

Wedding Planning Guide



Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church

4610 Belding Road
Rockford, Michigan 49341

616-866-1881
www.cosrock.org

Premarital Counseling Session 1:	_____
Premarital Counseling Session 2:	_____
Premarital Counseling Session 3:	_____
New Life in Christ 101:	_____

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WEDDING STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

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INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on your engagement! You are at the beginning of an important journey, and we are honored that you want Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church to share in your joy on your wedding day.

This booklet serves as a summary of the policies and procedures for marriages at Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church or performed by her pastors. We ask you to read through it prior to submitting the marriage request form (page 5).

This booklet also serves as a workbook for your marriage preparation and planning. Bring it with you for the premarital counseling sessions you will have with a pastor. It will be referenced often.

Ultimately, we pray the time you spend preparing to be married at Christ Our Savior will further impress upon you that the most important thing about your wedding day is not the flowers, the clothes, the pictures, or the party. It is how God himself comes to you in his Word of the Gospel to bless those who receive him in humble, penitent faith. What God brings to your wedding is something you can build your lives together upon.

If you have further questions, feel free to contact one of our pastors. We want your wedding to be a joyful, Christ-centered occasion, and we are here to support you as you prepare. Thank you for inviting us to share this important day in your life.



Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church
Marriage Request Form

Thank you for your interest in holding your wedding at Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church. Requests for marriages performed by our pastors are subject to approval by the congregation's board of elders. To make your request, please complete this form and submit it to a pastor. He will present it to the elders and inform you of their decision within the month.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____

Phone: _____ cell home **COS Member:** yes no

Email Address: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____

Phone: _____ cell home **COS Member:** yes no

Email Address: _____

Requested Wedding Date[s]: _____

Tell us why you would like to have your wedding at Christ Our Savior?

We have read through the Wedding Planning Guide for Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church and we pledge to plan our wedding accordingly with a pastor's assistance.

_____ Date: ___/___/___

_____ Date: ___/___/___



Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church
Marriage Approval Form

Bride and Groom: _____

having consulted with the pastor and submitted a marriage request form to the Board of Elders is hereby given permission to schedule their wedding on

Approved Wedding Date and Time : _____

The Board of Elders has review the marriage request and has given its approval.

_____ Date: ___/___/___

I commit to perform the above cited marriage in accord with the policies in the COS Wedding Planning Guide and the doctrine and practice of Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church.

_____ Date: ___/___/___

*Reception of your \$50 non refundable deposit by the church office secures the date.
Make check payable to "Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church."*



Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church
Marriage Planning Form

Approved Wedding Date & Time: _____

Full Name: _____

Phone: _____ **c / h Email:** _____

Full Name: _____

Phone: _____ **c / h Email:** _____

Bridesmaids as appearing in the bulletin

Groomsmen as appearing in the bulletin

Ushers

Junior Bridesmaids, Flower Girls, Ring Bearers as appearing in the bulletin

Processional _____

Recessional _____

Hymns _____

Special _____

Processional / Dismissal / Seating Instructions

Unity Candle ____ **Flowers** ____ **Rehearsal Date & Time:** _____
License ____ **Photo** ____ **Doors Open:** _____

Premarital Counseling Session 1 Date: ___/___/___ Time: _____

Premarital Counseling Session 2 Date: ___/___/___ Time: _____

Premarital Counseling Session 3 Date: ___/___/___ Time: _____

Premarital Counseling Session 4 Date: ___/___/___ Time: _____

New Life in Christ 101 Date: ___/___/___

THE BASICS

PRELIMINARY ARRANGEMENTS

All who wish to be married at Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church (COS), or be married by one of her pastors are asked to fill out a “Marriage Request” form. This document is taken by a pastor to the board of elders for their approval of the pastor’s officiating at the wedding and the wedding date.

Couples are asked to read the contents of this wedding planning guide as a prerequisite for making a request. Typically couples arrange a preliminary meeting with the pastor to walk through how weddings are done at COS, select possible dates, and to ask questions prior to submitting a marriage request form.

