectation that couples being married by Our Savior's clergy complete pre-marriage counseling. This will ensure that your marriage gets off on a solid foundation, and both partners are aware of the strengths and growth areas of your relationship, as well as develop good communication and conflict resolution skills.

Our staff-extended counselor is John Bragstad, LMFT. His office is located on Highway 5 in Lake Elmo, and his phone number is 651-308-1200. In these sessions, you will participate in the Keirse Personality Sorter, and the Prepare Marriage Inventory. The fee for this counseling is \$225, and should be paid to John at the time of your visit. The couple will be asked to sign a waiver so that the insights gained in the counseling sessions may be shared with your presiding pastor. Those for whom this is a financial hardship, may speak with your presiding pastor for alternative arrangements.

### *Planning the wedding worship*

After you have concluded your counseling, we can sit down and prepare your wedding worship. This term "wedding worship" may be new for you. You may be more familiar with the term "wedding ceremony," but we prefer the former. By virtue of being married by a pastor, and in the church, we assume that you want God's blessing as you begin your life together. So we will proceed with the idea that your wedding day will include a worship service, where you gather with your family and friends – in the presence of God – and allow God to be the focus.

**The Setting:** If you know anything about “seasons” of the Church year, then you know that the Sanctuary or the CLC will look different at different times of the year. For example, during December, the altar colors will be blue for Advent. During February and March, they are likely to be purple for Lent. Most of the spring, summer and fall, the colors are green. The Pastor will help you know what color to expect as you plan your wedding worship.

**The Music:** As in creating any worship service, the selection of music is important. You will want to give thought to the music to which you will walk into the worship space, the special music – whether vocal or instrumental – you would like, as well as other selections for prelude, postlude, recessional, etc. Keep in mind that this is a worship service. Love songs or other popular tunes may be very special to you, but are not appropriate for a worship service. Sacred, classical or contemporary Christian music are the appropriate styles for a wedding. The pastor or the accompanist will be happy to assist you in the selection of music.

**Musicians:** Because the instruments at Our Savior’s are expensive and unique to our facility, it is requested that only Our Savior’s musicians play them. However, if you have a musician among your family or friends, arrangements can be made for them to play. Our Savior’s does not provide vocalists for weddings; however we can provide a list of competent vocalists whom you may call.

**Décor:** We believe that both worship spaces at Our Savior’s are beautifully appointed and provide a lovely setting for a wedding. However, you may want to provide your own special decorations. Generally, candles, ribbons and flowers are the most appropriate decorations in either space. Only living flowers should be placed on or near the altar. You should not plan to move any of the worship furniture in the front of the worship space. The church is able to provide a pair of candelabra for your use, as well as a unity candle stand, should you choose to use them (couples are responsible for providing all candles). If yours is a Saturday wedding, you may decorate during business hours on Friday, or as early as 8:00 AM on Saturday, arranged through the church office.

**Scripture and Vows:** The pastor will assist you in selecting appropriate scripture for your wedding worship. Asking a special family member or friend to be a reader is a nice way to draw these people into your service. You may also provide input into the vows for your wedding worship service.

**The Order of Worship:** The worship service has several components, which will flow nicely. If you plan to print a wedding worship folder or bulletin, please allow the pastor to detail the order of worship, and plan to allow the pastor to proof the bulletin before printing.

### *The Marriage License*

Our pastors are able to officiate a wedding only if you have been issued a marriage license in the State of Minnesota. The state has regulations regarding waiting periods and the expiration date of wedding licenses; please consult with the local licensing center. The wedding license should be brought to the church by Wednesday of your wedding week. The pastor will gather the witnesses one half-hour prior to the starting of the service to sign the wedding license, and then immediately following the worship, will give the best man or groom the marriage certificates. The legal copy is sent to the State of Minnesota by the pastor on Monday morning.

**Birdseed, yes; rice, no!** As you and your wedding party leave the church to go to your reception, the joy will be obvious. We ask that your guests do not throw rice as you depart. Bird seed, flower petals or bubbles would be our suggestion.

## *The Rehearsal*

The evening before the wedding, you will want to schedule a rehearsal. Typically, a wedding is not so complicated that we need a lengthy, detailed practice. However, a brief rehearsal, so that people are comfortable with the timing and location of the parts of the worship service, is essential. This lasts less than an hour, but will allow all participants to relax and enjoy the wedding worship, confident in knowing their roles.

Who should attend the rehearsal? Certainly the entire wedding party should attend (bride, groom, attendants, flower girl, ring bearer), along with parents of the bride and groom, ushers, readers and accompanist. The vocalists may or may not attend; however, they will want to do a “sound check” sometime before the worship service.

**Dressing at the church.** Rooms are provided for the bridal party. These rooms ARE NOT LOCKABLE. Please do not leave valuables in these rooms during the taking of pictures or during the worship service.

**Pictures and Video.** Years from now, you will want to have detailed remembrances of your wedding day, and certainly pictures and video are a part of this. Most wedding parties take many of the photos before the worship service. Flash pictures are not appropriate during the worship service between the Invocation and the Benediction. Taste and discretion is greatly appreciated. Regarding video, the photographer may set up anywhere in the seating area of the Sanctuary or the CLC, however, in the altar area, only a tripod (unstaffed) may be used. Please have the photographer and videographer check with the pastor before the worship begins.

**Smoking and drinking.** Our Savior's is a smoke-free building. If members of your party wish to smoke, please do so outside. We are an alcohol-free campus, which means alcohol is not permitted on the premises. Our pastors request that members of the wedding party abstain from alcohol before the worship service, and we reserve the right to alter the events of the day if alcohol use is apparent.

**Clean up.** Our custodian will be responsible for cleaning up the space used during the wedding worship service. However, please be considerate in your use of these spaces. If you provide food for the wedding party during the taking of pictures, please dispose of boxes, bags, bottles and cans before the wedding. If you have rented items, or bring in other decorations, please assign someone to remove them following the worship. Remember, our congregation worships early Sunday morning.

**FEES**

	MEMBER	NON-MEMBER
Use of Sanctuary	n/c	\$200
Use of CLC	n/c	\$300
Custodian	\$75	\$75
Accompanist	-Arranged with accompanist-	
Sound Tech. (CLC only)	\$75	\$75
Pastor	Gift	\$250
Reception Hall	n/c	\$300
Custodian for Reception		
Gathering Area	\$75-\$150	\$75-\$150
CLC	\$300 (minimum)	\$300 (minimum)

*All fees must be paid to the church office 1 week prior to your wedding.  
(A \$75 non-refundable deposit is required to reserve the church.)*

***Pre-Marriage Counseling***

*Pre-marriage counseling                      \$225  
(Paid directly to John Bragstad)*

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