

Man and Woman in Christ: Preparing for Your Christian Marriage



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So, you want to get married! Are you sure? The world seems to think many things about marriage, including living together to practice”, prenuptial agreements, experimenting with open relationships and writing your own vows. But marriage is so much bigger—and better—than what you hear or often experience!

God’s got plans for husbands and wives. There’s a reason He started out forming two humans—one male, one female—and joining them together in a union unlike anything in the animal kingdom. And even after they fell into sin and selfishness and basically ruined their marriage, God redeemed them—and their marriage by promising a Savior.

You wanting to get married is awesome! You wanting to get married here at Trinity says even more! We believe your request shows a desire to have Christ Jesus—that Savior God would send—to be the central piece of your union as husband and wife!

As a body in Christ, the Church (here as Trinity) is all about supporting, nourishing, encouraging, and upholding each member, and that includes the unit that is to be you two! We are invested in your life-long union with Christ, one another, and with us! This packet is our first official “welcome” into the life of marital support for you and your spouse! We are here to lovingly give it to you straight—what works, what doesn’t work, and how to discover what else will work or not work for you—all according to the Truth of Jesus who has shared with us a Word of guidance, hope, peace, and promise!

So let’s get started, shall we?

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

Pre-marriage is a Process:

Some of this is ongoing with you two:

- Dating
- Developing
- Asking

Some becomes a planning for a special day – finding a photographer, choosing a cake and/or caterer, finding a venue, talking to your church.

But, by your invitation, some of it is an invitation to work with us directly:

- Contacting the Pastor for approval

- Completing an application and turning in a deposit

- Pre-Marital Counseling with Pastor

- Studying the marriage couple - filling out an online “inventory” (cost \$35 – reduces cost of marriage license with proof of coursework)

- Studying the marriage Guide (Scripture)

- Practicing Techniques (following at home exercises)

- Wedding coordination

- Logistics – schedule, rehearsal details, music, wedding day planning

- Questions and Answers

- Developing and copying a wedding bulletin for pastoral approval

- Delivering the marriage license to the office no later than one week prior to the wedding day.

We believe conversation is key – listening, sharing, working together in Christ to guide more than a Big Day, but a larger life as husband and wife.

Legal Matters

Yes, legal stuff matters...

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

1. Do not apply for a marriage license prior to premarital counseling with pastor. A substantial financial discount on the license fee is awarded to couples who have completed counseling. Apply at any county courthouse in the State of Minnesota. License is valid for a period of six months from date of application.
2. Two members of the wedding party need to sign for the license. Five day waiting period from the day of application to the day of issuance.
3. The License Bureau is open Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
4. The Law requires that the male and female applicant be 18 years of age or older. Any under 18, must provide a waiver from the court with parental or legal guardian consent.

You must provide a valid license and license must be in the possession of the pastor prior to the wedding.

Financial Matters

Weddings cost. Marriages cost. Everything has a cost. Some sacrifices are easy to make and well worth it. For instance, you sacrifice having a wedding in the woods when you choose to hold a wedding in a Church. Some sacrifices are easy, some more difficult. But the sacrifices you make for your spouse are the best and most important investments you can make!

Here are a few costs for us you should know about:

\$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 Optional use of Fellowship Hall

Rehearsal

As you’ll hear—and we pray take to heart—practicing marriage by moving in together, or maintaining a sexual relationship prior to your wedding, won’t create a recipe for fidelity or lasting faithfulness. Statistics will reveal they are a recipe for divorce and brokenness. We’re just so used to seeing—and assuming—the opposite is true. Such is the nature of our cultural dilemma—in the hopes of getting what we think we want, we ignore the reality of how things actually work. It’s why we drink lots of soda even when we know it’s not good for us!

Rehearsing for a wedding, on the other hand, is well worth our time. Here’s what you can expect:

*Wedding rehearsals are generally held the evening before the wedding. Expect it to last approximately 30 minutes. Please be prompt and have everyone present.

*Wherever the wedding Service is held, it will be, at least for that moment, “God’s local house”. When we visit someone’s house, we abide by their etiquette. In God’s house we act with respect and integrity.

So... Be on time for rehearsal and wedding day!

Be sober.

Be invested in the process

Don’t use confetti

Top 10 Ways to RUIN Your Marriage

10. Look for things that are wrong instead of things that are good or right with your spouse – and be sure to say something about it to them
9. Begin discussions with aggressive criticism and sarcasm as though you expect a fight.
8. When your spouse raises an issue, become defensive and find blame in the other person for the problem or deflect it with excuses in order to avoid taking any responsibility!
7. In any disagreement, be sure to correct the other – especially in front of others.
6. Point out your spouse’s flaws, mistakes, short-comings, and weaknesses to your partner regularly if not daily.
5. Be uninterested in your spouse’s world – don’t ask any questions about them or their day (activities).
4. Use lousy listening skills
3. Scowl
2. Disengage and avoid your partner
1. Do NOT pray for your spouse or your relationship

Top Ten Ways You CAN BUILD A LASTING RELATIONSHIP—RIGHT NOW!

10. Both husband and wife are committed believers in Jesus Christ.
 9. They worship together regularly.
 8. They pray together (not just at mealtime).
- Prior to marriage, they . . .
7. commit to at least a 6-month engagement.
 6. set clear boundaries for physical contact.
 5. commit to chastity.
 4. live in separate households.
 3. receive premarital counseling, using a relationship inventory.
 2. go on an engagement encounter or enrichment experience.
 1. Follow-up after marriage with marriage encounter, marriage Enrichment, or family life experiences.

The Christian Wedding Ceremony

1. An Act of Worship:

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 Time of Testimony:

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. A Reason to Celebrate:

- a. 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.

- b. 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 number 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.

4. A Prayer:

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 or other Unity Symbol (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

Psalms 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

Ready to dive into God's design for a beautiful Life-long union? Contact the office and we'll get you started.

Further Resources:

www.focusonthefamily.com/?s=cherish

www.zoescor.com

