

GUIDELINES FOR YOUR WEDDING AT

Saint James Lutheran Church
Concord, North Carolina



104 Union Street, South
Concord, NC 28025

704-786-0166

Revised 4/2011

INTRODUCTION

The people of Saint James wish you every happiness and God's blessing on your wedding day. We hope that your marriage will always be a sign of God's grace and presence to you and to others. In a Christian wedding, the couple invites their guests to join them in asking God's blessing on their marriage. It is meant to be festive and joyous with all present invited to participate fully in the Liturgy for Christian Marriage through prayer, hymns, and thanksgiving to God.

We believe that making a life decision as important as entering into marriage deserves the best and most careful preparation possible. In the excitement of planning a church wedding, questions are sure to arise. To assist those desiring to be married at Saint James, we have developed the following guidelines, which concur with the practices of the Church, the rubrics of the Lutheran Book of Worship, the laws of the state, and the policies of this parish. Please consider them carefully; we want your wedding to be planned as smoothly as possible, and your wedding ceremony to be a meaningful and memorable occasion; one that will be remembered with favor.

SETTING THE DATE

At least one of the candidates for marriage must be a member in good standing at Saint James. It is important to call the church office as early as possible to begin discussing marriage and wedding plans. A six-month to one-year period is not too soon. No wedding date shall be set without meeting with the Pastor. The Pastor will give a copy of Saint James' Wedding Guidelines to the couple at the initial meeting. There must be time before the wedding ceremony for premarital counseling. The Pastor will arrange dates with the couple for premarital counseling. For all weddings, the wisest sequence of planning would be to talk with the clergy first, before contracting the use of a reception hall, etc. This not only allows for proper preparation for your marriage, but shows a respectful ordering of priorities for your lives together. A festive party is great fun and a worthy tradition, but the blessing of God on the marriage itself is of higher importance. After your meeting with the clergy, you will be directed to meet with the Saint James Wedding Director to review the Wedding Guidelines.

MARRIAGE LICENSE

A marriage license from the state of North Carolina is prerequisite to the wedding ceremony and must be purchased at the courthouse in Concord. The appropriate certificates should be signed prior to the rehearsal; no wedding rehearsal shall be conducted without the signed marriage license. The marriage license will be mailed to the County Clerk's office after the ceremony.

PLANNING THE CEREMONY

One of the clergy of Saint James is the Officiant at all marriage ceremonies. Should the couple desire another clergy to assist in the ceremony, they should discuss this with the Saint James clergy first. The clergy of Saint James will issue such invitations to other clergy under certain circumstances. The ceremonies are done in accordance with the Lutheran Book of Worship. However, within this rite there is room for some creativity and special observances that may be important to you. These special circumstances must be planned carefully with the clergy and be well thought out before the rehearsal. Included in these guidelines is a copy of the Evangelical Lutheran Worship Rite, "The Service of Marriage." The service may appropriately include the Holy Eucharist or not. The decision to include or omit the Eucharist can be made with the counsel of the clergy as you plan.

MUSIC

It is our policy that the Saint James Director of Music Ministries (DMM) play for all weddings at Saint James when organ music is desired. Another organist may be used, but must be approved by the DMM. In accordance with the guidelines developed by the American Guild of Organists (AGO), the standard fee (see Fees and Charges) should be paid directly to the Saint James DMM two weeks prior to the wedding date. All music performed at the wedding should be planned well in advance with the organist and is subject to the approval of the DMM. The DMM is charged with the responsibility for all music at all services in Saint James Church, including weddings. You will need to meet with the DMM early in the planning stages and perhaps again later to choose music. Please call the music office to make an appointment.

Since the wedding ceremony is indeed a worship service, and during this worship service two people are married, careful detail is given to the selection and use of all music for the wedding service. All music selected for use before, during, and after the ceremony must be sacred in nature. The so-called “traditional wedding march” by Wagner (*Bridal Chorus*) is not to be used; it is a theater piece that has nothing to do with the sacred worship service and is contrary to the values and theology of marriage.