REQUIREMENTS

We receive many inquiries asking, “Do you have to be a member of your church in order to get married there?”

The short answer is no. You must, however,

1. be looking for a church and thus willing to consider our congregation as a possible church home; or
2. already are a member of a sister Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) or Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) congregation in a different community.
3. You are also required to fulfill the premarital counseling sessions as dictated by one of our pastors;
4. complete the New Life in Christ 101 course prior to your wedding date if either you or your fiancée is not a confirmed member of COS or the WELS or ELS; and
5. agree to plan your wedding service according to the policies and procedures detailed in this guide and the direction of our pastors.

FEES

The wedding fee is \$300 for members and \$500 for nonmembers. The member wedding fee will apply when one or both parties getting married are COS members. The wedding fee rate will be set based upon membership status one month prior to the wedding date.

The member fee for weddings conducted offsite without the use of our organist is \$50. The non member fee is \$100.

The wedding fee covers an honorarium to the organist, janitor and the incidental costs. The non member fee also includes a building usage charge. The organist fee covers a music planning consultation, attendance and playing for the rehearsal, playing for the service itself. If approved soloists or instrumentalists (see **Music Guidance** section) are used the organist fee increases by \$50 per additional musician due to the increased

consultation, coordination and performance demands. Increases in the organist's fee raise the wedding fee total.

To include visiting musicians or clergy in your service, a COS pastor must consult with you and give approval. Generally, our congregation's organist and pastors perform the weddings in our facility. (For much more information on the use of guest musicians and clergy see the **Music Guidance** and **Visiting Clergy** sections.)

The janitor fee portion of the wedding fee covers the custodial costs of preparing the building for your rehearsal and wedding, and preparing it for regular use after your wedding. Excessive mess requiring additional cleaning hours beyond the norm for a wedding your size will incur additional charges. Typically it is good practice to place trash in receptacles and put things back where you found them.

Repair costs of damage to the facility and its furnishings caused by behavior deemed reckless and disrespectful of the Lord's house will be billed to you.

When you receive a signed Marriage Agreement from the board of elders you may secure the approved date by remitting a \$50 non-refundable deposit payable to "Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church." The receipt of this deposit finalizes the reservation of the date. The deposit is credited toward the wedding fee. The balance is due when you deliver the wedding license to the church office no less than one week prior to the wedding date.

MAP



To download a printable version of this map visit the church website www.cosrock.org.

PARKING

There are surface parking lots on the church property offering ample space for capacity of the sanctuary. Street parking on Belding Road is also available.

ACCESS FOR THE DISABLED

Our entire facility is accessible to persons in wheelchairs. Since chairs not pews are used for sanctuary seating, spots for wheelchairs can easily be created within the rows.

DRUG & ALCOHOL POLICY

The use of alcohol or any illegal drugs anywhere on the church property during any wedding related activity by those associated with the wedding is prohibited.

KITCHEN USE

Wedding parties are welcome to use the kitchen for lunches on the day of the wedding. Table service is not included in the wedding fee, however, and wedding parties should bring their own.

RECEPTIONS

Our education wing and lobby are capable of hosting small receptions either after wedding rehearsals or wedding services. If you are interested in reserving the space, you must contact the church office to check on the availability of not only the rooms, but also of the church's seating and tables.

MARRIAGE LICENSE

In order to be married in the State of Michigan you must have a valid marriage license.

The following is taken from the Kent County website:

http://www.accesskent.com/YourGovernment/CountyClerk/clerks_marriage.htm

Apply for a marriage license in person at:

Kent County Clerk
County Administration Building, 1st floor
300 Monroe Avenue NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49503-2288

Thirteen things to know about MI Marriage Licenses:

1. Arrange for a wedding ceremony and date prior to applying for a license.
2. Fill out the application form (available online or at the clerk's office)
3. At least one applicant must apply in person.
4. \$20 fee for residents, \$30 for out-of-state applicants, payable with application.

