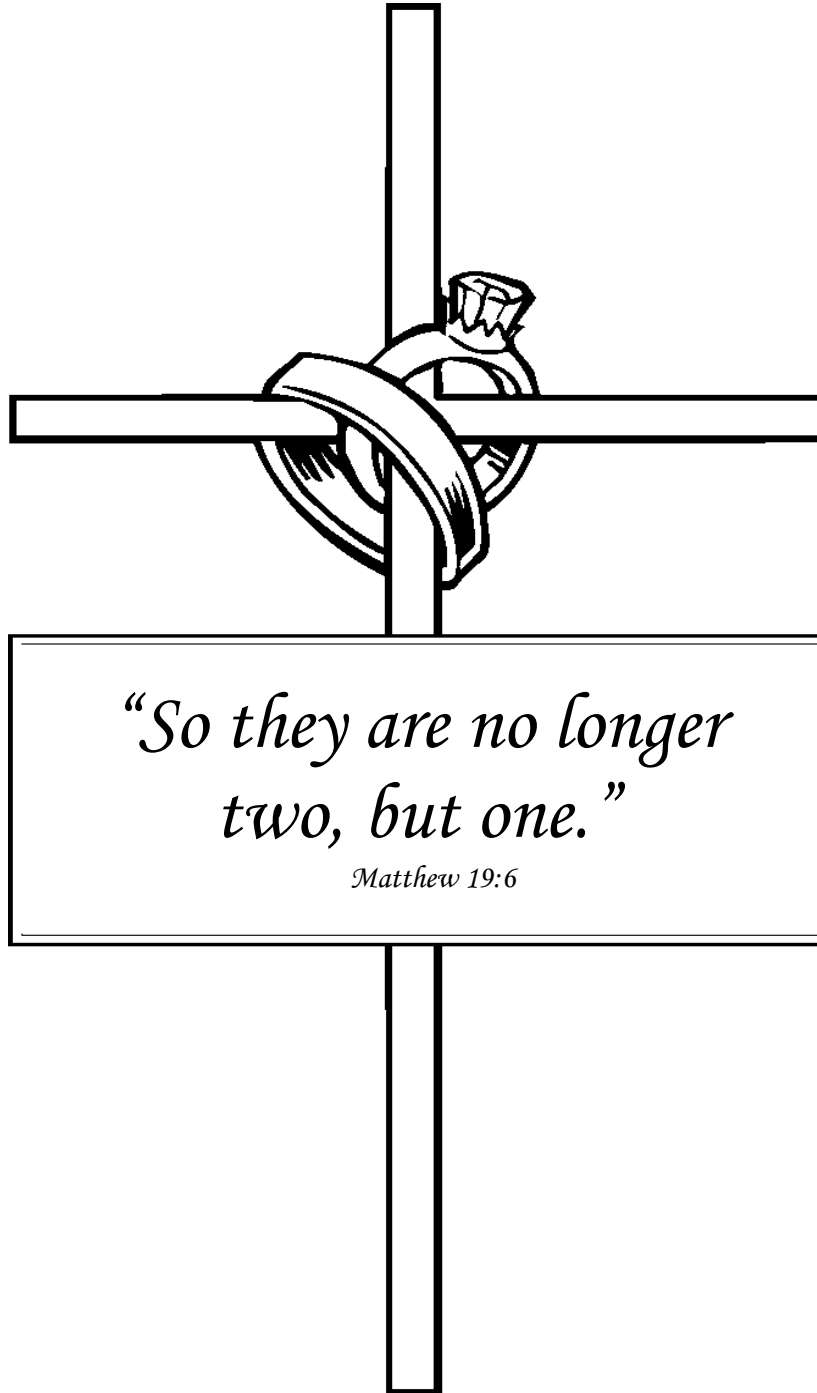




**PILGRIM
LUTHERAN**
CHURCH & SCHOOL



Rev. Tim Fraker

Rev. Dr. Michael Hanson
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Rev. Scott Malme

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Preparing for Your Wedding

Congratulations!