Other musicians may be a part of the ceremony if you wish. Soloists and instrumentalists are all appropriate for a beautiful wedding. Saint James can arrange for a soloist (there will be an additional fee). Any texts that are sung must be from the Holy Bible, the Lutheran Book of Worship or other authorized services, or from the hymnals of the Lutheran Church, or be theologically consistent with them. Not all “wedding songs” fit this directive. Selections require great sensitivity and discernment. Guest singers and instrumentalists taking part in the wedding liturgy are subject to the approval of the DMM of this parish (whether or not the parish musician will actually take part in the service).

FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS

Flowers are a traditional and beautiful part of a wedding and are symbols of joy and life. It is recommended that decorations in Saint James be kept relatively simple. Artificial flowers are not allowed in the church. Flowers placed at the altar should reflect the liturgical season of the year. Two arrangements are placed on the altar in the containers provided—with no other decoration in the altar area except for candelabras and palms if you wish to use either. You may also use pew torches and candelabras, which are the property of Saint James. If window decorations are used, any candles must be contained within glass. Let the Wedding Director know of your desire to use these decorations. Extreme caution is urged in the use of candles. Pew candelabras use only oil-filled candles, which are provided by the church. It is mandatory that some kind of protective covering (plastic) be placed under all candles to protect the carpet at the altar. Smokeless, dripless candles must be used. The Saint James Altar Guild will supply these if asked. The couple must pay any extra cleaning costs that are incurred because of dripping candle wax.

Please note that no adhesives, tacks, staples, or other marring materials may be used to attach decorations. Removal of decorations must occur the day of the wedding or prior to a service scheduled for the same day. The church and its facilities must be left in clean order following the service and/or reception. Rice and confetti are not permitted inside or outside of Saint James. Nothing may be thrown inside the church building; in the aisles or elsewhere.

PRINTED PROGRAMS

Some couples desire to have a printed program for the service. In this case, the officiating clergy will assist you in the planning of the leaflet. If it is to be printed by the church, it will be made up to look similar to a Sunday morning bulletin, with limited choice as to size and paper style. All information regarding content (names, musical selections, readings, etc.) must be submitted to the church office at least two weeks before the wedding. If you will have a leaflet, whether printed by the church or by your printer, the copies must be at the church in time for the rehearsal. It will be helpful for the officiating clergy and organist to have copies earlier than the rehearsal. Plan to have several more leaflets than the number of guests you expect to attend.

THE REHEARSAL

The purpose of the rehearsal is to acquaint members of the wedding party with their respective roles in the service so that the service itself may be conducted in a relaxed but worshipful manner rendering praise to God and joy to the bride and groom. The wedding party and everyone who has a part in the service are expected to be present and on time. The rehearsal is usually the day before the wedding. **It will begin promptly and should last no more than one hour.** Unless there is a special need, the organist will not be present at the rehearsal. One usher is generally necessary for every 50 guests. Groom's attendants can double as ushers, but it is helpful to have at least one usher who is not an attendant at the door during the Ceremony for late arrivals. The bride, groom, and two witnesses are required to sign official documents. Most importantly, please remember that the rehearsal takes place in a house of worship and proper respect for this space will be observed. Cell phones are not to be used in the church and should be turned off so they do not ring during the rehearsal. Dress at the rehearsal may be casual if you wish.

WEDDING DIRECTOR

A Saint James Wedding Director will assist you in the planning stages and in directing your wedding. The Wedding Director is responsible for assisting in the planning stages and also for collecting monies and distributing them to the wedding personnel. It is also the duty of the Wedding Director to oversee the activities of all outside personnel (florists, photographers, etc.) and to enforce the policies set forth in this document. A Wedding Director from Saint James must be used for every wedding held in Saint James. No "outside" directors are allowed without the invitation of a Saint James Wedding Director in which case the "outside" director will assist the Saint James Wedding Director.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Saint James is beautiful as a setting for photography, with its colorful stained glass and its dignified appointments. Wedding couples naturally like to have pictures of their special occasion. It is imperative that these policies be communicated to your photographer before engaging his or her services. Flash photography during the wedding service is forbidden. Posed pictures may be taken in the hours prior to the wedding or reenacted afterward. The professional photographer may have a reasonable time following the service for posed pictures. Thirty minutes is the norm for this activity. Pictures in the church must be completed 30 minutes prior to the wedding. It is the bride and groom's responsibility to inform the photographer, family, and friends of the no-flash policy. The photographer must refrain from moving in the chancel and aisle during the service. The photographer (or other guests with cameras) may not step into the center aisle during the ceremony. Climbing on pews, etc. at any time is not allowed. During the ceremony, photographs and videotape recordings may be taken only from the balcony or the rear of the church, or from a pre-arranged position at the side. Videotape recordings of your wedding may be made if the camera and operator remain stationary and use no extra lights.

