

Richland Lutheran Church

WEDDINGS POLICY

OBJECTIVE

Richland Lutheran Church and its pastors consider it an honor and privilege to help couples move from engagement to becoming husband and wife through the sacred institution of Marriage. We provide these guidelines and expectations to help assure a meaningful and memorable wedding will be planned and prepared.

BIBLICAL BASIS

Above all, the sacred rite of marriage is a God instituted and ordained concept. The very first commandment to humankind was, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it" (Genesis 1:28). The writer of Hebrew's reminds us, "Marriage should be honored by all" (Hebrews 13:4). Richland Lutheran Church, as an LCMC congregation, upholds "A Pastoral Admonition" developed by the LCMC.

"We affirm that God created us male and female, and that it is God's will and intention that human sexual expression and fulfillment take place only within the boundaries of marriage between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24-25; Matthew 19:4-6; and Mark 10:2-9).

WEDDING WORSHIP SERVICE

A. Pre-Marriage Counseling

An understanding of the biblical foundation for marriage is essential for any couple considering marriage. The officiating pastor retains the responsibility to offer pre-marriage counseling to include this biblical understanding. Each pastor has his/her own specific procedure and requirements relative to pre-marriage counseling.

B. Wedding Service

1. A wedding is a special worship service. We encourage the couple, along with the pastor, to design a ceremony that is personally meaningful and glorifying to God. Members of the wedding party are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a manner appropriate for a place of worship. Each pastor has his/her personal preference regarding the ceremony/service and will communicate with the couple his/her service expectations.
2. Members of the wedding party must refrain from using alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs, narcotics, and other controlled substances including marijuana on the day of and during any activities held at the church. No alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, or related paraphernalia may be brought to the church or served/used on the church premises at any time. The bride and groom are responsible to be certain this policy is understood and followed by all the members of the wedding party and those who service the wedding (florist, caterer, photographer, etc.)

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3. RLC makes its church facilities available to God's people who wish to use it for weddings if the facility is available (no regular worship services will be displaced or cancelled for the sake of a special wedding service).
4. Arrangements for participation of pastors other than RLC pastors will be made through the RLC Lead Pastor.

C. Music

The wedding ceremony and accompanying music is expected to be Christ-centered, God honoring, spiritually edifying, and in good taste. Any departure from more traditional music and ceremony requires prior approval of the pastor overseeing Pre-Marriage Counseling and wedding preparations. To achieve this, the couple should ask themselves how their ceremony and music will bring honor to the Lord.

D. Rehearsal

The rehearsal is normally held the day before the wedding. Participants are reminded that the rehearsal is intended to be as much a part of the wedding preparation as anything else. Members of the wedding party are expected to conduct themselves at all times in a manner appropriate for a place of worship.

E. Fees

Richland Lutheran church provides most services to members at a reduced rate. The fees charged to non-members are designed to recover the cost of providing the service. Please refer to the wedding and reception fee schedule for current rates.

F. Honorariums

RLC sets no fee for pastoral honorariums. The bride and groom should determine their level of generosity. Considerations in determining the amount includes the size of the wedding, the number of pre-marriage sessions, and the value of the time the pastor spent preparing the couple for marriage.

G. Wedding Coordinator

The coordinator for the wedding normally will be a member of the wedding committee. The Wedding Coordinator's role is to assist the couple with the details around the facility such as the placement of candelabras, use of pew candles, decorating, etc.

WEDDING RECEPTION

A. General

Richland Lutheran Church has facilities and equipment to serve approximately 200 guests with refreshments. Couples provide all the food and beverages for the reception according to the fee schedule. Those who wish to provide a dinner or luncheon to their guests will need to consult with the Reception Coordinator to determine feasibility and additional costs. No alcohol is allowed on church grounds.

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B. Reception Coordinator

The couple will have access to a Reception Coordinator. The Reception Coordinator must be consulted to assist with planning the reception to include room layout, traffic flow, menu, and decorations.

C. Equipment and Furnishings

The church has equipment and furnishings the couple is welcome to use for their reception. The couple will work with the Reception Coordinator for usage needs. The couple can elect to use local rental companies for these items if coordinated with the reception coordinator.

D. Decorations

Candles may be used as long as the flame does not extend above a glass cover. No open flames are allowed except on the cake table. Approval for all other decorations including balloons, streamers, and hangings must be secured through the Reception Coordinator prior to the reception.

E. Set-up

The couple will let the church office know when they need access to the room to set-up, decorate, and cleanup after the reception.

F. Music

There is a sound system in the Prince of Peace fellowship hall. The sound system has a CD player if you wish to provide background music. Music played or performed at the reception must be tasteful and not in conflict with Christian values.

G. Fees

Richland Lutheran Church provides use of the reception area to members at no cost. The fees charged to non-members are designed to recover the cost of providing the service. The cost of serving the reception is extra to all users. Please refer to the wedding and reception fee schedule for current rates.

WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHY

A. Before the Service

Taking of pictures in the sanctuary must be completed one hour before the service begins. Anything moved to facilitate picture taking, such as candelabras, flower baskets, or the kneeler, must be returned to their original placement.

B. During the Service

Taking of pictures during the service is allowed but the photographer must use good discretion and reverence staying "out of the way" of those participating in the service. The photographer may not ask those processing down the aisle to stop once the processional has started.

C. Videotaping

The television ministry of Richland Lutheran Church, Good News Media Ministry, will videotape your wedding if you choose. The couple will indicate interest in this on the Wedding and Reception Facility request form and refer to the fee schedule for current fees. The couple may use another videographer but he/she must use the same guidelines as the photographer.

D. After the Service

The photographer is welcome to accompany the couple and the officiating pastor to take pictures of the signing of the marriage certificate. In most circumstances, if time remains, the photographer may arrange to take additional photos following the service.

E. Family and Friends

Family and friends are permitted to take pictures as well. To the extent possible, the couple will advise them of these policies prior to their wedding.