

WEDDING

MANUAL



Zion Ev. Lutheran Church

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook explains the basic principles and guidelines for weddings solemnized and celebrated at Zion Ev. Lutheran Church, 1005 11th Avenue North, Humboldt, Iowa.

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THE BIBLICAL BASIS

While the laws of the state regulate marriage as a civil contract, God's Word declares that it is much more than a legal agreement. In fact, Scripture tells us that marriage was established by God Himself.

"The Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.'" (Genesis 2:18)

"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh." (Genesis 2:24)

Marriage is a divine institution in which God Himself joins the lives of two people. He has designed marriage for the welfare and happiness of the people He has created.

Jesus also taught this same view of marriage, as we read in Matthew 19. He added the statement:

"Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate." (Matthew 19:6)

Jesus taught that God instituted marriage to be a lifelong union. The New Testament teaches how this marriage relationship is to exist each day in the life of husband and wife.

"Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." (Ephesians 5: 1-2)

"Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their

own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church--for we are members of his body. 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.' This is a profound mystery-but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband." (Ephesians 5: 21-33)

On the basis of Scripture, Zion has established the following policy.

MARRIAGE GUIDANCE POLICY

We believe that a Christian Wedding is one of the privileges of church membership, therefore:

1. Zion Ev. Lutheran Church performs weddings when at least one of the parties is a member of the congregation.
2. Members of a church in fellowship with us may make an application to be married with Zion's pastor (s) and Board of Elders. They must have a valid reason for wanting to be married at Zion, and they must notify their home pastor (s) of their intentions.
3. Those who have no church affiliation must express a genuine interest in church membership to the pastor (s) and Board of Elders before making an application to be married. The application must be approved by the Board of Elders.
4. Requests under other circumstances may be made through one of the pastors to the Board of Elders for its approval.

We believe that marriage is a lifelong union of one man and one woman unto one flesh. Marriage has been instituted by God, therefore:

1. We require that every couple seeking to be married at Zion participate in a premarital counseling program as prescribed by the pastor (s) regarding the practical and spiritual aspects of a Christ centered marriage.
2. If the parties are living in a manner contrary to the will of God, they must amend their ways before His blessing can be given to the marriage. This is to be met to the satisfaction of the pastor (s).

We believe that a wedding ceremony is a worship service, therefore:

1. The pastor (s) of Zion, or a pastor on the clergy roster of a church in fellowship with us approved by the pastor (s) of Zion, shall be the presiding minister.
2. All elements of the service including the vows, the music, service folders, photographs, flowers, and the conduct of the wedding party shall seek to honor Christ and implore God's blessings upon the couple. For this reason the wedding service requires careful planning in consultation with and approval by the pastor (s).

SCHEDULING

To avoid scheduling problems for all concerned, contact the pastor as early as possible, certainly before any other arrangements are made. Consideration must be made for pre-marital counseling, wedding date, availability of church facilities, pastor's schedule, arrangement of music, musicians and other groups that may be involved.

LICENSING

The Marriage License can be obtained from the County Recorder's office in any county of Iowa. Either the bride or groom can make application. If both are present, only one needs to return to pick up the license together with a witness of legal age, who knows both the bride and groom. There is a three day waiting period from time of application to time of pick up, although the license applied for can be kept on file by the clerk for longer periods, even up to a few months. The Court House is not open on weekends or holidays. If the license is picked up in 60 days it is valid forever. Get it early to avoid the last minute rush.

The state currently requires a recognized ID, a witness and a fee to apply for a license.

Deliver the license packet to the church office at least 4 days before the wedding. Typically, that would be by the Tuesday before the ceremony.

The marriage license is to be signed by the bride, groom, witnesses, and the pastor either during the ceremony or as soon as possible after the ceremony.

THE WEDDING SERVICE

A Christian wedding is a worship service. It honors Christ and implores the blessing of God upon the assembled congregation, and especially upon the bridal couple. This is the basic principle that guides the planning of all weddings at Zion Ev. Lutheran Church. For this reason, your wedding service deserves careful planning in consultation with the pastor. You may choose a traditional or a contemporary service. The general outline follows.

Pre-Service Music
The Processional
The Invocation
The Scripture Readings
The Wedding Homily
The Exchange of Vows and Rings
The Marriage Declaration and Blessing
The Marriage Prayer
The Benediction
The Recessional
Post-Service Music

This is an outline of the basic elements of the service. There are many options, such as special music, hymns by the congregation, unity candle, unity sand, and the like. The pastor will provide sample copies of wedding services.

MUSIC

Every wedding at Zion Ev. Lutheran Church is a worship service. The music is selected carefully. The wedding service is a reflection of our Christian faith.

1. The early selection of music and musicians in consultation with the pastor ensures that the necessary rehearsal time is available and that the music expresses our Christian faith.
2. Ordinarily, Zion organists play for the wedding service. Other organist may play if approved by the pastor. The pastor can provide a list of Zion organists. The bridal couple is responsible for contacting the organist. If the organist is not from Zion, courtesy suggests that the organist contact one of the Zion organist to become familiar with Zion's organ.
3. Pre-service and Post-service music sets the mood for Christian worship. Organ, piano, instrumental or vocal music may be appropriate.
4. The Processional and Recessional: Our organists can help you with excellent suggestions. Individual organist may not want to play Lohengrin's "Wedding March" ("Here Comes the Bride") or the traditional recessional by Mendelssohn.
5. Vocal Music:
Hymns: Congregational singing is encouraged. Those present are thereby reminded that they are not spectators but participants in the worship service.
Solos or duets and other vocal music that fit the criteria are also appropriate.

