

Wedding Policies
For
Lutheran Chapel Church
Gastonia, North Carolina

The marriage service is a service of Holy Worship. This fact should guide you as you plan the service. These guidelines have been established to help assure and preserve the beauty, dignity and atmosphere of reverence, which will make your wedding meaningful. Lutheran Chapel Church does not support same sex marriages. No marriage shall be performed unless the pastor is convinced that God's blessing may properly be asked upon it, and that those being married propose to enter it in the name of the Lord.

A. Scheduling and Planning

- **Arrangements**

First arrangements for weddings, rehearsals, receptions, and cake cutting are to be made with our Pastor who will be responsible for the service. At the initial meeting between the prospective bride and groom, the pastor will share the wedding policies of the church and will make arrangements for pre-marital counseling sessions. Also, he will instruct the prospective bride and groom concerning other contacts to be made concerning music, custodial services, and use of church facilities. Weddings may be placed on the church calendar following the approval of the Pastor.

- **Pastor**

Lutheran Chapel Church policy requires that our Pastor either perform or be responsible for the wedding ceremony. At the request of the bride and groom, the Pastor

responsible for the wedding may invite a minister of another church to participate in the wedding ceremony.

- **Music**

- Lutheran Chapel Church organist may be available to play for weddings and to assist with planning of music for the wedding ceremony.
- Upon special request an organist other than Lutheran Chapel Church organist may be used; however, that person must be approved by the Pastor. The Pastor has the final decision regarding music to be used for the ceremony.
- Since the wedding ceremony is a worship service conducted in the church, only sacred music may be used.

B. Facilities and Services

Weddings and Receptions

- The wedding rehearsal and ceremony may be held in either the church sanctuary or chapel.
- Cake cuttings and/or receptions may be held in the Fellowship Hall or the Family Life Center. The church office will advise on the availability of these areas.
- The individual who reserves any area of the church for a wedding, rehearsal, or reception must accept full responsibility for damages other than normal wear.
- All members of the wedding party are to be advised that throwing rice is not permitted. Birdseed may be used outside only.
- No alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs are allowed on church property. No one under the influence of alcohol or drugs may attend the rehearsal, wedding or reception.
- Lutheran Chapel assumes no

responsibility for clothing, money, jewelry or other items that are left in the church.

C. Decorations and Flowers

Sanctuary and Chapel

- The altar, pulpit and lectern should always be unobstructed and in full view of the congregation. Nothing should be placed on the chancel rail. Symbols of the faith (altar candles, Bible, etc.) may not be removed from the chancel area. Center handrails may be removed; Baptismal font and Baptismal candle may be moved to the side. The bride and groom are responsible for any furniture or other items being returned to their original place immediately after the ceremony.
- Altar decorations should consist only of candles in the church's brass candleholders.
- Unless otherwise arranged in advance with church office, all decorations and flowers are to be removed from the building, and all areas which have been used are to be satisfactorily cleaned immediately after the ceremony.
- By advance arrangement with the church office, flowers may be left for Sunday services, or for a memorial or an honorarium.
- Flowers within the chancel shall be live.
- If fresh flowers are to be dropped by a flower girl, an aisle cloth must be used.
- Altar cloths must be decided with the Pastor who will in turn notify the Altar Guild.

D. Photography and Recordings

Photography

- Weddings are sacred religious services invoking God's blessing upon two persons joined in Holy matrimony; nothing occurring during the service should detract or distract from that fact. For this reason photography during the ceremony is strictly limited.
- A photograph without flash may be taken from a fixed position in the balcony during the service. Photographs with flash (if desired) may be taken from the entrance door of the sanctuary as the father and bride enter and as the wedding party departs down the aisle at the end of the ceremony.
- The photographer is requested not to move about the sanctuary in a distracting manner during the ceremony.
- Guests carrying cameras will be instructed not to use cameras since the wedding ceremony is a worship service.

Recordings

- By advance arrangement with the church office, and with the approval of the wedding director, the wedding ceremony may be recorded by audio cassette or video cameras.
- If a camera is used in the chancel area, placement of the camera must be approved by the Pastor.
- Camera should be turned on before the ceremony begins and left running until the ceremony is concluded.
- A stationary camera may be used in the balcony.
- The church can provide audiocassette recordings of the wedding if requested in advance.

E. Other Guidelines

- The individual who reserves any area of the church for a rehearsal, wedding, or reception is also subject to the following regulations:
- Nails, screws, staples, thumbtacks, wire or tape may not be used in any part of the church facilities.
- No temporary construction or any carpentry is permitted.
- The furniture, floor, carpet and altar must be fully protected at all times from moisture, wax, and marks.

F. Holiday Scheduling

Special seasonal flowers are often used in the sanctuary for Easter and Christmas. Weddings scheduled for those times may use these flowers. Altar flowers and additional flowers should be provided by the bride and groom.

G. Fees and Other Guidelines

See Lutheran Chapel Church Facility Use Guidelines for fees and other rules. Applicable fees should be received by church office prior to wedding date.

APPROVAL

These guidelines have been prepared and recommended by Lutheran Chapel Church Altar Guild appointed for this purpose, and were formally approved and adopted by the Worship and Music Committee and the Congregational Council of Lutheran Chapel Church.

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