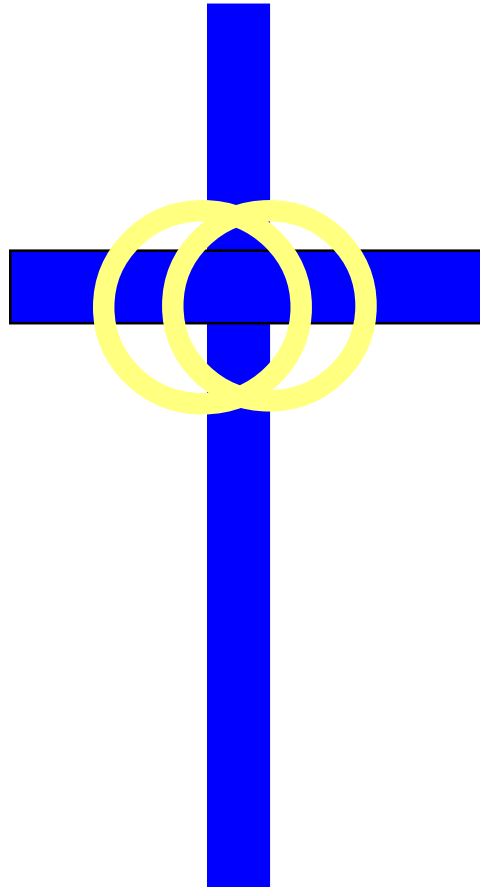


# WEDDING GUIDELINES



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Dear Friends,

We are happy that you have inquired about being married at Friendship Lutheran Church. The Christian faith affirms marriage as a covenant of fidelity - a dynamic, lifelong commitment of one man and one woman in a personal and sexual union. As such, it must certainly rank at the top among the experiences and adventures of life. Congratulations on your plans for such a significant step.

To this end, we are happy to offer the services of Friendship Lutheran Church to church members and others in accordance with the policies and practices adopted by the Congregational Council of Friendship Lutheran Church in the Wedding Guidelines. These pages are to assist you in your preparation for marriage in order that this might truly be one of the happiest and brightest days of your life in faith and love.

Amid all of the considerations and expectations you are facing as you begin to plan your wedding, you need to understand what is about to take place in the eyes of God and in the eyes of the community. **Marriage in the church is first and foremost an act of Christian worship.** The fact that it is a worship service needs to shape all decisions regarding the wedding service.

Please take time to carefully read through these guidelines before making any plans for your wedding at Friendship. Please feel free to share any questions or concerns not understood or addressed in these guidelines with one of the pastors.

May God continue to bless and guide you as you plan your wedding.

In Christ's Name,

Congregational Council

## **YOUR WEDDING**

Even though love has brought you together, the service of worship is not primarily about love but about promises and faithfulness. At the heart of a Christian Marriage Service are the promises made to us by God and revealed to us through the faithfulness of our Savior Jesus Christ. In light of God's promises, the service is also about the promises you will make in the presence of God and the congregation. The wedding does not begin and end with you, the couple. Those who gather to witness you exchange vows are not merely spectators but participants in the service. They make a commitment to support you and pray for you as you begin your life together as husband and wife.

## **WHO MAY BE MARRIED**

Use of the church is a right of membership. Weddings for non-members will be considered on a case by case basis. The decision of the pastor(s) will be final in such cases. At least one member of the bridal couple must be baptized in the name of the Triune God. It makes no theological sense to marry two people in a Christian setting who are not baptized. Please note, however, the fee schedule for non-member weddings (see page 17).

## **CHOOSING THE DATE**

Please speak with the Parish Administrator and one of the pastors as early as possible concerning your wedding plans. Friendship has many church activities and other events scheduled. Therefore, the earlier the planning is done, the better the chance of a clear church calendar on your preferred date. It would be unwise to make any plans for a wedding without first consulting the Parish Administrator and/or one of the pastors. Do not sign any contracts with a reception facility or catering service until you schedule the church.