OTHER IMPORTANT FACTS

No animals or pets are allowed in the sanctuary during the ceremony. Smoking is not permitted in any part of the building. The use of alcohol, in any form, is not permitted in the church building or on the grounds of the church, with the exception of the celebration of Holy Communion. The nave seats 500 people. The chapel seats 75 people. Saint James can provide a room in which the bride and her attendants may dress. For security reasons, personal items and valuables should be entrusted to a designated person before the service begins. A friend or family member should be designated to take care of any gifts brought to the church. Saint James cannot be responsible for the loss or theft of any gifts, personal items, or clothing. The nave and chancel of Saint James is supplied with an amplification system. The lectern (from where the scripture lessons are read) and pulpit are equipped with microphones.

FEES AND CHARGES

Normal fees and charges are listed below, but will be finalized after discussion and agreement with the officiating clergy and Wedding Director. All costs must be paid in advance.

Wedding Director	Chapel: \$150 Nave: \$300
Clergy	Honorarium (make check payable to the clergy)
Organist	\$300 (make check payable to the musician)
Additional musicians (soloist/instrumental)	from \$50 - \$200 (make check payable to the musician)
Wedding Bulletins	\$10 per 100
Candles/Oil	\$60
Fees for cleaning service (make check payable to Carole A. Cress)...	
Wedding in Nave (no candelabras/pew torches)	\$100
Wedding in Nave (with candelabras/pew torches)	\$125
Wedding in Chapel	\$45
Rehearsal Dinner at the church	\$50
Reception at the Church	\$75

WEDDING RELATED PERSONNEL

Senior Pastor	Rev. Tony Bradshaw	704-786-0166
Director of Worship and Music/Organist	Mark D. Frye	704-786-1063
Parish Administrator	Debbie Wilkinson	704-786-0166
Wedding Director	Janet Patterson	704-788-8386
Janitorial Service	Carole A. Cress	704-786-9371

The wedding liturgy is a service of worship; therefore, the use of flash equipment is not allowed during the ceremony.

THE LITURGY FOR THE CELEBRATION AND BLESSING OF A MARRIAGE

The congregation is asked to participate fully in this liturgy by following the order of worship printed here in the Service Leaflet.

THE OPENING VOLUNTARIES

THE PROCESSIONAL VOLUNTARY

THE CHIMING OF THE HOUR

The People stand.

THE BRIDAL PROCESSIONAL

THE APOSTOLIC GREETING

P The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

a And also with you.

THE WELCOME

P Dear friends: We have come together in the presence of God to witness the marriage of ***** and *****, to surround them with our prayers, and to share in their joy. The scriptures teach us that the bond and covenant of marriage is a gift of God in which a man and a woman are joined as one, an image of the union of Christ and the church. As ***** and ***** make their promises to each other today, we remember that at Cana in Galilee our Lord Jesus Christ made the wedding feast a sign of God's reign of love. Let us enter into this celebration confident that, through the Holy Spirit, Christ is present with us now also. We pray that this couple may fulfill God's purpose for the whole of their lives.

THE DECLARATION OF INTENTION

The Pastor addresses the couple in these words, asking each person in turn:

P *****/*****, will you have *****/***** to be your wife/husband, to live together in the covenant of marriage? Will you love *her/him*, comfort *her/ him*, honor and keep *her/him*, in sickness and in health, and, forsaking all others, be faithful to *her/him* as long as you both shall live?

R I will.

THE DECLARATION ADDRESS

The Pastor addresses the assembly in these words.

P Families, friends, and all those gathered here with ********* and *********, will you support and care for them, sustain and pray for them in times of trouble, give thanks with them in times of joy, honor the bonds of their covenant, and affirm the love of God reflected in their life together?

a We will.

