

**Wedding Guidelines & Use of Church
St. Luke Lutheran Church ELCA
N6193 State Hwy 32
Sheboygan Falls, WI 50385-2343
920-467-6149**

**Church office email: office@stlukeshebfalls.org
Website: www.stlukeshebfalls.org**

Christian marriage is an important recognition of a life-transforming transition from individual to married life. The wedding ceremony seeks God's blessing on you as a couple as well as providing a recognition and support of the community gathered to celebrate your union.

Scheduling of Wedding

- The pastor would appreciate being contacted regarding the date and time of the wedding as soon as possible so that conflicts can be avoided. The wedding should be scheduled at least three (3) months in advance. We can accommodate 180 guests and we are handicap accessible.
- While St. Luke Church is happy to serve the needs of non-church members and happily offers its hospitality to all, if, in the rare instance a conflict over date and time of your wedding arises, active church members will be given priority in the scheduling of a wedding. However, once your deposit has been paid and the date and time have been reserved for you, you will not be pre-empted from your planned wedding.
- No weddings will be scheduled during holy week and only one wedding shall be scheduled for a specific date- first come, first served!

Premarital Counseling

- The couple will schedule with the pastor, two (2) to five (5) sessions of required premarital counseling. These sessions will take place as least one month prior to the wedding. There is a fee of \$35.00 to score the premarital survey which will be taken. Make checks payable: Life Innovations, Inc. If the couple cannot keep the scheduled appointment(s), it is their responsibility to contact the pastor in advance.

The Rehearsal

- The couple will have a rehearsal at least one day in advance. Normally, a rehearsal, usually lasting less than an hour, is scheduled the day before the wedding. All wedding party participants are expected to be present for the rehearsal. The Pastor or church representative and organist will normally be present.
- The marriage license shall be produced two (2) weeks in advance of the wedding. Failure to provide the license will result in the cancelling of the wedding.
- No liquor or drinking of alcoholic beverages before or during the wedding ceremony, and no use of non-prescription drugs or controlled substances are allowed on the church grounds and if any use is found, the responsible person(s) will be required to leave at once, whether they are part of the wedding or not.

- Smoking is not allowed in the building or on the church grounds.
- It is suggested to notify the custodian two (2) weeks prior to the wedding to discuss when the church needs to be open for floral deliveries or other uses on the wedding day. Some of these uses are if you would like the Communion rail in or out, if any or all of the wedding party is getting dressed at the church and if there will be a Unity Candle used. The custodian may have other options or concerns for your special day that can be worked out during that conversation.

Service/Wedding Ceremony

- The couple may have wedding bulletins printed for use by the congregation. In such circumstances, the service must be planned at least three (3) weeks in advance of the wedding to allow the church secretary enough time to print. Names of the bridal party, ushers, musicians, or other participants must be submitted at this time. It is the responsibility of the couple to select a bulletin far enough in advance so it can be ordered and received in the church office three (3) weeks prior to the wedding. Of course, couples may have a bulletin done by a professional printer, after approval of the content by the Pastor.
- You, the couple, are invited to request permission to write your own vows and promises. Such personal and meaningful promises are encouraged. They must include a statement of complete sharing which is the core of marriage, and make clear that the vows and promises to each other are for a life-long commitment. The vows to each other are a promise of fidelity and bonding commitment to each other under the blessing, guidance and support of God. The vows are to be in the church office three (3) weeks prior to the wedding for approval of the content by the Pastor.
- If the couple desires to write their own service, this information must be turned in to the pastor three (3) weeks in advance of the wedding. The pastor can provide helpful suggestions and material if so desired.
- If a pastor other than the pastor from St. Luke Lutheran Church is desired, he or she may assist or officiate in the service only with the consent of the St. Luke pastor and of the Church Council.
- If the couple desires to have an assistant, this individual may be clergy (see above), a member of the family, or a friend.
- If the celebration of Holy Communion is desired, it must be open to the entire congregation and not just the couple, bridal party, or a select few. If circumstances prevent including the congregation (such as the time element, etc.) the marriage service will be used alone. The sacrament of Holy Communion is for the gathered congregation and community in Christ.
- The couple must provide the white runner and Unity Candle, if so desired. You, the couple, are responsible for purchasing the “unity candle,” its holder, and the two side candles, and their holders. St. Luke has a Unity Candle holder available for use, if you choose not to purchase your own.

- Use of rice, birdseed, confetti or other “throwable” items are not permitted on the church grounds or in the church building.
- Nothing of any kind, including flowers, bows or decorations can be taped to the ends of the pews or on any furniture in the sanctuary. It is very difficult to get the sticky glue off the furniture from tape. Slender “greenhouse wire” may be used instead.
- Flowers are a wonderful decoration for your wedding. However, no flowers can be placed on the altar, except a rose or two in memory of a loved one. Otherwise, flowers can be accommodated on the platform underneath the cross.

Music

- It is expected that, normally, one of the St. Luke Church organists or musicians may be available to play for any weddings at the church. However, you the couple may select an organist or musician of your choosing after approval by the Pastor who will determine the appropriateness for a Christian church worship service of the music selected and the musicians playing it.
- The organist and other musical performers must be contacted for their services at least two (2) months prior to your wedding day, arranging with them their fee and any music you wish included in the wedding service/ceremony.

Additional Guidelines

- Christian marriage is an important recognition of a transition from individual to married life, seeking God’s blessing as well as the recognition and support of the community. Consideration of membership in the church at this time is recommended.
- We offer digital recording of the ceremony. Members in good standing for at least six (6) months will be charged a \$25 fee, paid prior to event. Includes one copy of a digital recording. Subsequent copies will be \$1 per copy. Non-members will be charged a \$100 fee paid prior to event includes one copy of digital recording. Subsequent copies will be \$5 per copy. Digital recordings can only be requested by the person(s) requesting the wedding. Written confirmation to the Church Secretary is needed prior to releasing recordings to anyone else. We are not in the video profession and are not responsible for quality of recording. We also are not responsible for equipment malfunction.
- The church’s fellowship hall is available on the day of the wedding for a wedding reception. There is no additional fee for church members in good standing. Non-church members are charged \$200 for its use, which covers the cost of the custodian and building use. Again, all policies on the prohibition of smoking, liquor, alcoholic use and the use of illegal non-prescription or controlled substance drugs still apply.
- Fee for the use of the facility for non-members is \$600.00. This includes the use of the church, the janitor fees, a church representative and pastoral services. In order to waive the above fees, the bride and/or groom must be members in good standing for at least six (6) months.

- A non-refundable deposit of \$150 is required to hold your date. The remaining balance is due 60 days before the wedding day.
- All fees must be given to the pastor prior to the wedding rehearsal. One check may be payable to “St. Luke Lutheran Church”.

If you have any questions concerning having your wedding at St. Luke Lutheran Church or wish to reserve a date and time for your wedding, please contact the Pastor or Church Secretary at 920-467-6149 as soon as possible.

Effective November 1, 2001
Updated July 15, 2009
Policy Updated July, 2013