

Wedding Ceremony Addendum

All wedding ceremonies held at Morning Star Lutheran Church are Christ-centered worship services, in keeping with our congregation's Christian/Lutheran theological teachings. Please read the "Doctrine and Policy Regarding Marriage" explanation at the end of this addendum. We expect the bride and groom to understand our Bible teachings, and for one or both to be in fellowship with our church as members of our congregation or another WELS/ELS congregation. For those not affiliated with Morning Star or the WELS/ELS, we offer a Bible Information Class to couples so they can become familiar with the main Bible teachings we profess.

Service Planning The pastor who officiates the wedding plans the service to be Christ-centered, reverent, and presented with the excellence that our loving God deserves. Since the wedding service is a worship service, the wedding couple must make no assumptions about their personal preferences for any part of the service until they meet with the pastor who will preside at their wedding. Certain musical selections and styles, as well as instruments and singing, promote a Christ-centered wedding service, and the pastor will discuss these choices with the wedding couple. All other elements of the service will also be discussed when the couple meets with the pastor. Couples who wish to involve musicians must discuss these arrangements with the pastor.

Pre-marriage Seminar Couples getting married at Morning Star are expected to complete a pre-marriage seminar with the officiating pastor. The purpose of this seminar is to understand and appreciate God's design for marriage and the family as revealed to us in God's Word.

Scheduling a Date and Time It is recommended that the couple contact the pastor and church office as much in advance as possible to begin wedding plans and schedule the date of the ceremony. **In order to formally reserve the church for a wedding date, the Wedding Ceremony Reservation Form must be completed and submitted to the church office.** Please note: worship services are held every Saturday at 5:00PM. Wedding ceremonies held on Saturdays need to schedule accordingly; all wedding participants need to vacate the church sanctuary by 3:30PM to allow for service preparation. Ceremonies held on a school day cannot begin any sooner than 4:00PM in order for school families to exit the building and campus at dismissal.

Personnel for Wedding Ceremonies In addition to the pastor and musicians, personnel are required for weddings held at Morning Star.

- **Facility supervisor:** A trained member of Morning Star will be assigned to each wedding and couple. The supervisor's responsibilities include providing access to the building, on-site supervision during the rehearsal and the ceremony, and giving assistance to the wedding party and those assisting with the ceremony. A complete list of supervisor duties is listed on the next page.
- **Audio operator:** A trained audio operator will be assigned to each wedding to run the sound system for the rehearsal and the ceremony. The audio operator is responsible for microphone and audio board arrangements for all the musicians.
- **Video operator:** If the couple chooses to use the video projection system for the ceremony, a trained video operator will be assigned to run the video slideshow for the rehearsal and the ceremony. The couple should discuss the slideshow presentation with the pastor and church office to make the necessary preparations. Please note: if the couple wishes to film the ceremony, they should select and make arrangements with a videographer.
- **Custodian:** To ensure that the facility is cleaned before and after the ceremony, a custodial staff member will be assigned to each wedding. The facility supervisor will schedule the custodian to clean.

Wedding Ceremony Fees

Personnel fees: All ceremonies for congregation members and nonmembers are charged the following fees for the services rendered by personnel assigned to the wedding.

- Facility supervisor = \$125.00 payable by cash or check to the individual
- Audio operator = \$50.00 payable by cash or check to the individual
- Video operator (if using the projection system) = \$50.00 payable by cash or check to the individual
- Custodian = \$50.00 payable by cash or check to Morning Star (to pay the wages of custodial staff)

All these individual payments must be given to the facility supervisor who will distribute them to the personnel. Personnel payments are due before/by the wedding rehearsal.

Facility rental fee: Members of the congregation are not charged a facility rental fee; a wedding ceremony is a service provided to our members who support the congregation's ministry with their offerings. Former member sons and daughters of Morning Star (i.e. those who were members during their youth/young adulthood and have joined other churches) who are in fellowship with the WELS/ELS are given member status for weddings and are not charged the facility rental fee. For those who are not members of Morning Star, a rental fee of \$250.00 is charged for the use of the facility payable to Morning Star. The facility rental payment should be given to the facility supervisor and is due before/by the wedding rehearsal.

