



ST. MATTHEW'S EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

766 West Wabasha, Winona, MN 55987

(507) 452-2085

Wedding Guidelines at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

The Elders of our congregation oversee all worship services that are performed by the Pastor of the congregation. All worship services are first and foremost to the glory of God. The Board of Elders have reviewed the policies regarding wedding services at St. Matthew's and the following key points have been highlighted.

1. A wedding service is a worship service.
2. All people leading that worship service will be members of our congregation or members of the WELS (Wisconsin Synod) or ELS (Evangelical Lutheran Synod). This includes the pastor(s), organist, soloist or any group of singers or musicians. This **does not** include the members of the wedding party, ushers, candle lighters or other peripheral duties.
3. All of the musical selections must be approved by the pastor(s) and our head organist. There may be some times when wording will need to be changed in a song or the song might not be appropriate for a worship service.
4. There will be no alcohol or smoking in the church & school. There will be no alcohol consumed on church grounds. Smoking is permitted outside the buildings as long as cigarette butts are disposed of properly.
5. There are premarital classes for the couple to be married. The exact number of classes will be determined by the pastor. These classes run from an hour to an hour and a half. We suggest that these be completed at least a month before the wedding. There may be other meetings for working out the arrangements of the wedding.
6. Most weddings are performed on Saturdays. Since worship services start at 6:00 pm, the latest starting time for the wedding is 3:00 PM. In setting the time, consideration must also be given to the taking of pictures and clean up after the wedding.
7. A wedding license from the state of Minnesota is needed for all weddings conducted at St. Matthews or conducted by the clergy of St. Matthew's in the state of Minnesota.
8. God's Word defines marriage as a lifelong commitment between a woman and a man. We rejoice that you will begin that lifelong commitment and union in God's house, gathered around



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God's Word. Couples that are living together are in essence starting that lifelong union before the legal and God pleasing commitment that God commands in His Word.

9. In order to start your marriage in a way which is God pleasing and which allows you the best chance of a successful, lifelong union, couples who are living together will make arrangements to establish separate residences. The couple will also commit to maintaining sexual purity according to God's Word. This means no sexual relations until after the wedding.

St. Matthew's will not be obligated to perform the wedding ceremony if these requirements are not met. The elders with the Pastor make the final decision on the approval of weddings at St. Matthew's

The pastor will discuss suggested wedding fees for those planning their wedding at St. Matthew's.

Your wedding date is reserved once you have read and agreed to these guidelines by signing below and met with the pastor to ensure that the church is available on your selected date. If you need to meet and counsel with the pastor first concerning questions and/or your personal situation, please do so as soon as possible.

As soon as this agreement is signed, we can meet to go over the worship service so that you can begin your wedding arrangements as soon as possible.

Groom _____ **Date** _____

Bride _____ **Date** _____