5. You may apply for a license at age 16 or 17 with parental or guardian consent (who must be present to sign consent form).
6. Proof of age required. Bring in a birth certificate (recommended), driver's license, state ID or passport. (Documents must be in English.)
7. **Michigan residents must apply in the county in which one of the applicants resides.** License may be used in any county in Michigan. (Verification of county residency may be required.)
8. Out-of-state applicants apply in the county in which they will be married.
9. Applicant may pick up license at the Clerk's office 3 days after application.
10. License is valid for 33 days from, and including, date of application.
11. Social Security numbers required for both parties (or legal reason why none.)
12. Bride & groom must sign marriage license after ceremony
13. Witness must be 18 or older

YOUR PASTOR

A pastor of our congregation will not only officiate at your marriage service, but will also be responsible for assisting you with service planning and leading you through the required premarital counseling and New Life in Christ 101 course, if necessary. He is a shepherd of our congregation and is called by us to proclaim the Law and the Gospel for the salvation of souls. As a public minister he represents the congregation and our Lutheran Christian faith. It is his responsibility to insure the conduct of your wedding is in keeping with everything our congregation stands for. As such, he has final say on all the content of your marriage service, and who can serve in leading any part of it, including the music. This also applies even if the marriage service is held in a location away from the church such as a park or a private residence.

Service planning will be a part of each premarital counseling session. It is good to start meeting with the pastor soon after you've received confirmation of your wedding date via a signed "Marriage Agreement" form.

VISITING CLERGY

Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church welcomes the participation of visiting clergy of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) in marriage services. If you have a pastor from a home church, or a family member ordained in these denominations who wants to be involved in the marriage service, we are happy to accommodate you.

For confessional reasons we cannot accommodate clergy or musicians of other denominations leading our worship services. To do so misrepresents the teachings of Scripture upon which this congregation has pledged to stand.

NEW LIFE IN CHRIST 101

The purpose of our congregation is not to merely “marry and bury.” It is to make disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ by teaching people what he has done and told us as recorded in the Scriptures.

Therefore, we require those we marry who are not communicant members of the WELS or ELS to take our New Life in Christ 101 course. This is an adult instruction course using the outline of the Apostles’ Creed to direct a study and discussion of the key doctrines of Holy Scripture. Participants will learn the beliefs of the Lutheran Church, and how they are drawn from the Bible. More importantly, they will grow in the knowledge, understanding and faith of Christ.

Upon completion of the course those who find themselves in agreement with what they have been taught are invited to join our congregation as communicant members. Those completing the course, but deciding COS is not the church for them will still have their marriage service conducted at COS as agreed upon in the “Marriage Agreement” form.

You are to complete this course prior to your wedding date, so plan accordingly and arrange your schedules. Couples have repeatedly reported this to be a wise investment not only in their faith lives, but also their relationship.

PREMARITAL COUNSELING

A minimum of three premarital counseling sessions with our pastor is our standard expectation. During these sessions you will work on service planning issues, examine what the Scriptures say about the origins and intended purpose of marriage, learn the God-given roles for husbands and wives, and apply the Scriptures to a variety of practical issues. The sessions also serve to develop the relationship between you and a pastor of our congregation.

Our pastors are neither clinical counselors nor therapists. They are shepherds of souls who use the Word and Sacraments to care for the sheep entrusted to them. The counsel they will give you is not only Bible-based; it is also Gospel-oriented. Drawing on the Scriptures and their own experience will make these sessions an important part of your marriage preparations.

It is your responsibility to contact a pastor once your wedding date is confirmed and schedule your first session.

Here is a typical outline of issues covered in the premarital counseling sessions:

Session One

- Start a marriage planning form.
- Walk through the entire worship service pointing out areas where decisions will need to be made.

- Assist with scheduling questions and other incidentals.
- Make assignments for next session.