Suggested Gratuity for Services The services of the officiating pastor and the musicians typically involve a gratuity. These servants invest time and effort preparing and practicing for the wedding in advance of the rehearsal and ceremony. As a guide for the couple, a suggested gratuity amount is listed below. **The couple is free to determine the amount.** These amounts may vary depending on the amount of involvement in the ceremony and number of musical pieces performed. Gratuities are given by the couple directly to the individuals providing their services.

- Officiating pastor = \$150.00
- Keyboardist/Organist = \$125.00
- Soloist = \$100.00
- Instrumentalist = \$100.00

Wedding Information Form As a guide for planning and a record of important information about the wedding, couples work with the officiating pastor to complete the Wedding Information Form. This form will be completed over the duration of the planning process. **It is recommended that all information is provided to the church office at least two weeks before the ceremony.**

Facility Supervisor Responsibilities

In advance of the wedding rehearsal:

1. Obtain a copy of the Wedding Ceremony Application Form from the church office.
2. Communicate with the couple, officiating pastor, and musicians to determine their needs and schedule for accessing the facility in advance of the rehearsal. Confirm the time of arrival of wedding personnel on the days of the rehearsal and wedding.
3. As needed, provide facility access and on-site supervision for any pre-rehearsal visits to the church. Members of Morning Star may be able to arrange their own access; nonmembers will require access and supervision.

4. Communicate with the couple regarding plans to decorate/adorn the church and gathering area for the wedding (flowers, candles, decorations, etc.). Follow the Guidelines Governing Appearance and Décor in the next section.
5. Make arrangements for custodial services to be provided before and after the wedding.
6. Make arrangements with the couple to receive and distribute the personnel payments and the facility rental payment (before/by the rehearsal).

At the rehearsal and the wedding:

1. Arrive at least 15 minutes before the scheduled time of arrival of wedding personnel and wedding party members.
2. Unlock (key open) the four doors of the main entrance.
3. Adjust/set the heating and air conditioning as needed.
4. Turn on lights in the gathering space and sanctuary as needed.
5. Open/close shades in the sanctuary as needed.
6. Remove the friendship registers from the pews and place them into the chair storage room. Move the baptismal font into the chair storage room.
7. Light the chancel candles 10-15 minutes before the ceremony begins. Candles should be lit for the photo session taking place before or after the ceremony.
8. As wedding personnel/party arrive, be available to them for directions and guidance.
 - Show them locations of restrooms.
 - Show them locations of changing rooms. (females – conference room in administration area; males – sacristy and altar storage area; larger spaces may be utilized if needed)
 - Snacks/refreshments must be served and consumed at the kitchenette.
 - Answer questions and provide assistance as needed. Remain available to people during their time in the facility.
9. Following the guidelines for facility use (next section), provide direction and supervision as needed.

After the rehearsal and the wedding:

1. Remain in the facility until all wedding participants depart.
2. Extinguish the chancel candles after the ceremony or after the photo session.
3. Move the baptismal font back into the church. Return the friendship registers to their pew locations. Dispose of bulletins left behind and return hymnals to their racks under the pews.
4. Conduct a walk-through of the facility, checking to see that all areas are picked up and returned to their original condition/arrangement. Check sanctuary, sacristy, altar storage, parent/child room, gathering area, restrooms, fireside room/chapel, kitchenette, and administration area. If anything is missing, damaged, or any item is left behind, please report it to the church office. Note: a custodial staff member will clean the facility after the ceremony.
5. Return operations to original settings as needed: sanctuary shades, heating/AC, lights turned off, and four doors of the main entrance locked (key shut).

Guidelines Governing the Appearance and Décor of the Church and Gathering Area for Weddings The facility supervisor is responsible for communicating with the couple regarding wedding decorations and ensuring that these guidelines are followed.

