**Weddings at Mt. Olive Lutheran Church**

**Mound, Minnesota**

**Introduction**

Our congregation congratulates you on your engagement and in your decision to begin your married lives by seeking the blessings of God in a Christian wedding service. Your desire to be married with the blessing of a Christian pastor and the support of a Christian congregation expresses a desire to include God’s presence on your wedding day and throughout your married life.

**A Christian Wedding**

Your wedding day will be special not because you are the “star attractions” but because you have invited Jesus to be present with you, your family, and your friends as you celebrate the joining of your lives together. The wedding ceremony is a worship service in which the bride and groom make their commitment to live in the marriage relationship as God established it and ask Him to bless and direct their life together.

**A Christian Marriage**

Having the wedding in a church or officiated by a Christian pastor will not make yours a Christian marriage. A wedding is a ceremony; a marriage is a complex relationship between you and your partner that can grow in health or be weakened depending on your attitudes and actions. What makes a marriage uniquely Christian is the faith commitment each spouse has to Jesus. The mutual giving and receiving of unconditional love and unlimited forgiveness can only happen when those gifts have been received from Christ. Serving and building each other up are possible with Jesus’ presence through worship, prayer, and other spiritual practices.

An active relationship with the Lord Jesus can make all the difference in your marriage. The Bible states, “…a cord of three strands is not quickly broken” (Ecclesiastes 3:12)—those strands being you, your partner, and the Lord Jesus Himself. While married life contains difficulties and challenges, studies have shown that partners who pray and worship together on a regular basis are less likely to separate and divorce, pointing to the wisdom, love, and strength Jesus can bring to you as an individual and to your marriage.

If you and/or your spouse currently do not know Jesus Christ we would like to introduce Him to you. We offer a class that will explain who He is and what He has done for us. It provides that basics of the Christian faith and allows you to meet and learn with other adults about this amazing God we worship.

**Who can be married at Mt. Olive?**

A wedding at Mt. Olive or officiated by the pastor of Mt. Olive is normally a privilege reserved for members of the congregation, or for those seeking to commit to a regular and active membership in the congregation. In this regard, it is the discretion of Mt. Olive’s Elders and Pastor whether a wedding will take place in our church. Holy Scriptures speak only of heterosexual marriage unions; therefore, our pastor will not solemnize, officiate, recognize, or bless same-sex partnerships or unions, 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.

**What is marriage?**

We learn from the Word of God that marriage is the life-long, exclusive union of one man and one woman, as husband and wife. Marriage is a part of God’s creation. Thus, we read in God’s Word, the Bible: “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh” (Gen.2:24; cf. Matt. 19:5–6; Eph. 5:31).

Elsewhere we read, “Since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband” (1 Cor. 7:2). And, “Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral” (Heb. 13:4).

The beauty and significance of marriage go beyond its earthly effects — as rich and wonderful as they are. God gave marriage as a picture of the relationship between Christ and His bride, the church. In sustained and exalted language, Ephesians 5:21-33 connects godly marriage with the glorious relationship of Christ and His church. As a man and woman relate to one another with rich love and profound respect, their one flesh union hints of and is intended to signify the union of Christ and His bride, the church. But Christ and His bride also indicate the fullness of divine intention for marriage. Speaking of Christ as bridegroom and church as bride, the apostle notes that husbands are called to sacrificial love toward their wives and wives to a willing respect for their husbands.

**Premarital Preparation**

While our congregation prays that yours is a beautiful wedding day, our greater concern is for the quality of your marriage relationship. To assist you in the premarital dialog, you will be asked to respond to an inventory entitled “PREPARE”. This is a computerized evaluation which, based on your individual responses, is designed to assess the strength and growth areas of your relationship. It is not a test and is not designed to determine the potential success or failure of your marriage. Rather it serves as a springboard for communication and discussion of relationship issues.

The pastor will give you instructions about how to complete the PREPARE inventory and will make appointments to review the results with you and also to plan the wedding worship service. Your meetings with him will include discussion about Scripture Readings, Songs/Hymns, other special music or ceremonies, decorations, bulletins, photos and videos, the wedding rehearsal, reception, wedding license, fees, and other decisions.