Session Two

- Update the marriage planning form.
- Identify decisions yet to be made about the worship service.
- Examine the Origin and Purpose of Marriage according to Genesis 1-3.
- Review the first assignment the couple was to work on together: “What do you think the essential bond of marriage is?”
- Review the results of the second assignment the couple was to work on separately: “The five reasons I want to marry you” (For this assignment none of the reasons can be “Because I love you.”)
- Examine the roles God assigns to husbands and wives in marriage according to Ephesians 5.
- Make assignment for next session.

Session Three

- Update the marriage planning form.
- Identify decisions yet to be made about the worship service.
- Provide a rough draft of the bulletin for the couple’s review.
- Apply God’s Word to the following areas of marriage:
 - Finances
 - Children
 - In-laws
 - Problem Solving
 - Faith Life
- Collect completed assignment made at the previous session to be worked on separately: Write a letter to your fiancée completing the thought, “When others look at our marriage, I want them to see...” Each is to provide the pastor with the letter they wrote and sealed in an envelope with their fiancée’s name on it. The pastor will return them unopened to the couple on their wedding day.

THE REHEARSAL

Rehearsals normally take place the day before the wedding from 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm. It is essential that all members of your wedding party be present and on time – including parents, ushers, m/m of ceremonies. The pastor and organist also attend the rehearsal.

The rehearsal is typically the beginning of the weekend's celebration of your marriage. It is an opportunity for members of your wedding party to get acquainted with the worship space and become comfortable with their responsibilities for the coming day.

In the case of small weddings the pastor will discuss with you whether or not you wish to have a formal rehearsal the night before.

DRESSING ROOMS

Dressing rooms are available for your use on the day of your wedding. The bridal party uses Rooms 101 and 103 in the education wing. The groom's men use the Youth Center in the lower level. You may bring items into those rooms on the night of your rehearsal unless they are scheduled for other ministry uses that evening. COS is not responsible for items left in the building overnight. The rooms are to be left in good condition. Any trash should be cleaned up and disposed of properly before the wedding party leaves the building.

You may bring snacks, lunches and non-alcoholic beverages to the kitchen either at the time of the rehearsal or on the wedding day. The refrigerator, stoves and microwave are available for your use. COS does not supply plates, napkins, cups or glasses.

It is important to assign a person (who is not in the wedding party) to remove all your belongings from the dressing rooms after the service. This person[s] should also be tasked with putting things back the way they were found and the picking up of any trash and meal leftovers in the kitchen.

THE SANCTUARY

Christ Our Savior's sanctuary seats 275 people. There are 13-15 rows of seats on either side of the center aisle, depending on how the nave is configured. The center aisle is just over 50 feet long. The baptismal font will be relocated from the center aisle to the chancel for weddings.

The sanctuary is decorated with seasonal banners and other items throughout the year. These items will not be removed or altered for wedding services. This includes the color of the paraments on the altar, pulpit and font as well as the stoles our pastors wear. Please note the following colors of the various seasons of the church year. Paraments are changed at specific times of the year and are not changed for wedding services.

Advent – blue
Christmas – white
Epiphany – white
Time after Epiphany – green
Transfiguration – white
Lent – purple
Good Friday – black
Easter – white
Pentecost – red
Holy Trinity – white
Time after Pentecost – green
Reformation – red
All Saints – white
Christ the King – white
Festivals of the Church – red

We do not allow our sanctuary to host weddings on the weekend before Christmas or during Holy Week.

DECORATIONS

Decorating the sanctuary for your wedding is allowed, but your plans must be approved by a pastor. Often bows will be attached to the end of the rows or on the communion rail. The chancel can accommodate candelabras and other free standing fixtures. As a general rule decorations can go anywhere in the sanctuary except on or in front of the altar.

You can make arrangements with a pastor to decorate the sanctuary anytime after the conclusion of the Thursday evening worship services. It is your responsibility to assign someone to take down the decorations after the wedding service.

CANDLES

The two altar candles and two candles flanking the pulpit will be lit for your wedding. The large paschal candle may or may not be lit depending on the church year season in which you are married.