Because of other services, no formal weddings can be scheduled on Christmas Day or from Monday of Holy Week through Easter

Sunday. No weddings may be scheduled later than 8:00 p.m. on week nights and 7:00 p.m. on Saturdays. Due to the solemn, penitent nature of the season, scheduling a wedding during Lent is discouraged.

## **CHOOSING THE LOCATION**

Weddings may be scheduled in either the nave or the chapel. If you have questions, please discuss this with the pastor.

## **WHO OFFICIATES**

One of the pastors of Friendship Lutheran Church conducts the wedding service and the rehearsal. The bride and groom may decide whether they desire the Senior Pastor or the Associate Pastor to officiate at their wedding. Other pastors may assist with the exception of former pastors of Friendship (This policy is based on Synod guidelines, ELCA Synod Constitution S14.14 and the North Carolina Synod's "Handbook of Call Process.>"). The use of additional ministers should be discussed with the officiating pastor.

## **CONFERENCES WITH THE PASTOR**

Pre-Marital counseling is almost universally considered necessary and helpful in the establishment of a Christian home. Every couple that wishes to be married at Friendship must participate in a pre-marital counseling program. The officiating pastor does this helpful preparation in several sessions prior to the wedding. Please speak with the officiating pastor about arranging for pre-marital counseling.

Each counseling program will be tailored by the pastor to the individual couple. The counseling sessions are most often designed to assist a couple in clarifying what they expect of one another, to help them learn to express their feelings, to negotiate differences and to assess their strengths and areas of growth.

## **STATEMENT ON ALCOHOL/DRUGS**

No alcoholic beverages may be brought or served on church premises. No rehearsal will be held or wedding conducted when any member of the wedding party is under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Members of the wedding party under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be asked to leave (rehearsal or wedding) - regardless of their role in the wedding.

## **REHEARSAL**

It is wise, except in very simple weddings, to arrange for a rehearsal. If there are several attendants, a rehearsal is necessary. The rehearsal should be scheduled at the time the wedding date is set. Normally, the rehearsal will be the evening before the wedding.

Wedding rehearsals should begin promptly at the scheduled time. Members of the wedding party should be reminded that throughout the entire rehearsal they are in a holy place – dedicated to the worship of God. So while joy, anticipation and happiness are accepted to be the mood, proper respect should be given to the Church setting.

Most wedding rehearsals require between 60 and 90 minutes.

## **THE ORDER OF SERVICE**

The marriage service found in the *Lutheran Book of Worship* is one option for the Order of Service. The ELCA has also published other resources for the marriage service. Please consult the officiating pastor for information on these options

Regardless of which resource is used, the service is a dignified, beautiful and flexible service. It allows for the selection of scripture readings, prayers and the writing of vows. The officiating pastor will assist you in choosing which options are most appropriate for your desires.

Generally, there are three separate scripture lessons at Lutheran services of worship: an Old Testament Lesson (frequently called the First Lesson), an Epistle Lesson (frequently called the Second Lesson) and the Holy Gospel. Since the Holy Gospel features the actual words of Jesus, the congregation rises in reverence. Couples planning their wedding are invited to select a lesson from one of each of the following categories:

**Old Testament:**

Genesis 1:26-31  
Genesis 2:18-24  
Psalm 33, 67, 100, 117, 121  
Psalm 127, 128, 136, 150  
Proverbs 3:3-6  
Song of Solomon 2:10-13  
Song of Solomon 8:6-7  
Isaiah 63:7-9

**Epistle Lesson:**

Romans 8:31-35, 37-39  
Romans 12:1-2, 9-18  
I Corinthians 12:31-13:13  
Ephesians 3:14-19  
Ephesians 5:1-2,21-33  
Philippians 4:4-9  
Colossians 3:12-17  
I John 3:18-24  
I John 4:7-16

**Holy Gospel:**

Matthew 5:1-10  
Matthew 5:14-16  
Matthew 7:21, 24-29  
Matthew 19:4-6  
Matthew 22:35-40  
Mark 10:6-9  
John 2:1-10  
John 15:9-12

**HOLY COMMUNION**

Holy Communion may be celebrated at a wedding service. If so, the Order of Marriage is included in the larger context of the entire Service of Holy Communion. The invitation to commune must be extended to all present as done by this congregation on Sundays. It is NOT appropriate to limit the celebration of the Eucharist to the wedding party.