OTHER WORSHIP DETAILS

1. No flash pictures are to be taken after the processional and before the recessional. The flash distracts from the worship of the congregation.
2. Videotaping is permissible if it is not distracting. Check with the pastor.
3. The Nave holds 400 people.
4. Wedding Service Folders: If printed folders are desired, they are the responsibility of the bridal couple. Zion's secretary may be contracted to produce the wedding folder.
5. Clean Up Services: It is the responsibility of the wedding party to arrange for the clean up of the sanctuary, narthex, dressing rooms and fellowship hall after the service and to leave the church in good order.
6. Rice/Birdseed: Rice is not permitted. Birdseed is discouraged. If used, it must be kept outside and swept up afterward.
7. Guest Book: This should be conveniently placed in the entrance hall (narthex) or in back of the pews in the nave of the church. The person(s) in charge should be at the church at least one-half hour before the worship service begins. Closing the book 5 minutes before the service helps to keep it on time.
8. White aisle runner may be used. This is the responsibility of the wedding party. The church aisle is approximately 60 feet long.
9. A special Candelabra may be used. This is the responsibility of the wedding party.
10. A unity candle may be used. The church has a stand with a 3 inch diameter holder. The candle is the responsibility of the wedding party.
11. Flowers/Plants add to the beauty of the service. The church provides plant stands. Flowers/plants may be left at the church for the following worship service. Please sign the flower chart.

12. Ushers/Acolytes: Recommended is a minimum of 2 ushers. If ushers light the candles, this may be done up to 30 minutes prior to the start of the service. If separate acolytes are used, the candles are lit at the start of the service.
13. Dressing at the church: Classrooms are available for this purpose. Please do not leave valuables in the classroom unattended. Zion is not responsible for any losses.
14. Refreshments, for the bridal party and family, may be served in the Fellowship Hall. The bridal party may use the kitchen. No alcoholic beverages are to be served on church property.
15. Saturday Evening Worship begins at 6:00 p.m. Therefore we ask that a wedding service begin no later than 4:00 p.m. to accommodate the custodian to prepare for the evening service.

FEES

Taking care of all fees before the day of the rehearsal is helpful. We ask that you bring the fees to the church office when you bring in your wedding documents.

The County Recorder Office charges a fee for a marriage license.

The PREPARE/ENRICH pre-marriage counseling inventory currently is also \$35.00.

The people involved in a wedding spend many hours consulting, planning, preparing, and rehearsing to make your wedding special. Good etiquette requires that they be compensated accordingly. A suggested honorarium:

1. Organist \$100.00
2. Soloist \$50.00
3. Custodian \$50.00
4. Pastor: There is no set fee for the pastor's services. However, a \$100 honorarium is customary.
5. The couple is responsible for the reimbursements of bulletins that are ordered through the congregation.

OTHER FEES

Non-Member	\$150 + \$35 Custodian
Wedding & Reception	\$200 + \$50 Custodian

MEMBERS

Wedding + Reception	\$50 (\$30 Custodian / \$20 Church)
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INVITATIONS

1. As a courtesy, please send a wedding invitation to the pastor officiating, the organist, and the custodian. If you wish to send only one invitation to the church office, the church secretary can distribute the information to them.
2. As a courtesy, please send a wedding invitation to any soloists or others that are performing at your wedding.
3. If you expect the pastor and his wife to attend the rehearsal dinner, please let him know in advance. Be sure to send a complete invitation to their home address.

ITEMS WITH DEADLINES

1. The license paperwork is valid forever if it is picked up within 60 days.
2. The state license paperwork (the entire packet) must be left with the office secretary at least four days (Tuesday) before the wedding.
3. If the secretary is doing the bulletin folders, in the month before the wedding date, the following must take place:

Four weeks before the wedding: Bring your wedding ceremony information and blank bulletin folders to the office: (If you bring the information on a floppy or if you e-mail the information, you have until three weeks before the wedding.)

Two weeks before: You must proof a copy of the bulletin folder. (If changes are to be made, you must proof a copy once more before the secretary prints the final folders.)

ZION EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH
Humboldt, Iowa

MARRIAGE APPLICATION FORM

The following application will be reviewed by the Board of Elders of Zion Ev. Lutheran Church:

GROOM

BRIDE

FULL NAME _____

FULL NAME _____

USUAL ADDRESS _____

USUAL ADDRESS _____

PHONE / CELL # _____

PHONE / CELL # _____

USUAL OCCUPATION _____

USUAL OCCUPATION _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____

RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION _____

RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION _____

WEDDING DATE _____

TIME _____

NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN YOUR WEDDING PARTY _____

REHEARSAL DATE _____

TIME _____

REHEARSAL DINNER LOCATION _____ TIME _____

RECEPTION LOCATION _____

We have read this Marriage Manual and understand its content and desire to have our Wedding Service at Zion Ev. Lutheran Church.

Groom

Bride

Reviewed by the Board of Elders On _____

Chairman – Board Of Elders