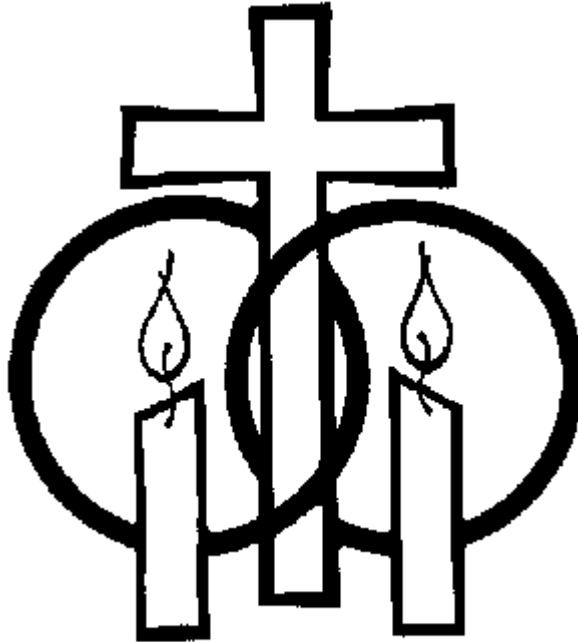


**Preparing for Marriage
At
Trinity Lutheran Church**



**2163 Mayhew Lake Road
Sauk Rapids, MN 56379
Phone: (320)252-3670
www.trinitysr.org
office@trinitysr.org**

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Dear Friends in Christ,

The fact that you are considering having your wedding at Trinity indicates your desire to have God and His church be a vital part of your marriage. The truth is, God is vitally interested in your marriage. After all, it is God who ordained marriage when He said: *“It is not good for the man to be alone.”* When the Lord created Eve and brought her to Adam, Adam said: *“This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.”* (Genesis 2:18-24) Every wife is God’s special wedding gift to her husband and every husband is God’s special gift to his wife.

We at Trinity are also vitally interested in your marriage and desire that you find a lifetime of joy together as you experience the love and blessings which your Heavenly Father gives you in your life of “oneness.” For that reason, we offer not just a building to hold a wedding service, but preparation for your marriage that will help you in fulfilling a happy marriage that is God pleasing and rich for you. This booklet outlines that preparation process.

May the Lord richly bless your marriage and marriage prep!

Pastors: Rev. David W. Hinz (320) 815-2779 pastorhinz@trinitysr.org

Wedding Coordinator: Linda Kothman (320) 255-9813

lindapiano4@gmail.com

Church Secretary: Judy Rehwaldt (320)252-3670 office@trinitysr.org

***Wedding Musicians:** Linda Kothman (see above)

Ruth Immerfall (320) 291-9293 ruthimmerfall@gmail.com

**You may select and contact as necessary.*

Trinity's Pre-marriage Process

- Contact Pastor for wedding approval.
 - *When approved by Pastor, your wedding date will be placed on the church calendar.*

- Receive this “*Preparing Your Marriage*” booklet and application.
 - *Please read through the booklet thoroughly.*

- Complete the application and turn it in with your deposit to the church office.

- Complete the Pre-Marriage counseling sessions with Pastor.
 - *He will speak with you about beginning sessions.*
 - *This will include an online “couples Inventory” to be taken by each of you. The cost is \$35.*

- The Wedding Coordinator will contact you two months before your wedding to schedule a meeting.
 - *Logistics, schedule, and details of the rehearsal and wedding service will be discussed.*
 - *Feel free to contact the Wedding Coordinator before this meeting if you have questions.*

- Turn in a copy of your wedding bulletin to the pastor (normally at the last premarital session) for review and approval.

- Deliver the marriage license to the church office.
 - *Do this as soon as you receive it from the courthouse, but no later than the week before your wedding.*

Legal Matters

You will need to consult the Marriage License Bureau of any county in Minnesota for information regarding a marriage license. The following information may be helpful to you:

1. Do not apply for your marriage license before you complete premarital counseling with pastor and receive a letter from him, verifying that you have completed counseling. A substantial financial discount on the license fee is awarded to couples who have completed counseling.
2. You can apply at any county courthouse in the State of Minnesota. Your license is valid for a period of six months from date of application.
3. Two members of the wedding party need to sign for the license. There is a five day waiting period from the day of application to day of issuance.
4. The License Bureau is generally open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
5. The law requires that the male and female applicant be 18 years of age or older. If one or both are under 18, a waiver is needed from the court with parental or legal guardian consent.

You must have a valid license and the license must be in the possession of the pastor before the wedding can take place.

Payment of fees is required prior to the wedding (members)

\$50.00 Church utilization fee paid to “Trinity Lutheran church” and required to lock in the reservation date, paid at the time reservation is made.

\$225.00 Pastor

\$175.00 Wedding coordinator – **All fees paid to the wedding coordinator at the rehearsal**

\$150.00 Use of Fellowship hall (*optional*)

Rehearsal

It is best to hold the wedding rehearsal on the evening prior to the wedding. Rehearsals should not last more than thirty minutes. We request that parties involved be on time for the rehearsal. All members of the wedding party should be present at the rehearsal.

Wedding parties should remember that the church is God's house and should show proper respect. If there are persons in the wedding party who are not familiar with the Christian Church and what is appropriate in such a church, kindly explain to them the importance of respectful behavior and appropriate dress.