## MUSIC

Music is a beautiful part of any wedding service and should be planned with much care. Only sacred music is permitted at weddings due to the fact that the wedding ceremony itself is a sacred worship service. By sacred, the Church means that the text and setting of the music should be that which expresses and witnesses to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Music which would not be used during congregational worship times is not appropriate during this service of Holy Matrimony.

A number of musical options are possible before the entrance procession: solo, ensemble, or choral pieces; organ or other instrumental music. Organ music may be based upon hymn tunes used within the marriage service. Instrumental music may be selected from chamber music literature or similar sources and should reflect the mood of joy and celebration in the service.

The Bridal March (from Mendelssohn's A Mid-Summer Night's Dream) and the Wedding March (from Wagner's Lohengrin) may not be used at Friendship. In a Mid-Summer Night's Dream, the bride goes crazy after the wedding and the groom commits adultery. A pagan theme pervades Lohengrin which is counter to the Christian nature of our worship setting.

Below is a list of suggestions (music which has been played at previous weddings at Friendship). The list is intended to help but no limit your selection of music. It is not the only music which can be used.

Air From the Water Music	Handel
Aire from Overture in D	Pachelbel
Allegro	Handel
Amazing Grace	Hughes
Arioso	Bach
Ave Maria	Schubert
C-Major Prelude	Bach
Canon in D	Pachelbel

Cathedral Fan Fare	
Chorale from Cantata No. 147	Bach
Holy Ground	Davis
Hornpipe	Handel
How Great Thou Art	Hine
If Thou Art Near	Bach
If With All Your Hearts	Mendelssohn
In This Very Room	
Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring	Bach
Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee	Beethoven
Largo	Handel
The Lord's Prayer	Bach
Marche Priomphale	Karg-Elert
Meditation from Thai's	Massehet
Nocturne	Chopin
Ode to Joy	Beethoven
Parents Prayer	Davis
Praise Him with Trumpets	Harris
Psalm 19	Marcello
Rondeau	Mouret
Seek Ye First/Pachelbel's Canon	Lafferty
St. Anthony's Chorale	Brahms
Surely the Presence	Wolfe
Thanks Be to Thee	Handel
Trumpet Air	Purcell
Trumpet Tune	Purcell
Trumpet Voluntary	Purcell
Thine Is the Glory	
The Wedding Prayer	Dunlap
Wedding Song	Stookey
Whither Thou Goest	

#### LBW HYMNS

Blest Be the Tie that Binds	370
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling	315
O God, Our Help in Ages Past	320
Praise My Soul the King of Heaven	549
Praise to the Lord, the Almighty	543
The King of Love My Shepherd Is	456

In keeping with the sacred nature of the worship service, we encourage the use of live musical accompaniment for all soloists rather than taped musical accompaniment. Whenever music is employed in the service and by whatever instruments or voices, it should be of high quality and not cloud the mood of the service with triteness or sentimentality. It should, moreover, be within the ability of the performers at hand to play or sing with assurance.

Since the church organist is familiar with our customs and our instrument here at Friendship, it is expected that he/she will play the organ at all weddings. If another organist is desired, this must be cleared with the church organist before any arrangements are made. An early conference with the church organist should be scheduled for the planning of music.

If vocal or instrumental music is desired, please consult with the church organist for guidance. Other than what already exists in the nave, no additional amplification is permitted.

Since the Lord's Prayer is a part of the congregation's liturgical response at a wedding, it is preferable to have the prayer said rather than sung. If it is sung, it is preferable to use it as a prelude or sometime prior to the reading of the lessons. Once the prayers begin, special music interrupts the flow of worship.

## **WEDDING RINGS**

The rings should be placed on the altar by the best man an hour before the wedding.