If you desire additional candles such as free standing candelabras, you will need to rent them from your florist or another supplier. You should purchase dripless tapers for the candelabras as you are responsible for any additional costs incurred to clean wax off the flooring in the chancel.

If you plan to have a unity candle ritual, you are responsible for providing the large center candle and two long burning, dripless tapers. You may use COS's stand for holding the unity candle arrangement or rent one from an outside party.

You may place candle arrangements in memory of deceased loved ones in the chancel, but not on the altar. This information can be included in your wedding bulletin.

FLOWERS

Flower arrangements are welcome in the chancel. There are five wooden stands of different heights to hold the arrangements. Your arrangements should be in self-contained vases. Flowers may not be placed on the altar.

You are welcome to have specific flowers or flower arrangements displayed in honor or memory of loved ones. This information can be included in your wedding bulletin.

You are invited to leave flowers from your wedding in the sanctuary for the Sunday services. If you plan to do this, inform the pastor so it can be noted in the Sunday bulletin.

PHOTOGRAPHY / VIDEOGRAPHY

Photographs in sanctuary are normally scheduled two hours prior to the start of the service and should be completed 45 minutes prior to its start. They are also taken after the service.

Once the wedding party, bride and groom have arrived at the chancel steps photographs may be taken without a flash from the back of the sanctuary. Videographers and their cameras are also restricted to the back of the sanctuary during the worship service.

You will receive a DVD of your wedding service, recorded by the church AV equipment.

MISCELLANEOUS

COS does not permit the throwing of plastic confetti, rice, or birdseed either inside or outside the church building. Once the wedding party is outside it is permissible to throw flower petals or to blow bubbles. (Note: bubbles and colored flower petals may stain fabric.)

COS does not permit live animals in the building.

COS does not permit smoking in the building.

ORDER OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

This order of worship is from our hymnal, "Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal." It celebrates God's gracious gift of marriage. The congregation shares the joy of the bride and groom as they publicly promise lifelong love and faithfulness to each other.

PROCESSIONAL

M: In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Our Lord Jesus Christ came as an invited guest to the wedding at Cana and with his gracious presence, he brought joy and gladness to those who were there. Jesus is also with us who have gathered in his name to celebrate with the Word of God and prayer the marriage of _____ and _____. We are assured of God's gracious help and guidance in these words from the Psalms:

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.

C: His love endures forever.

M: The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, and rich in love;

C: He is good to all.

M: God is our refuge and strength.

C: An ever-present help in trouble.

M: He is our God forever and ever;

C: He will be our guide even to the end.

M: May God be gracious to us and bless us

C: And make his face shine on us.

M: Loving Father, we are grateful for your goodness in permitting us to gather as the family and friends of ____ and ____ to share their joy on this special day. Look on them with favor, strengthen their confidence in your firm promises, and assure them of your abiding love. As your Son Jesus graced the wedding at Cana with his presence, so may he be with us who pray in his name.

M: Amen.

HYMN

SCRIPTURE LESSON

SERMON

MARRIAGE RITE

M: Dear friends: When God in love created the world; he made man and woman in his own image and bonded them together in marriage. Through this blessed union of husband and wife, God established the family, provided for the physical and spiritual welfare of children, and fostered the peace and stability of society.

God intended marriage to bring loving companionship to the people of his world. But because of sin, the joy of marriage was soon overcast with sorrow, and the harmony of family life was shattered by strife. Out of love God sent his Son Jesus to die on the cross to take away the sins of all people. Everyone who believes in Jesus receives forgiveness and is enabled by the Holy Spirit to live in peace and joy.

God's love for you is boundless. He commands you, in response to his love, to love each other. Love is forgiving and enduring. Love shows itself in truth and faithfulness, in thoughtfulness and understanding, in patience and kindness. Marriage furnishes a unique opportunity to put this love into practice.

