

**12. POLICY GOVERNING
CONDUCT AND USE OF CHURCH FACILITIES
FOR WEDDINGS**

**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Conneaut, Ohio**

The Marriage Service, like all services of the Church, is centered in the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is not the private activity of the couple, but a public act of worship. Everything we do, the music we use, the clothing we wear, the decorations; all is intended to enhance our worship of the almighty God. God's steadfast love in Christ is the foundation of a model for marriage. We come to the church asking for God's presence and blessing upon and in our marriage.

This Christian Congregation and its leaders have set down these guidelines in order to help you plan a Holy moment in your life. We trust the following to be helpful to you. If you have any questions, please feel free to bring them to the Pastor of Good Shepherd. In these guidelines, the "Pastor" shall be the Pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Conneaut, Ohio.

It shall be the responsibility of the Bride and Groom to advise parents, wedding party, florist, photographer, those involved in the wedding, and guests of these policies.

1. Before witnessing a marriage, the Pastor shall counsel with the persons about to be married and shall diligently inquire:
 - A. Whether the union contemplated is in accordance with the Word of God.
 - B. Whether it will be in accordance with the laws of the State.
 - The couple shall schedule three (3) meeting times as part of the marriage counseling.
 - No marriage shall be witnessed unless the Pastor is convinced that God's blessing may properly be asked upon it.
 - **The wedding will not take place if alcohol is detected on the bride, groom, attendants, or groomsmen.** The Pastor will cancel the wedding ceremony for any presence of alcohol.
2. Those who plan to be married are expected to consult with their Pastor, not only about the nature of marriage, but also about the form of the marriage service. The date and time of the marriage service should not be announced before consulting with the Pastor.
3. Marriage celebrations are inappropriate during Lent and Holy Week because of the solemn character of that time.
4. The marriage service followed at Good Shepherd comes from the "Lutheran Book of Worship" (pg 202) and the "Lutheran Occasional Services Book" (pg 27). By choosing one of them the Bride, the Groom, and the Pastor may create an appropriate service of worship and praise fitting to the particular occasion. Attention shall be called to any Statement on Marriage adopted by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and all rubrics for the Marriage Service.

5. The promises are the Bride's and Groom's and come from the marriage liturgies.
6. The Pastor may publish the Banns (Announcement of Marriage Service) In bulletins or congregational papers.
An appropriate form is: "(Name) _____ and _____ have announced their intention to marry on (Date) _____, and ask your prayers."
 - 6a. **The wedding bulletin** - For the marriage service, the Bride and Groom will be responsible in selection and cost of marriage bulletins. The selection and ordering can be done through the Church Secretary. Please make arrangements with the Church Secretary with ample time for deliver of bulletins.
7. The presiding minister shall be the Pastor of the Congregation. Exceptions can be made with the consent of the Pastor. Assisting ministers may be invited, and may include members of the family.
8. The Pastor or Church Secretary shall record the marriage in the Parish Register of the Congregation. The Pastor will see that all legal documents are completed and sent into the State of Ohio. A Marriage License shall be presented to the Pastor at the wedding rehearsal, and may be secured from any Probate Court. Such license is good for sixty (60) calendar days.
9. The Honorarium for the Pastor meeting with the wedding couple, leading rehearsal, and presiding at the wedding is \$200.00. This is to be given to the Pastor at the wedding rehearsal.
 - 9a. The rehearsal dinner and the wedding reception are the celebration of the two families coming together as one. Please know, that you are not obligated in any way to invite the Pastor. It is at your discretion and no offense will taken.
10. The Church Organist shall be the first person contacted to play for weddings. If the Organist is not available on the date chosen, other persons approved by the Worship & Music Committee of Good Shepherd shall be contacted. The Church Organist must approve any organist invited by the wedding couple.
 - 10a. The Honorarium for the Organist is: \$125 to be given at the wedding rehearsal.
11. Music selections, by voice or instrument, should embody a high standard of quality and specifically reflect the praise of God. Couples should make certain that musical selections chosen are within the ability of the performer to play or sing with assurance.
12. Organ music and solo materials must meet with the approval of the Organist and be arranged at least four (4) weeks in advance. For special musical selections, the Bride and Groom are responsible to provide sheet music if requested by the Organist. When the piano or organ is not used; the Pastor must approve the music and the placement of solos.