It is a joyful time for God’s people when they find the partner that God has created for them. Marriage is an honorable estate, created by God in Paradise, before humanity’s fall into sin. The fact that you two have come to this point in your life is certainly a blessing from above, and one for which we, along with you, give thanks to the Lord!

Now you have entered into one of the most important phases of your lives, the time when you prepare together to enter into the most important of all estates in our society—marriage. Think about it. After your wedding vows are said and the declaration of husband-and-wife is made, you both will have a title that God designed to last the rest of your lives!

As you well know, not everyone is able to enjoy the fullness of God’s blessings in marriage. Some never find the partner they desire. Some have been called to lives of singleness. Some have broken marriages. Some have difficult marriages. While these side effects of sin haunt our society, you are standing against the negative trend of marriage in our world by seeking to enter into this estate, and your church looks forward to helping you prepare now, celebrate on your wedding day, and receive God’s gifts as part of our congregation for all the years you share together.

In order to best prepare for your marriage, there are a few things that we ask of couples:

1. Fill out our **Wedding Form** found on our website (pilgrimluth.org). This is the start of your wedding planning at Pilgrim, and provides us with the information we need for your big day.
2. **Premarital counseling** is a must. After we have received your Wedding Form, you will schedule an appointment with one of our Pastors to begin talking about your wedding. The first thing we will ask you to do is our Prepare/Enrich online survey which is used as the basis for your premarital sessions. You can plan to have about 3-5 total sessions with the Pilgrim Pastors. (Note: if you are planning to be members at a different congregation, we may work with your Pastor there to fulfill his premarital counseling desires as your Pastor.
3. **Live apart and practice abstinence** until you are married. The Bible clearly teaches that sex is one of God's great gifts for married couples, and instructs us to keep the marriage bed pure. If you are currently living together we would be glad to discuss with you God-pleasing ways to resolve the situation. More information about this topic is available on page 12 of this manual or from your Pastors.
4. Plan **wedding service details** (including the date and music) with the Pastors and our Music Director, Mrs. Ruth Mackie.
5. **Attend Pilgrim's Inquirer's Class** if you are not yet a member. While joining Pilgrim is not a requirement for both partners, the class allows you the opportunity to understand better the faith background of the Lutheran confession of faith.
6. Agree to Pilgrim's **Marriage Policy**: the Marriage Policy of Pilgrim Lutheran Church, a member congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, is and always has been consistent with the Synod's and the Bible's beliefs on marriage. We believe that marriage is a sacred union of one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24-25), and that God gave marriage as a picture of the relationship between Christ and His bride the Church (Ephesians 5:32). The official position of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, as set forth in 1998 Res. 3-21 ("To Affirm the Sanctity of Marriage and to Reject Same-Sex Unions"), is that homosexual unions come under categorical prohibition in the Old and New Testaments (Leviticus 18:22, 24; 20:13; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; 1 Timothy 1:9-10) as contrary to the Creator's design (Romans 1:26-27).

These positions and beliefs can be found on the LCMS website, along with other statements, papers and reports on the subject of homosexuality and same-sex civil unions and "marriage." Our Pastors will not officiate over any marriages inconsistent with these beliefs, and our church property may not be used for any marriage ceremony, reception, or other activity that would be inconsistent with our beliefs and this policy.

We have prepared this Marriage Manual to be of assistance to you as you make your plans for your wedding celebration. It will help answer your questions and may raise new questions which you may not have considered. We look forward to working with you through this process, and are always here to help answer questions and make suggestions. May the Lord richly bless your preparation for your wedding day, and your union together as husband and wife.

—*Rev. Tim Fraker, Rev. Dr. Michael Hanson, & Rev. Scott Malme*

The Wedding Service

Whether you are having a small wedding or a large wedding, there are some important points to consider as you plan for the wedding service.