The pattern for Christian marriage is the intimate union of Christ and his Church, which the apostle Paul depicts in Ephesians 5. After urging believers to "submit to one another out of reverence for Christ," he makes this application for Christian spouses: "Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the Church ... Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ love the Church and gave himself for her." It is reverence for Christ on the part of husbands and wives that lays the foundation for a Christian marriage.

You have come here to be united in marriage, which consists in your mutual consent, sincerely and freely given. You are now invited to declare this intent in the presence of God and these witnesses.

MARRIAGE PROMISES

M: *(to the groom):* _____, will you take _____ to be your wife? Will you be guided by the counsel and direction God has given in his Word and love your wife as Christ loved the Church? Will you be faithful to her, cherish her, support her, and help her in sickness and in health as long as you both shall live? If so, answer, "I will."

G: I will.

M: *(to the bride):* _____, will you take _____ to be your husband? Will you be guided by the counsel and direction God has given in his Word and submit to your

husband as the Church submits to Christ? Will you be faithful to him, cherish him, support him, and help him in sickness and in health as long as you both shall live? If so, answer, "I will."

B: I will.

M: Join your hands and make your promises to each other:

The groom and bride will say in turn:

**I, _____, /in the presence of God and these witnesses,/ take you,
_____/ to be my wife/husband./ I promise to be faithful to you / as long as
we both shall live.**

EXCHANGE OF RINGS

M: Exchange rings as a symbol of the lifelong commitment and abiding love which you as husband and wife have promised each other.

The groom and bride will say in turn:

_____, receive this ring / as a symbol of my love and faithfulness.

DECLARATION OF MARRIAGE

M: By their promises, _____ and _____ have bound themselves together in marriage before God and these witnesses. Therefore, I declare that they are husband and wife, in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit. Those whom God has joined together, let no one separate.

MARRIAGE BLESSING

M: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit preserve you in faithfulness, strengthen you in love, and guide you to life's end.

If a unity candle is used, it is lit here.

HYMN

PRAYERS

M: Eternal God, source of love, help _____ and _____ to fulfill the promises they have made here today and to reflect your steadfast love in their love for each other. Give them kindness and patience, affection and understanding, happiness and contentment. Use their families and friends to support them in difficult days, that their love for each other may continue to grow as long as they live.

Gracious Father, in your goodness you bring people together into families and enrich their lives with abundant blessings. Renew the love of husbands and wives, parents and children, that they may strengthen and support each other on the way that leads to our heavenly home, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

BLESSING

M: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and + give you peace.

C: **Amen.**

RECESSIONAL

MUSIC GUIDANCE

The marriage rite is a liturgy of the church celebrating God's gift of marriage. It is part of the ministry of our congregation which offers its witness and support to you and who, with you, seek God's blessing on your marriage. As such, only that which is appropriate for the worship of God is included in the wedding service. Music chosen on the basis of Christian themes of faithfulness, Christ's self-giving love, and seasonal context are most appropriate. (See the Hymns section on page 23.) Secular music based on the theme of love for one another is appropriate for the wedding reception, not the worship of God Almighty in his house of prayer.

Here's some additional information to make planning music for your wedding an easy task:

1. It is our practice that Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church organists, instrumentalists and soloist lead the music for all weddings held at our church. In rare circumstances visiting musicians may lead the music provided they are competent musicians and members of a WELS or ELS sister congregation.
2. The pastor will begin assisting you with music selection issues already in the first premarital counseling session.
3. Contact the church organist at least two months before your wedding date to schedule a consultation regarding all your wedding music. The consultation is included in the organist portion of the church fee. They usually take less than 30 minutes and often can be arranged for after a worship service.
4. If you are interested in a soloist or instrumentalists for your wedding the pastor will provide you with names within the congregation you can approach to secure their services.
5. Regarding the selection of music, especially vocal solos: since the wedding ceremony is a worship service of the congregation, selections must be appropriate for use at any service (ie sacred in nature, in keeping with the doctrines of this church). Solo pieces to be included in any wedding service must be submitted to the pastor for his approval prior to arranging a consultation with the organist.
6. Please note that soloist and instrumentalist (other than organist) fees are not included in the COS fee schedule. It is your responsibility to remunerate these additional musicians directly.

