



Preamble: Welcome to Messiah for your wedding, and congratulations on your decision to take this important step in your life with God's blessing through the marriage service. A wedding is a brief event, but a marriage is intended to last for the whole of one's life. The church is a place where the wedding takes place, but it is also a home where your life together can be nourished. We invite your active participation in the life of this congregation, so that you may both receive from and contribute to this family of faith.

In order to assist your preparation for your wedding, and also to assist Messiah's staff, we invite you to take note of the following policies which govern the conduct of weddings here.

The intention of the Wedding Policy is

- a) To assist the wedding party as it makes its plans, and
- b) To assist Messiah staff as it seeks to conduct Messiah activities in an efficient and loving manner.

1. The Pastor: Ordinarily only marriages performed by one of the pastors are permitted in Messiah Lutheran Church. Exceptions may be approved by the pastor who oversees wedding bookings. Pastors/priests/ministers from other congregations or Christian denominations may participate in a wedding service that is being conducted by one of Messiah's pastors.

2. Scheduling of Wedding and Counseling: Couples desiring marriage in Messiah Lutheran Church should contact the pastors early to book the date and make arrangements for three or more premarital counseling sessions. A pre-marriage workshop is conducted each spring for all couples planning marriage the following summer. Which pastor performs the ceremony will depend on pastors' schedules and availability.

3. Booking the Wedding time and Rehearsal: Bookings are normally arranged to accommodate the possibility of having two weddings on a Saturday, with 2 hours between the starting times. Couples may choose either a 1 pm time or a 3 / 4 pm time. If a 2 pm time has been requested, it can be booked six months prior to the wedding date, only if a 1 and 3 pm booking has not been made. The rehearsal is usually booked for the evening prior to the wedding.

4. Booking of Additional Space: In addition to the sanctuary, a booking may include the use of another room for preparation purposes.

5. Technical Assistance: Technical assistance for the sound system or for audio or visual recording could be available if required for needs beyond the normal minimum. A fee is charged for the technician.

6. Organists: Arrangements for an organist are to be made through Messiah's Music Ministry Coordinator. One of Messiah's organists is normally available for weddings. The couple may, however, provide an organist or musician of their own. If that organist has had no experience on Messiah's organ, he or she will be required to spend an hour with the Music Ministry Coordinator or a designated assistant from Messiah. At that time they will

receive brief instruction on the use and capabilities of the organ and receive suggestions for accompanying the service. For that time of instruction, a fee is charged.

7. Fees: Because performing weddings is a part of the pastor's ministry, there is no fee for the pastor for performing a wedding.

A refundable deposit must be paid at the time that the wedding is booked. The wedding will not be considered to be booked unless this deposit has been received. The funds will be held until after the wedding, and until all other fees have been paid. It will not be deducted from the fees for the wedding as listed below, which must be paid in their entirety before the deposit is returned. See *Fees & Suggested Donations*

The following fees, as applicable, are paid to Messiah Lutheran Church at least one week before the wedding. The pre-marriage preparation fee, however, is paid at least one week before the workshop.

a. Organist

1. Messiah organist (Includes rehearsal) - See *Fees & Suggested Donations*
2. Organist training session (see #6) - See *Fees & Suggested Donations*

b. Custodian - See *Fees & Suggested Donations*

c. Sound/Video Technician(s) - See *Fees & Suggested Donations*

d. Pre-marriage preparation - See *Fees & Suggested Donations*

** Costs for the pre-marriage preparation workshop will vary depending on what arrangements have been made that year to provide the workshop. This workshop may be run by salaried Messiah pastors or staff as part of their work schedule, or by an outside counselor or counseling agency on a contract basis. It may include costs for pre-marriage preparation materials such as *Prepare and Enrich*.

e. **Suggested donation:** While there is no charge for use of Messiah's facilities, users should be aware that Messiah incurs costs in hosting a wedding. These include maintenance costs for such things as heat and lighting, the receptionist's office time, the church marriage certificate, pastoral time spent meeting with the couple to plan the wedding, for the rehearsal, the pastor's preparation for the service, for the service time, and time spent completing office paperwork and submitting the marriage registration form, and any pre-marriage preparation done which is over and above the pre-marriage preparation workshop. A suggested donation which recognizes this is always appreciated. Because of income tax rules, we regret that we cannot issue an income tax receipt for such donations. See *Fees & Suggested Donations*

8. Promptness: Because the pastor is likely to have other appointments later on the same evening as the rehearsal, members of the wedding party are expected to be prompt for that rehearsal.

9. Fertility Symbols: No confetti or rice or birdseed shall be thrown anywhere in the building or on the grounds.

10. **Photos, Video and Audio Recording:** There shall be no flash photography during the wedding service proper from the opening prayer to the benediction. Flash photography during the processional and after the benediction is permitted.

Non-flash photography, video taping and other non-intrusive means of recording the ceremony are acceptable and should be discussed with the pastor.

11. **Exceptional Circumstances:** In the event that the wedding of a Messiah member is to take place at a location other than at Messiah Lutheran Church, the wedding party will be expected to cover the pastor's accommodation, if required, and mileage expenses.

12. **Grand Piano:** The grand piano may not be moved without the permission of the Music Coordinator.

13. **Facility Use Policy:** Messiah's *Facility Use Policy* is applicable to those situations not specifically addressed in this *Wedding Policy*.

Adopted by Church Council on November 20, 2009
Last Reviewed by Church Council on October 28, 2010
Amended by Church Council on October 28, 2010