The pastor is also willing to discuss “Covenant Marriage” with you which is a Christian blessing of your marriage without obtaining a state-issued marriage license.

**Fee Guidelines**

Facility charge for a full wedding with guests in the sanctuary - $600 (custodian, utilities, use of sound system, etc.) – payable to Mt. Olive Lutheran Church.

A simple ceremony with just a few guests – a donation of your choice.

Organist/Pianist (if desired) - $200 (planning & preparation, rehearsal, and ceremony)

Vocal/Instrumental soloists (if desired) - $50 - $200 depending on number of pieces, preparation and involvement in the worship service.

Pastor – the pastor serves the members of Mt. Olive by conducting wedding ceremonies and no gratuity is required or expected. Those wishing to give an honorarium are welcome to do so. Honorariums usually range from $100 - $300.

All fees or honorariums for musicians and the pastor are payable in separate checks to each individual and should be paid the day of the wedding or before. Fees listed are guidelines and are considered minimum amounts. You may consider additional tips if extra time or effort was given towards your wedding.

Wedding Information – please complete and return to pastor or church office

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| --- | --- |
| 1. **Name of Groom** | Click here to enter text. |
| 1. **Groom's Address** | Click here to enter text. |
| 1. **Groom's Phone** | Click here to enter text. |
| 1. **Groom - other contact info** | Click here to enter text. |
| 1. **Groom previously married Y/N** | Choose an item. |
| 1. **Groom's age** | Click here to enter text. |
| 1. **Name of Bride** | Click here to enter text. |
| 1. **Bride's Address** | Click here to enter text. |
| 1. **Bride's Phone** | Click here to enter text. |
| 1. **Bride - other contact info** | Click here to enter text. |
| 1. **Bride previously married Y/N** | Choose an item. |
| 1. **Bride's age** | Click here to enter text. |
| 1. **Desired date of wedding** | Click here to enter a date. |
| 1. **Time of wedding** | Click here to enter text. |
| 1. **Wedding Location** | Click here to enter text. |

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| --- | --- |
| Musician(s) for wedding | Click here to enter text. |
| Hymns/Songs (See “Planning Your Wedding Worship Service” document for suggestions) | Click here to enter text. |
| Special Music | Click here to enter text. |
| Bible Readings (See “Planning Your Wedding Worship Service” document for suggestions) | Click here to enter text. |
| Unity Candle or Sand? | Choose an item. |
| Bulletins | Choose an item. |
| Decorating | Click here to enter a date. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Rehearsal | Click here to enter a date. |
| Time of Rehearsal | Click here to enter text. |
| Rehearsal Dinner? | Click here to enter text. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Photographer | Click here to enter text. |
| Time for photos | Click here to enter text. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Maid/Matron of Honor | Click here to enter text. |
| Best Man | Click here to enter text. |
| Bridesmaids | Click here to enter text. |
| Groomsmen | Click here to enter text. |
| Ushers | Click here to enter text. |
| Ring Bearer | Click here to enter text. |
| Flower Girl(s) | Click here to enter text. |
| Acolyte(s) | Click here to enter text. |
| Reader(s) | Click here to enter text. |
| Important Guests (Grandparents, Godparents or Sponsors) | Click here to enter text. |
| 2 witnesses to sign certificate | Click here to enter text. |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Reception | Click here to enter text. |
| Music for reception | Click here to enter text. |
| Caterer | Click here to enter text. |

**Wedding Planning Checklist**

We have read through this Wedding Handbook.

We have filled out and turned in the Wedding Information Sheet to the church office.

We have made an initial appointment with the pastor.

We have finalized the dates and times for the rehearsal and the wedding.

We have made appointments to meet with the pastor for premarital counseling and wedding planning.

We have made appointments with the musicians for planning.

We have discussed purchase of sheet music with the musicians.

We have discussed decorations.

We have discussed photography/videography.

We have secured our marriage license.

We have purchased a unity candle, if desired.

We have coordinated the opening and closing of the building with the pastor or church representative.

We have paid all fees.

May God richly bless your planning, wedding day, and married life together!