HYMNS

Our hymnal has a section of marriage hymns (600-604). Below is a list of other suggested hymns from our hymnal, *Christian Worship*.

If you desire the use of a hymn or song not appearing in our hymnal, you must submit a copy of it to the pastor for his approval prior to your scheduling a consultation with the organist. If approved, you are also responsible for secure permission from the copyright holder to reproduce the song in the bulletin.

Abide, O Dearest Jesus	333
All People that on Earth Do Dwell	233
Alleluia! Sing to Jesus	169
Beautiful Savior	369
For the Fruit of His Creation	611
Go, My Children, with My Blessing	332
Hear Us Now, Our God and Father	603
Joy to the World	62
Let All Things Now Living	260
Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus	452
Love Divine, All Love Excelling	365
Love in Christ Is Strong and Living	490
Love Is the Gracious Gift	505
Now Thank We All Our God	610
O God, Our Help in Ages Past	441
Oh, that I Had a Thousand Voices	242
Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty	255
Our Father, By Whose Name	501
Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow	334
Praise to the Lord, the Almighty.....	234
Songs of Thankfulness and Praise	82

BULLETIN

Most weddings provide a bulletin for the worshippers. The church office will produce your bulletin for you.

The pastor will work with you to gather the required information for your wedding bulletin and provide you a rough draft for your approval. Since the worship bulletin is also representative of the church and its ministry, the pastor has final approval on content.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Do you have to be a member of Christ Our Savior in order to be married there?

A: The short answer is no. You must, however, be looking for a church and thus willing to consider our congregation as a possible church home, or already are a member of a sister Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) or Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) congregation in a different community. You are also required to fulfill the premarital counseling sessions as dictated by the pastor, complete the New Life in Christ 101 course prior to your wedding date if either you or your fiancée is not a confirmed member of COS or the WELS or ELS, and agree to plan your wedding service according to the polices and procedures detailed in this guide and the direction of the pastor.

Q: Can we have the pastor perform our wedding offsite?

A: Yes. God has many locations in West Michigan beautiful locations for wedding services. Our pastors perform marriages outdoors as well as in different locations. The same theology and practice applies to services our pastors do offsite. They are no less spiritual than the ones done at Christ Our Savior. Our pastors will work with you in putting together a worship service that achieves the goals for your wedding service even if it is held in a different location.

Q: When can we have access to the church for the rehearsal and the wedding?

A: Rehearsals are generally scheduled from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm. You have access to begin decorating or bringing things into the building for the next day starting at 5:30 pm, unless you've made other arrangements with the pastor. The building will be opened at least 4 hours prior to the start of your service, unless you have made other arrangements with the pastor.

Q: How long is the wedding service itself?

A: Depending on the number of attendants and musical selections, a traditional service held in the sanctuary generally lasts between 25 and 40 minutes. Services held offsite in parks or at private residences typically last about 20 minutes.

Q: What about our marriage license?

A: You must obtain your marriage license for the county clerk office. There is a three day waiting period between application and pick up. The license is good for 33 days from the day of application. You must deliver the license to church no less than one week prior to your marriage so that the pastor can fill out the parts of the license he is required to and prepare it for signatures on your wedding day.

Q: Do you rent out your facility for weddings?

A: No. Renting the facility to those uninterested in the ministries of our church due to affiliation with another local church or some other reason is not in keeping with our mission.

Q: Is a Lutheran marriage service different from the common conception of marriage services?

A: Our marriage services have the same goal as our other worship services: to preach the Gospel of Christ crucified. The focus in a Lutheran wedding is on Christ, then the bride and groom. Thus the service is first about his love for you, and then about how his love makes your love for each other possible.

Additionally our liturgy (see pages 19 ff) does not include things like “Who gives this woman to be married to this man?” or “speak now or forever hold their peace.”