Some Requests and Helpful Suggestions

1. Please be on time for the rehearsal and the wedding service.
2. No throwing of confetti, rice or any other items on the premises.
Bubbles are acceptable.
3. **No alcohol on the premises or smoking in the building.**
4. We discourage the taking of flash pictures by anyone during the wedding service. Professional photographers and videographers must consult with the pastor before the service.
5. Arrangements and placements of floral decorations should be made with the wedding coordinator. Any floral display that in any way detracts from the chancel or covers up any part of the altar is not in order. The seasonal paraments on the altar and pulpit will remain the correct seasonal color. No decorations may be fastened on the woodwork with tacks.
6. The wedding coordinator will cover unity displays, logistics, paperwork and many other details with you.

Ten ways to increase the success of your marriage to over 95%

1. Both husband and wife are committed believers in Jesus Christ.
2. They worship together regularly.
3. They pray together (not just at mealtime).

Prior to marriage, they . . .

4. commit to at least a 6 month engagement.
5. set clear boundaries for physical contact.
6. commit to chastity.
7. live in separate households.*
8. receive premarital counseling, using a relationship inventory.
9. go on an engagement encounter or enrichment experience.
10. Follow-up after your marriage with marriage encounter, marriage enrichment and family life experiences.

** If you are living together, please speak with Pastor before proceeding with any further wedding plans. We recognize that many couples choose to cohabit before marriage. Our concern is for you to build a strong and fulfilling marriage. Studies have consistently shown that couples who cohabit have an 85% relationship failure rate and their divorce rate increases to 75%. We welcome the opportunity to look at your living arrangement with you and strive, together with you, to reach your goal of a joy-filled relationship.*

The Christian wedding ceremony

1. Christian couples want their wedding ceremony to be characterized not only by dignity, reverence and joy, but by the very spirit of Christ Himself. Therefore, every wedding service at Trinity Lutheran Church is an act of worship. It's a ceremony in which people, particularly you as bride and groom, come together to offer special thanks and praise, and to ask God's blessing upon your life together as husband and wife. Worship is centered in Christ. Several sections of Scripture picture the relationship of Christ to His church in the imagery of the bridegroom and the bride (Ephesians 5:22-33). (*See also "Suggested Bible Readings for Weddings" in this booklet*)
2. A Christian wedding is also a public act. It is the worship of all who are gathered. Strange as this may sound at first, it means that your wedding is not for you alone. Those who come should come not as spectators, but as worshippers. By emphasizing the congregational nature of the Christian wedding, you will be offering a witness of faith to many and helping those who come to share your joy to be true participants in this joyful occasion in your life.
3. Therefore, wherever possible, we encourage you to have congregational participation. The singing of hymns/songs by the congregation is always appropriate. We will ask the congregation to join in the praying of the Lord's Prayer.
4. The music used in your wedding forms an important part of the wedding service. Your decisions about music, therefore, should be made with the following guidelines in mind:

- a. The wedding ceremony is a service of Christian worship. The fact that you've chosen a church wedding is an indication that you want God's blessing to be part of your married life. Therefore, the service, including music, should reflect the praise of God and the love of Christ for His church as the model for love in marriage. You may want to meet with our wedding musicians (*Suggestions listed on p. 1*) for musical suggestions – vocal and instrumental – appropriate for a Christian wedding.
 - b. Music is a service rendered, as are flowers and photographs. Be sure to discuss the musician's fees. They are generally commensurate with performance experience, number of rehearsals, and amount of selections to be performed. Do not assume a friend will perform for free. *We suggest starting at \$100, depending on the amount of music needed for your ceremony.* Organist/accompanist/soloist fees should be paid to them at the time of the wedding rehearsal.
 - c. All music, including the pre-service music, needs to be approved by the pastor. Receive his permission early to avoid the need to quickly find an alternate. If at all possible, it is preferred that live musicians are used for all music.
5. We surely have no right to ask the blessing of our Lord upon a marriage which ignores Him in His own house and centers everything upon the beauty of the bride, the dresses, the decorations, etc. These things may all add much to the joy of this day, but the truly worthy, memorable and lasting thing – which must abide when all else has faded – is His blessing. For this reason, you will want to plan your service to be worshipful and in good order.

The Order of Service

Pre-service Music

Processional

Invocation

Hymn or Vocal Selection (Optional)

Scripture Readings

Homily

Hymn or Vocal Selection (Optional)

The Marriage Rite:

The Mutual Consent

The Exchange of Vows

The Exchange of Rings

The Pronouncement of Marriage

The Marriage Blessing

The Lighting of the Unity Candle (Optional)

(Vocal Selection – Optional)

Prayer and Lord's Prayer

Benediction

Presentation of the Couple

Recessional

Suggested Bible Readings for Weddings

The following list of familiar and frequently used Bible readings appropriate for a Christian wedding service is by no means exhaustive. However, it does provide a starting point for consideration. If a Scripture passage is selected that is not on this list, please indicate the selection to the pastor before the service is printed.

Genesis 2:18-24

Psalm 23, 46, 121

Matthew 19:4-6

John 2:1-11

John 15:9-12

I Corinthians 13

Ephesians 5:22-33

Philippians 4:4-9

Colossians 3:12-17

I John 4:7-12

