



Wedding Guidelines

Immanuel Lutheran Church
246 S Clark St.
Forest City, Iowa 50436
641-585-3152
www.immanuelfamily.com

First Steps in Planning Your Wedding

1. Read This Booklet

Jot down questions raised in your mind as you read.

2. Confirm the Date of Your Wedding

The date and time of your wedding and rehearsal must be confirmed by the pastor who will officiate and reserved for you by the office secretary. If you haven't yet, please begin by calling the church office (641-585-3152).

Because Immanuel Lutheran Church is a very large congregation, we occasionally find it necessary to schedule two weddings on the same day. Weddings are scheduled with first priority for time to the first couple securing that date. A second wedding planned for the same day will need to respect the time allotted to the first couple as priority for that date.

No weddings during Holy Week.

3. Wedding Coordinator Contact

A trained wedding coordinator will be assigned to you who will assist you and the pastoral staff in making all arrangements for your wedding. The coordinator will contact you at least 90 days before your wedding date.

4. Arrange for Planning Session with the Officiating Pastor

The officiating pastor will consult with you in planning your wedding and in helping you prepare for your marriage together.

Normally one of the pastors of this congregation will officiate at your wedding. If it is your intention to have a clergy person from outside the congregation participate or officiate, you should consult Immanuel's pastor about such arrangements.

5. Securing an Organist

Please secure an organist/pianist and confirm arrangements at least 3 months prior to your wedding date. The church office can inform you of Immanuel's organist as well as other organists/pianists. Please read the section **Selecting Music**, and discuss your plans with the church organist. His/her guidance in music selection will be of great assistance to you.

6. Secure a Sound Technician

The church office can inform you of trained sound technicians for you to contact to secure for your wedding rehearsal and ceremony.

7. Secure a Wedding License

Iowa law required couples to secure a license to marry. You may apply for a license at any County Recorder's Office in the state. You must apply a minimum of three (3) days before the wedding, though we recommend you apply earlier. Normally the two of you should be present to apply, along with your driver's licenses and a witness (who must be 18) to verify your ages (legal age for marriage being 18). A fee will be charged. The license should be brought to the pastor at the rehearsal.

8. Pre-Marriage Counseling

All couples being married in this congregation are required to participate in pre-marriage counseling sessions with a pastor, or in a pre-marriage workshop currently scheduled once or twice annually. (These workshops are usually in late winter-spring time and then again in mid-summer if enough couples haven't attended the earlier session.) [The cost of the workshop will be detailed at the time of the session. Following the completion of the workshop, each couple meets once with the pastor to go over the wedding service.

MARRIAGE AND THE CHURCH

We are pleased that you want to have your wedding in this congregation. The pastor(s) will work with you to make your wedding meaningful and to help you prepare for a fulfilling marriage.

Marriage does not belong exclusively to the church. While marriage is ordained by God and supported by the church, it is a social contract, governed and regulated by the state for the purpose of protecting individuals and providing stability to the social order. But to the Christian it is more:

We believe God ordained marriage to enrich the lives of husband and wife, and to provide a sound basis for family life.

We believe God's intention for marriage is that it be a life-long relationship based on the commitment by the man to the woman and the woman to the man.

We believe God's self-giving love and faithfulness toward us is the foundation of a committed relationship between wife and husband.

We believe God, along with the church, desires marriage to be a source of faith, joy, love, and fulfillment. Marriages rooted in God's steadfast love will be the most likely to experience these qualities.

The pastor who officiates at your wedding represents both church and state. It is our belief that bride and groom enter into God's gift of marriage by their promises before God and in the presence of the gathered community. You make your promises in the presence of God, trusting that God will bless and support you as you work together to fulfill them. Thus, to be married in the church is to recognize God's intentions for marriage and to affirm them as your own.

II PLANNING THE CEREMONY

As you meet with one of the pastors to plan your ceremony, you are encouraged to bring ideas about ways to personalize your wedding. Of course, what is done in the service should be appropriate to a service of worship and consistent with the Christian understanding of marriage.

The Order of Service

The order for Marriage in the Lutheran hymnal allows a variety of options. You may wish to modify the service. A suggested worship order could be:

Processional
Greeting
Prayer
*Hymn/Solo
Scripture
Sermon
*Hymn/Solo
Vows
Exchange of Rings
Declaration of Marriage
Blessing
*Unity Candle
*Hymn/Solo
Prayers/Lord's Prayer
Benediction
Recessional

*Optional

Selecting Wedding Vows

The following vows, each expressing the promises of a couple's lifelong commitment to each other, are examples of appropriate vows for use at your wedding.

The pastor will use this vow unless you express a preference for another:

[With God's help]

"I, _____, take you, _____, to be my wife/husband, 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, till death us do part, according to God's holy Word, and with these words I promise you my love and faithfulness."

Sample alternatives might be:

From Evangelical Lutheran Worship Hymnal:

"I take you, _____, to be my wife/husband from this day forward, to join with you and share all that is to come, and I promise to be faithful to you until death parts us."

or

"I, _____, take you, _____, to be my wife/husband; to have and to hold from this day forward, in joy and in sorrow, in plenty and in want, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, as long as we both shall live. This is my solemn vow."

Other examples:

"I give myself to you _____, as your wife/husband from this day forward, to join with you and share all that is to come, and I promise to be faithful to you until death parts us."

"_____, I give myself to you as your wife/husband from this time onward, to join myself to you, to give and to receive, to speak and to listen, to inspire and to respond, and in all circumstances of our life together to be faithful to you with my whole life and being, as long as we both shall live."

"I give myself to you _____, as your wife/husband, and I promise you:

I will be faithful to you and honest with you;

I will respect, trust, help, and care for you;

I will share my life with you;

I will forgive you as we have been forgiven; and along with you,

I will try to better understand ourselves, the world, and God, through the best and worst of what may come as long as we both shall live."