The wedding service is just as the name implies—a service. It is a service of worship, praise, and thanksgiving, always remembering that it is God who began marriage by making Eve for Adam which set the stage for other marriages to follow.

The wedding service is a service of praise to God for bringing you together as a special gift to each other. It is praise to God for the special blessings He will bestow upon you as you begin your new lives together.

Since the wedding service is a church service in the Lutheran Church, containing all the ingredients of a church service, we refrain from many wedding customs which have resulted from secular thinking. For this reason we avoid the sensational and the sentimental, emphasizing Christ-centered character of the ceremony. This will be discussed as you plan your wedding with the Pastor.

Pastors at Your Wedding

Because Pilgrim is a church, you will work primarily with a Pilgrim Pastor in planning your wedding day. Any of our Pastors are able to do your premarital counseling, and who you meet with, and which Pastor does your ceremony, is ultimately up to Pastoral availability. Generally you will work with the same Pastor through the entire process, but that will not always be the case.

Because Pilgrim is a church of the LCMS, Pilgrim also requires that any Pastor who is involved in the service be a Pastor who is a rostered member of the LCMS. Exceptions may be made if participation is requested as a reader, singer, or musician.

Your Wedding Coordinator

So that your wedding goes smoothly, Pilgrim does require the assistance of a Wedding Coordinator. Your Wedding Coordinator will open the facility for you, assure appropriate preparation of the sanctuary and dressing rooms, and be available for other needs or to answer questions so you do not need to worry about anything. Your Wedding Coordinator will be with you for your rehearsal and the day of your wedding. It is best to talk with them about any facilities, decorations, or other questions well ahead of the service. As such, please contact one of our Coordinators via the church office.

Carol Krueger *or* Kelly Schumm

A fee for their services is included as part of the wedding fee. If you feel your Coordinator has gone above and beyond, you may consider giving them an additional honorarium

The Wedding Coordinator is available to help in the following ways:

- Open facilities 2 hours prior to the ceremony for flower delivery and the bridal party
- Prepare the sanctuary for the service
- Assist wedding party in getting prepared for the service
- Direct the processional for the wedding party
- Present wedding service materials on the screens in the sanctuary
- Assist wedding party with pictures and other needs after the service
- Assist wedding party in gathering all items after the service (flowers, clothing, etc.)
- Close facilities 2 hours after the conclusion of the service
- Additional time before or after the service is available at a cost of \$50/hour

Please contact a Wedding Coordinator prior to your final premarital counseling meeting session.

Wedding Guidelines

Below are some guidelines which we at Pilgrim expect to be followed by those who desire to be married here. Read through these and if you have any questions, please share them with the Pastor you are meeting with. Please share this information with your parents.