Decorations: Decorations must appropriately accent the décor of the facility in a manner that does not jeopardize the aesthetic appearance and the condition of the building. No adhesives, glues, pins, staples, tacks, nails, floral tape, double-sided tape, sticky-tack, clamps or any other substances are allowed for attaching decorative elements to the church sanctuary and gathering area surfaces, floors, walls, windows, brick, woodwork, and furnishings. Please contact the facility supervisor to discuss ways decorations can be placed and fastened.

Flowers: All plants and flowers require a protective waterproof plate or base underneath when placed on the altar, chancel, floors, carpet and plant stands. Protective plates and stands will be provided by Morning Star. Flower girls may toss only silk/artificial flower petals during the processional; real flowers are not allowed since they can stain floors and carpets.

Candles: Flame candles are not allowed except for the two chancel candles (on stands) and wedding unity candles on a protective base in the chancel area. Battery-operated (non-flame) candles are allowed in the sanctuary.

Banners: A banner stand is available for banners. Banners must not be attached to any other surface.

Aisle Runners: If an aisle runner is used, it must consist of a material that can adhere to the floor without adhesives, tape, tacks, nails, etc., and provides a safe walking surface.

Furnishings: Sanctuary and gathering area furnishings must remain in their predetermined locations. Furnishings include baptismal font, altar, pulpit, piano, organ, individual chairs, plant stands, coffee tables, and end tables. Relocation or rearrangement of furnishings for the wedding requires the permission of the officiating pastor or the facility supervisor. Items must be returned to their predetermined locations after the wedding.

Audio and Video Equipment: Only the assigned audio operator and video operator are allowed to operate the A/V equipment at the console. Set up and take down of microphones, sound equipment, and music equipment is restricted to operators, musicians, and vocalists trained with the equipment.

Food and Beverages: Food and beverages are not allowed in the sanctuary or adjacent rooms. Food/beverages must be served and consumed at the kitchenette.

Doctrine and Policy Regarding Marriage
Morning Star Evangelical Lutheran Church
(adopted by Morning Star's Coordinating Council 8/13/2015)

The Bible teaches that marriage was established and given by God at the time of creation. As he designed and instituted it, marriage is the life-long union of one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:4-6). It is a relationship that is to be honored and kept pure (Hebrews 13:4; Ephesians 5:22-33). As a man and woman promise life-long faithfulness to each other as husband and wife, God himself joins them as one. Marriage is not simply a contract between two consenting individuals, nor is it merely a creation of human society, culture, or tradition. God himself instituted marriage at the time of creation, and God himself joins a man and woman in marriage today.

The biblical teaching on marriage emphasizes the blessings God intends to convey to those joined together in the marital relationship. Through marriage God provides partners well suited and complementary to one another. In marriage, God provides a partner who will provide encouragement and support. Marriage is also to be the God-ordained means to procreate and to establish a stable environment in which children can be nurtured both physically and spiritually. Marriage is the one context God intended for the use of the blessing of sexual intimacy,

where the sexual union of one man and woman is an expression of love and oneness rather than a sinful satisfaction of lust. Finally, since we live in a fallen world, in marriage God provides a restraint for selfishness and sin as each partner strives to live the pure life that God intends for his people (1 Thessalonians 4:3-8).

This is the Bible's teaching about the origin, definition, and nature of marriage. For that reason it is also the doctrine of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Every congregation and called worker accepts the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the written Word of God and the only rule and norm of faith and practice. That marriage is the God-ordained union of one man and one woman is the clear teaching of the Bible, and therefore is the teaching and confession of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

The policy and practice of Morning Star Lutheran Church, a member congregation of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, is consistent with the synod's beliefs and teachings regarding marriage. We believe that marriage is the sacred, life-long union between one man and one woman. Therefore, our pastors will not officiate in any marriage ceremony or celebration and our church sanctuary may not be used for any activities related to a marriage ceremony or celebration that is inconsistent with these beliefs.