## **DECORATIONS**

Considerable thought and planning have gone into the design of the nave and chapel at Friendship. Both spaces do not require decorations to make them places perfectly suitable for a beautiful church service such as a wedding. Efforts to change the appearance with

elaborate decorations only mar the effect of these sacred spaces.

Therefore, it is strongly suggested that simplicity of decorations be followed. It is not necessary to invest in additional decorations such as candle stands, etc. Friendship has two set of candleabras (with appropriate candles) for your use. The church does not own a unity candle set. If you desire to have a unity candle at your wedding, this is your responsibility. Please consult with you florist for details.

Please help maintain the sanctuary by assisting in the following:

- use decorations that will not damage carpet, pews, chancel furniture, and the like;
- no nails or screws can be placed in any part of the building;
- decorations must be promptly removed following the service and the church left clean;
- the altar, pulpit, lectern, Bible and Missal should retain their prominent place and should not be obstructed from view by decorations;
- the paschal candle, baptismal font and banners (with stands) shall not be removed from the chancel area;
- altar paraments for the season of the church year are proper for weddings and will not be changed to suit a particular decorating scheme. The officiating pastor can provide information as to the proper color for any date of the year;
- church furniture will not be displaced or moved and extra non-church furniture will not be permitted in the chancel area.

## **FLOWERS**

Two bouquets of live cut flowers or greenery may be placed in the chancel by the bride if she desires (using only the altar vases of the church). Flowers in the church are not for decoration but are symbols of God the Creator and as such must be designed to adorn the altar - not compete with it. No additional decorations will be used in the chancel.

Liners for our floral vases are available at the church and can be picked up by the bride or the florist the week of the wedding. The florist will be responsible for the delivery on the day of the wedding at least two hours prior to the service. The church cannot be responsible for the arranging of any bouquets. The bride is to provide her florist the information contained in Letter 1 (see back of this book) entitled "Instructions for the Florist."

Flowers should be removed from the church in a timely manner unless other arrangements have been made. The bride should sign the flower chart if the wedding flowers are to be left on the altar for the following Sunday services.

## **BULLETINS**

Because those attending a wedding are often unfamiliar with the bridal party and the Lutheran tradition, you may desire to provide a bulletin as a guide through the service. The bulletin may be printed commercially or in the church office. Copies of old wedding bulletins are available to use as samples. The bride and groom are responsible for providing a rough draft of the bulletin to the officiating pastor for review prior to the final printing of the bulletin.

There are many bulletin cover designs available. The cost of the bulletin is the responsibility of the bride and groom. This cost can be furnished upon request.

If the church is to print the bulletins, the final draft should be submitted to the Parish Administrator at least three weeks prior to the wedding. Otherwise, the church cannot guarantee the timely completion of the bulletins.

### **SOUND SYSTEM**

It is necessary to have a member of the Audio Committee operate the sound system. A fee is required.

### **PHOTOGRAPHER**

The wedding is a service of worship and should not be interrupted by flashes and movement of photographers. Therefore, **NO** photographs are allowed during the worship service. The only exception to this is non-flash, non-autowind cameras used from the narthex or balcony by a professional. Following the service, there will be ample opportunity for photography.

The bride is to provide her photographer the information contained in Letter 2 (see back of this book) entitled "Instructions for the Photographer." Please state the church's policy to your friends and family as well.

### **VIDEO TAPING**

The service may be video taped from the balcony or from the front of the Church with a still camera on a tripod only at a place determined by the officiating pastor. The bride is to provide her video operator the information contained in Letter 3 (see back of this book) entitled "Instructions for the Video Operator."

If the bride chooses, the church can video the service through our audio-visual system. In this case, the bride is responsible for providing a videotape. The church is not responsible for problems with the videotape.

## **DRESSING AT THE CHURCH**

The bride may prepare in Room 301 or 302. The groom may prepare in Room 302 or 304. It is suggested that no valuables be left in any area of the church. Although every precaution will be taken to assure their security, Friendship is not responsible for any items that are lost, stolen or damaged.