1. After meeting with a Pastor, you may select a **tentative date and time** for your wedding. Please call the Ministry Office, 920-965-2233, to arrange an appointment with one of the Pastors.
2. A pre-marital **relationship inventory** (known as “Prepare/Enrich,” administered by Life Innovations, Inc) will be used in preparation for your marriage.
3. A **wedding fee of \$700** is charged for all weddings at Pilgrim. This covers the fees for the organist, Pastor, custodian, Wedding Coordinator, worship elements, and facility use. The fee is due prior to the wedding rehearsal. The fee does not include compensation for any soloists, or other decorations.
4. If you would like any **other Pastor** from The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to participate in your wedding, the matter should be discussed with a Pastor at Pilgrim first.
5. In choosing **music** for your wedding, you will work with the Music Director and Pastor. Focus on music that is Christ-centered and that celebrates a Christian view of marriage. See pages 8-9 for suggestions,
6. All participants (bride, groom, and all of the wedding party, ushers, acolytes, father of the bride, organist and soloist, etc.) are expected to attend the **rehearsal**, which is usually the night before your wedding. Please be prompt in arriving on time.
7. **Flash photography** is permitted only during the processional and recessional. Flash pictures are not allowed during the ceremony beginning with the invocation and ending with the benediction. Any special pictures or poses may be obtained following the wedding. Please inform your guests and relatives.
8. **Video taping** is permitted during the entire service as long as no bright light is used and the photographer is not interfering with the wedding service. Please consult with the Pastor regarding procedures in video taping.
9. The appointed **candles** in the sanctuary are used for all services. The Pastor or Wedding Coordinator must approve the placement of the additional candles.
10. Place **decorations or floral arrangements** in consultation with the Pastor or Wedding Coordinator.
11. **Flower vases** will be provided for use in the Chancel area upon request of the wedding party. Arrangements can be made with the Wedding Coordinator. If floral arrangements are to be left for use in the worship service, please notify the Wedding Coordinator at least one week in advance.
12. If you would like to rent Pilgrim’s Kitchen and Fellowship Hall for a reception, please make arrangements to reserve it through the Pastor.
13. All who receive permission to use the church and/or its facilities will agree to replace or restore any breakage of furnishings and equipment. When facilities are used, those planning the arrangements shall be responsible for the setting up and taking down.
14. No **rice or bird seed** is to be thrown on the church premises. **At no time will alcoholic beverages be allowed on the church property.**
15. The **aisle length of the church is 55 feet** from the bottom of the steps to the back door (for aisle runner). These are available from wedding supply stores for purchase (paper runners) or rent (cloth runners). The cost for an aisle runner is not included in the wedding fee.

For the Ushers

1. All ushers should arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the wedding.
2. The ushers will not be responsible for the lighting of the candles unless this is specified by the officiating Pastor or Wedding Coordinator.
3. It is not necessary to ask those attending if they are “friends of the bride or groom.” Places are designated for the immediate family members. For the rest there is no special “side” unless arranged through the wedding couple and the officiating Pastor.
4. If ushers know of those who might be inclined to use flash cameras during the ceremony, such individuals are asked to refrain from taking flash pictures during the ceremony. Opportunity will be given later to take appropriate pictures.
5. At the direction of the Wedding Coordinator, one usher will seat the grandparents, then the parents of the groom, and the mother of the bride. If an aisle runner is used, both ushers will bring the runner down the aisle.
6. Ushers are asked to refrain from seating people during the processional.
7. Following the recession of the wedding party out of the church, the ushers will go to the front to escort the parent of the bride, parents of the groom and the grandparents. Ushers will then go to the front of the church and dismiss the guests one row on each side at a time.

Order of Service for the Rite of Marriage

1. The Processional

****-denotes appropriate places for congregational hymns and/or other appropriate music*

2. The Invocation & Exhortation

3. The Scripture readings

4. The Wedding Address

5. The Declaration of Intent

6. The Wedding Vows

7. The Exchange of Rings

8. The Pronouncement of Husband and Wife

9. The Lighting of the Unity Candle (*optional*)

10. The Wedding Prayer & Lord’s Prayer

11. The Benediction

12. The Recessional

Scripture Selections for Your Wedding

You will have the opportunity to select Bible readings and a sermon text for your wedding. This can be a wonderful time for you to search the Scriptures together, reading God's Word and reflecting on it together. Let the selections be your joint selections! Don't miss out on the chance you have to establish and build your relationship in the area of spiritual life.

There will be a time for Scripture readings during the service, as well as a message from your Pastor based on a text of Scripture that you select. Sometimes people choose a confirmation or baptismal verse for their wedding day. Other possibilities are listed below. Discuss them together, then share your thoughts with your Pastor.