13. **The hour set for the wedding service will be the time the Procession begins** and not when Prelude music begins.
14. The Pulpit, Lectern, Communion Rail, Baptismal Font, and Altar shall not be hidden from view or used to hold decorations. Tacks, nails, or staples shall not be used on woodwork, walls, pews, chairs, or floor. Protective holders for pew bows can be obtained from your florist and are to be used. Protective coverings shall be placed under all additional candles to prevent dripping from marring woodwork, carpet, or linens. The Altar Candles of the Congregation may be used. Any additional candles are to be provided by the Bride and Groom.
15. Altar Flowers are welcome, and may be left for Sunday Service. One way to leave flowers is to sign the Flower Chart, located in the hallway opposite the church office in advance. Another way to enhance Sunday's service with your flowers is to ask for a special stand to place the flower arrangement beside the Baptismal font for Sunday morning. This arrangement needs to be made with the Pastor. Wedding Flowers should come in vases provided by the florist.
16. The throwing of rice, confetti, birdseed or other materials is not permitted. **Please speak to the Pastor regarding your needs.**
17. Marriage services may include Holy Communion. We celebrate Holy Communion as part of God's family and invite all baptized Christians to the table of our Lord. The Sacrament of Holy Communion is not just for the Bride and Groom; therefore we abstain from this in the service when it excludes others. The meal is for the assembled family of God.
18. In order not to disturb the act of worship, flash pictures or lighted video are not permitted either by professional photographers or guests during the service itself. The photographer may take non-flash pictures of the service if a position in the very rear of the church is used. Video recording of this service shall be permitted with stationary video equipment using natural lighting and shall be limited to the following stationary positions; the choir area or the Sacristy wall.
19. All rooms used for dressing and preparations for the wedding shall be left in good order, and all materials brought into them removed or placed in waste cans. No valuables or monies should be left in these rooms during the service.
 - 19a. The Bride and her attendants will be invited to use the Church lounge which has air conditioning as well as couches and chairs. The Groom and groomsmen are invited to use the Senior Luther League room which has couches and bathroom access.
 - 19b. **There is a \$75.00 janitorial fee as part of the building use.** This fee pays for the cleaning of the sanctuary, dressing rooms, and reserves your selected wedding date. You are encouraged to make the janitorial fee payment as soon as you commit the wedding date. Please make check payable to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. If you choose to have a rehearsal dinner in fellowship hall, there will be a \$50.00 janitorial fee for this event as well. A separate fee can be assessed to the bride and groom if any damage occurs in the rooms.
20. Non-member persons requesting the marriage service at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church will be held to this policy. Non-members will incur a \$200.00

building usage fee as well as all fees and honorariums within the marriage service policy of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

Non-members associated with an immediate member family will incur a \$125.00 building usage fee as well as all fees and honorariums within the marriage service policy of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church.

Please make building usage check payable to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, 876 Grove Street, Conneaut, OH 44030. Checks may be sent in two weeks before marriage service.

21. If an Acolyte is desired, they shall be arranged by the couple. Otherwise, candles will be lit before the service by the Pastor or other person.
22. No church furnishings or property is to be moved from its normal position. This specifically includes the Paschal Candle and Baptismal Font. This does not, in any way, limit procession and recession.
23. Near the wedding date, specific outlines will be given you to give to your florist, photographer/videographer and soloist.

These policies have been adopted by the Congregation Council in keeping with good order and due regard to the sacredness of the Marriage Service. Your cooperation in all of the above matters is earnestly requested. This policy will periodically be reviewed, and the Congregational Council shall approve any revisions. In cases of differing opinions, the action of the Council always takes precedence over any other opinions of individuals, groups, or organizations.

Acceptance of Policy: _____
Bride Print **Bride's signature** **Date**

Acceptance of Policy: _____
Groom Print **Groom's signature** **Date**

Revised January 2006
Revised October 2008