"I take you, _____, to be my wife/husband, and these things I promise you: I will be faithful to you and honest with you; I will obey, respect, trust, help, and care for you; I will share my life with you; I will forgive you as we have been forgiven; and I will try with you to better understand ourselves, the world, and God through the best and worst of what is to come, as long as we both shall live."

Readings and vocal music lyrics should be approved by the officiating pastor.

Selecting Scripture Readings

You are encouraged to select scripture which will be consistent with themes you want to emphasize. One or more readings is appropriate. Selections are to be limited to passages from Holy Scripture.

Some suggestions from the Old Testament:

Genesis 2:18-24

God's purpose in creating man & woman

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Isaiah 62:2b-5

Some suggestions from the New Testament:

John 15:9-17

Romans 8:37-39

I Corinthians 13

The way of love

Ephesians 5:21-33

Marriage and the church

Philippians 1:9-11

Philippians 4:4-8, 13, 19

Colossians 3:12-17 (18-20)

Life in Christ

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

1 John 4:7-11

Members of your family or wedding party may serve as readers of the scripture you select.

Selecting Music

In arranging the music for the wedding, the organist/pianist of the congregation must be consulted to insure that it is appropriate for worship, and will offer suggestions regarding vocalists and instrumentalists.

III OTHER DETAILS

Rehearsal

A rehearsal is necessary if your wedding party consists of more than six persons. Rehearsal is usually held the evening before and scheduled with

the officiating pastor. All members of the wedding party (bride, groom, bridesmaids, groomsmen, flower girl, ring bearer, and parents of the bride and groom) should be present at the rehearsal. The pastor will walk the wedding party through the ceremony. The rehearsal should not take longer than one hour.

Dressing Rooms

The Shalom Room, located downstairs next to the kitchen, is available as a dressing room for women. Either the Fireside Room or the Lounge, both located upstairs near the church office, is available as a dressing room for the men.

Ushers

A minimum of two ushers is necessary to seat guests and family members. More ushers will be needed if you intend to invite more than 150 guests. All ushers should be adults as the nature of their tasks requires confidence and decisiveness.

Though ushers do not need to walk through the worship order, they should attend the rehearsal to receive special instructions for the wedding day.

Service Folders

It is helpful, but not necessary, to have a service folder to inform guests of the order of service and the names of participants in the wedding party. You should discuss the layout of the service folder with the pastor.

Decorations

The color of the paraments on the altar and pulpit are determined by the season of the church year. They are not changed for weddings.

Floral decorations and aisle runner are not necessary, but if desired, must be provided by you. Flowers may be placed on the two stands or other appropriate places in the chancel.

The candles in the chancel will be lighted by your ushers for the wedding ceremony. You may use Immanuel's unity candle stand. You must provide

the unity candle and two 12" taper candles for this stand. Also available is a pair of candelabras with oil-filled candles.

All decorations must be removed immediately following the wedding ceremony. If you wish to share flowers at worship on Sunday, please inform the church office.

Conduct of Guests

As the wedding is set within the context of worship, participants and guests are expected to conduct themselves accordingly (building and parking lot). Persons under the influence of alcohol or other controlled substances will not be permitted to participate in the wedding.

The officiating pastor reserves the right to halt the ceremony if a member of the wedding party or a guest is behaving in a manner inappropriate for the wedding.

No rice, confetti, or bird seed is allowed in the church building. Birdseed, but not rice or confetti, may be used outside. Anything else you are considering using, please consult with the officiating pastor or hostesses for approval.

Photographs and Videos

Most people contract a professional photographer to photograph or videotape their wedding. Floodlights or flash are not permitted during the ceremony. Any pictures taken during the ceremony must be done from the back of the church or the balcony. If you have a service folder, please request your guests to refrain from taking flash pictures after the processional.

As a matter of courtesy to your reception guests, you should consider taking your wedding pictures prior to the service.

Sound System

Please discuss with your secured sound technician what you are planning (CD music, DVD slide show on screen, vocalists).

Reception

If you desire to use the Fellowship Hall for a wedding reception, please reserve it at the time you reserve the sanctuary for your wedding.

The Immanuel Lutheran Church Women are available to host your reception in the church Fellowship Hall provided you furnish the food and beverages. Their services include serving your prepared food and cleaning up following the reception. To arrange for the services of the church women, telephone the wedding chairperson (name may be obtained from the church office.)

You may also arrange to have your reception in the Fellowship Hall catered.

As you make your plans, remember that alcoholic beverages may not be served on church premises, and that smoking is prohibited within the church building.

Church Office Hours: M-F 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. (summer hours 4:30)

Church Building Hours (Saturdays): 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.

WEDDING FEES

All fees should be paid at the church office the week of your wedding during office hours.

DAMAGE DEPOSIT (members & non-members) (payable 30 days before wedding)	\$250
NON-MEMBER BUILDING FEE	\$500

HONORARIUMS & FEES:	
PASTOR HONORARIUM Counseling, Rehearsal, Ceremony	\$175-200 suggested
ORGANIST/PIANIST Consultation, Rehearsal, Ceremony	\$150 (more for more music)
COORDINATOR Consultation, Rehearsal, Ceremony	\$100
SOUND TECHNICIAN	\$60
CUSTODIAN	\$60 wedding only \$100 wedding/reception
OFFICE ASSISTANCE PLUS MATERIALS (If Immanuel produces your service folder)	\$75

RECEPTION <i>Charge is for serving your prepared food, making punch, providing dishes, linens, etc., and clean up.</i>	
100 guests	\$125
each additional 50 guests	\$50
non-member 100 guests	\$175
each additional 50 guests	\$75