Scripture Selections for the Readings

Genesis 2:15-25	Numbers 6:24-26	Psalm 103:17-18
Psalm 128:1-4	Ecclesiastes 4:9-12	
Matthew 7:24-27	John 2:2	
1 Corinthians 13:4-7, 13	Ephesians 5:21-33	
Colossians 3:14-19	1 Peter 3:1-7	

Possible Sermon Texts

Genesis 2:18	Numbers 6:24-26	Joshua 24:15
Psalm 25:10	Psalm 37:5	Psalm 37:39
Psalm 67:1	Psalm 84:11	Psalm 103:17-18
Psalm 121:8	Psalm 127:1-2	Psalm 128:1-4
Proverbs 3:5-6	Proverbs 8:17	Proverbs 18:22
Proverbs 31:10-12	Jeremiah 32:38-39	
Matthew 6:31-33	Matthew 7:24-27	Matthew 18:20
Matthew 19:4-6	Matthew 28:20	John 2:2
John 6:68	John 14:27	Romans 14:19
Romans 15:5-6	Romans 15:13	1 Corinthians 1:3
2 Corinthians 9:8	2 Corinthians 13:11	Colossians 3:12-14
Colossians 3:17	Colossians 3:18-19	2 Thessalonians 3:16
James 1:17	1 Peter 3:7	Jude 20-21

Music in the Christian Wedding Service

Music plays a very important role in the Christian Wedding. The **Pre-Service** music sets the mood and prepares the guests for the service. **The Processional** draws the focus of the congregation into the beginning of the wedding service. The musical pieces (**hymns** or **solos**) during the service are chosen with the utmost care and concern in order that they aid and enhance the worship service rather than detract from it. During the wedding, only identifiably Christian music should be used.

Because the selection of music for the wedding is a crucial piece, working with Pilgrim's Music Director is of utmost importance. The Music Director, along with the Pastor performing your wedding, are able to suggest appropriate and reverent music to accompany your wedding, and they will have the final say on whether requested music is approved for a worship service.

Musical opportunities include congregational songs, solos, or instrumental versions. Please contact Pilgrim's Music Director at the church office to set up a meeting **at least two months prior to your wedding.** Here are some popular musical possibilities to consider:

Organ Processionals

Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring Cannon in D	J.S. Bach J. Pachelbel	Trumpet Voluntary Trumpet Voluntary in D Major	J. Clark H. Purcell
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Organ Recessionals

Trumpet Tune Trumpet Tune in D Major	J. Clarke H. Purcell	Ode to Joy Lift High the Cross	Beethoven Busarow
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Vocal Solos

Wedding Prayer	Dunlap	Bless our Wedding Day	Dunlap
Walk Hand in Hand	Gowell	Wedding Song	(folk)
O Promise Me (w/ Christian lyrics)	Koven	O Perfect Love	Barnby
Lord, Who at Cana's Wedding Feast	Cassler	Whither Thou Goest	Singer
The Lord's Prayer	Malottte	Wedding Candle Song	Ridings
Household of Faith	Smith		

Congregational Singing from the Hymnal (*Lutheran Service Book*):

O Father, All Creating	858
Lord, When You Came as Welcome Guest	859
Gracious Savior, Grant Your Blessing	860
Oh, Blest the House	862
Let us Ever Walk with Jesus	685
Blest be the Tie that Binds	649
Praise to the Lord, Almighty	790
Alleluia! Let Praises Ring!	822
All Glory Be to God on High	947
Come Holy Ghost, God and Lord	497
Lord Jesus Christ Be Present Now	902
O Holy Spirit Enter In	913
Our God, Our Help in Ages Past	733
Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer	918
Thine Forever God of Love	687



Living Together Outside of Marriage

“Everybody is doing it.” “You wouldn’t buy a car without test driving it.” “We need to save money, surely God understands.” “We’ve already got children, why would we think about moving out?” “It’s not like we’re not going to have sex anyway, so why does it matter?”

Each of the above statements has been given as justification for couples who choose to cohabitate, that is live together before marriage. The fact that culture, parents, friends, and others may even endorse and celebrate living together only complicates the conversation. However, just because many do not follow God’s law doesn’t make ignoring what he says is right any more acceptable. This is especially true for Christians, who know his law, and are called to live by a different standard than the world.