## **MARRIAGE LICENSE**

The marriage license may be secured at the Alexander County Courthouse in the Register of Deeds Office (828-632-3152). The license should be brought to the officiating pastor at the rehearsal. It is signed by the officiating pastor and two witnesses of the bride and groom's choice (general the best man and maid/matron of honor) and returned by the officiating pastor to the Register of Deeds for proper recording.

## **RICE**

No rice or other substance may be thrown in the sanctuary or anywhere inside the church buildings. Only birdseed may be thrown outside as the couple leaves.

## **FELLOWSHIP HALL USAGE**

The Fellowship Hall is available for wedding receptions and rehearsal dinners. There is no rental fee required for the use of the Fellowship Hall for either the reception or rehearsal dinner although there is a cleaning fee.

The church's responsibility for receptions and rehearsal dinners is limited to provided the facility in which the event is to be held. The space must be reserved on the church calendar maintained by the Parish Administrator. Schedule requests shall be considered in the order in which they are received.

## **TERMS OF FELLOWSHIP HALL USAGE**

Friendship has been blessed with the facilities that enable us to foster Christian fellowship in our community. Our Fellowship Hall is open for use by our church family members and our community. In order to facilitate our common usage of these facilities, the following guidelines shall be observed.

- Smoking is prohibited inside all church buildings.
- No alcoholic beverages will be consumed on church property.
- The user is responsible for keeping guests in the designated parts of the building. Other rooms may be used with the permission of the staff. There is no additional fee. However, the bride should not assume that all rooms are available to the wedding party without prior consultation with the church staff.
- The user is expected to remember that the facility is part of God's house. As such, behavior befitting Christians is expected at all times.
- All decorations used in the Fellowship Hall shall be approved in advance. Nothing shall be attached to the walls and/or ceilings.
- The audio/visual system in the Fellowship Hall may be operated only by a member of the Audio Committee.
- Use of the partition must be scheduled in advance. The partition shall be opened/closed only by the appropriate church staff.

The wedding couple is responsible for the following:

- cleaning tables;
- removing all trash (trash should be bagged and disposed of in the church dumpster immediately following the rehearsal dinner/reception);
- ensuring that all cooking and eating utensils are clean and returned to their proper storage location;
- ensuring that the Fellowship Hall and kitchen are generally clean - including counter tops, stove, oven and sinks;
- turning off all lights and appliances after use;

The wedding couple is also responsible for providing all consumables (i.e. napkins, paper towels, salt, pepper, etc.).

The Church Sexton will be responsible for the following:

- vacuuming the floors,
- rearranging tables and chairs;
- mopping the kitchen floor;
- replacing trash bags.

## **FEES & EXPENSES**

Friendship Lutheran Church does not conduct wedding services for a profit. Responsible Christian stewardship, however, requires that certain expenses be covered. In no case does Friendship desire to have these fees create an undue burden for any person. Any financial needs should be discussed with the officiating pastor.

Below are the fees and expenses associated with a wedding:

<u>REHEARSAL DINNER</u>	<u>MEMBERS</u>	<u>NON-MEMBERS</u>
Fellowship Hall	No Charge	No Charge
Kitchen	No Charge	No Charge
Cleaning Fee (Preparation/Cleanup of Fellowship Hall)	\$50.00	\$100.00

### WEDDING

Nave	No Charge	\$250.00
Pastor	No Charge *	No Charge *
Counseling (3-4 sessions)	No Charge	No Charge
Organist	\$100.00	\$150.00
Parish Administrator (If Friendship prints bulletin)	\$15.00	\$15.00
Sound System Operator	\$15.00	\$15.00
Cleaning Fee (Preparation/Cleanup of nave for rehearsal and wedding)	\$25.00	\$50.00

\* - Although there is no charge for the pastor services, a monetary remuneration for the pastor(s) services is appropriate. The couple determines the amount.

### RECEPTION

Fellowship Hall	No Charge	No Charge
Kitchen	No Charge	No Charge
Cleaning Fee (Preparation/Cleanup of Fellowship Hall)	\$50.00	\$100.00

\*\* All fees are payable in advance to the church office.

\*\* **No fees are optional.** \*\*