We have a higher ethic—one that comes straight to us from God’s Word. **“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world”** (Romans 12:2). We are different, we live differently. Nowhere in Scriptures is living together, before or outside of marriage approved of or condoned. Instead, Scripture is clear, **“Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral”** (Hebrews 13:4). **“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh”** (Matthew 19:5, Genesis 2:24).

Time and again, sociological research also demonstrates that people living together outside of marriage do not go through a real “trial period.” Instead, they tend to “hide from each other important aspects of their true selves.” Imagine getting married then discovering that your spouse hid the truth from you out of fear that you wouldn’t go marry him or her! They are reluctant to explore sensitive areas out of fear that differences will mar their relationship; they frequently speak and behave cautiously, avoiding criticizing each other and repress anger. And the list goes on. **Without the benefit and blessing of marriage, true commitment and faithfulness cannot be expected or required.**

When we rationalize why we can disobey God in one area of our life, it soon spreads to other areas as well. Pre-marital sex is no different in kind than extra-marital sex (outside of marriage). If we can rationalize the one, we can rationalize the other. If one ignores God on this issue, he’ll ignore God in others also.

Because of the seriousness of this we require that couples to be married at Pilgrim live apart until their wedding day. If you are currently living together, we stand ready to help restore individuals to God-pleasing alternatives, including an initial private wedding ceremony.

If the couple desires to have a full church wedding later, a re-affirmation service may be conducted. Otherwise the couple should separate and obtain separate living arrangements until they are married. This would publicly show regard for God’s ways and qualify them for a wedding in the church.

It needs to be stated clearly: this sin (though often “public” in its offense) is neither less nor greater than any other sin. As with all sin, there is One who is willing to forgive all who repent and who bring forth the “fruits of repentance” by amending their behavior and conforming it to the will of God. The same would be true for those for whom this manner of living was a past but not a present reality. The same Jesus who says, **“Be of good cheer, your sins are forgiven”** also directs repentant sinners. **“Go and sin no more.”**

Important Extras

The details may seem to come nonstop as you approach your wedding. This section is designed to help give you an overview of the typical marriage timeline.

Wedding Date and Time _____

Rehearsal Date and Time _____

Apply For **Marriage Certificate** One Month Prior to Wedding _____
- Bring your Marriage Certificate to the Rehearsal!

Service Planning session with Pastor (2-3 months out) _____

Music Selection session with Music Director (2-3 months out) _____

Third Premarital session with Pastor (~4 months out) _____

Second Premarital session with Pastor (~5 months out) _____

First Premarital session with Pastor (~6 months out) _____

Notes From Premarital Sessions

A Wedding Prayer for Your Marriage

Our God, marriage is most pleasing in Your sight, for You have ordained it for our good and have promised to bless it. Bless those whose hearts You have brought together in love. Give us richly of Your Holy Spirit that we may build our marriage on faith that continually looks to You for forgiveness and salvation, for health and protection, for guidance and help —as well as for every needed thing.

May we build our marriage on unselfish love for each other, a love that seeks to imitate Your own love for us. Help us fulfill our vows to remain faithfully at each other's side through sickness and health and through good times and bad. Help us endure life's sorrow and to cope with life's hardships, always being sources of strength and encouragement to each other.

Do not allow our faith to be shaken in times of testing, nor let us resent the crosses that sometimes accompany marriage. Instead, draw our hearts ever closer to You. Lend the Your grace to forgive any hurts caused by the other and to be always loyal, loving and considerate.

Help us serve You in true righteousness throughout our marriage so that all we say and do is prompted by love for You and each other. By our silent partner that we may live from day to day in the sunshine of Your grace and favor.

We ask this in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen

May the Lord bless your union together!

Pilgrim Lutheran Church

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