THE SALUTATION AND COLLECT OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

a And also with you.

P Let us pray.

Gracious God, you sent your Son, Jesus Christ into the world to reveal your love to all people. Enrich ********* and ********* with every good gift, that their life together may show forth your love; and grant that at the last we may all celebrate with Christ the marriage feast that has no end; in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

a Amen.

The People sit.

THE SCRIPTURE READING

The People stand.

THE HYMN OF THE DAY

THE HOLY GOSPEL

The People sit.

THE HOMILY

Rev. Tony Bradshaw, Senior Pastor

THE VOWS

P ********* and *********, I invite you to declare your vows to one another.

The couple joins hands. Each promises faithfulness to the other in these words.

R I take you, *******/*******, to be my *wife/husband* from this day forward, to join with you and share all that is to come, and I promise to be faithful to you until death parts us.

THE GIVING OF RINGS

P Let us pray.

We give you thanks, O God of grace, for your love and faithfulness to your people. May these rings be symbols of the promise ***** and ***** have made with each other; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

a Amen.

The couple exchanges rings with these words.

R *****/*****, I give you this ring as a sign of my love and faithfulness.

THE ACCLAMATION

The presiding minister addresses the People.

P ***** and *****, by their promises before God and in the presence of this assembly, have joined themselves to one another as husband and wife. Those whom God has joined together let no one separate.

a Amen. Thanks be to God.

THE MARRIAGE BLESSING

The couple kneels. The Pastor extends a hand over the couple while praying for God's blessing in the following words.

P Most gracious God, we give you thanks for your tender love in sending Jesus Christ to come among us, to be born of a human mother, and to endure the cross for our sake, that we may have abundance of life.

By the power of your Holy Spirit pour out the abundance of your blessing on ***** and *****. Defend them from every enemy. Lead them into all peace. Let your love be a seal upon their hearts, a mantle about their shoulders, and a crown upon their foreheads.

Bless them so that their lives together may bear witness to your love. Bless them in their work and in their companionship; in their sleeping and in their waking; in their joys and in their sorrows; in their life and in their death.

Finally, in your mercy, bring them to that table where your saints feast forever in your heavenly home, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

a Amen.

The People kneel as able.

THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

P Seeing how greatly God has loved us, let us pray for the whole world.

A brief silence is held for reflection.

P For the Christian community everywhere; for the life and ministry of the baptized, and for all servants of the gospel, that the church may be the risen body of Christ in the world. Gracious and faithful God,

a hear our prayer.

P For all who are joined by bonds of marriage, kinship, and friendship, and for communities everywhere; for the nations, for all those who govern, and for justice and peace throughout the world. Gracious and faithful God,

a hear our prayer.

P For those we love easily, and for those with whom we struggle, for those different from us and for those familiar to us, that we might be instruments of God's peace. Gracious and faithful God,

a hear our prayer.

P For those who suffer in any way, and those who are lonely, for the sick, the dying, and those who are bereaved, for those who are poor, hungry, homeless, or unemployed, for the victims of violence, hatred, and intolerance. Gracious and faithful God,

a hear our prayer.

P For all those who are joined to us in love; for our families, friends, and neighbors, for those separated from us by distance or discord, and giving thanks also for those who have gone before us. Gracious and faithful God,

a hear our prayer.

P Creator of all, you make us in your image and likeness and fill us with everlasting life. Hear the prayers of your people and grant to ***** and ***** grace to live in unity and joy all the days of their lives; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and praise forever.

a Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (SOLO)

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.

The People stand.

THE PEACE

P The peace of Christ be with you always.

a And also with you.

The couple greets one another with the kiss of peace. All present greet one another with a gesture of peace, and say, "Peace be with you."

THE BLESSING

P God Almighty send you light and truth to keep you all the days of your life. The hand of God protect you; the holy angels accompany you; and the blessing of almighty God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be with you now and forever.

a Amen.

THE PRESENTATION OF THE COUPLE

THE DISMISSAL

P Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

a Thanks be to God.

THE RECESSIONAL

THE CLOSING VOLUNTARY

THE RINGING OF THE TOWER BELLS

TO THE BRIDE AND GROOM

Please read carefully these policies and all information contained herein. If you have any questions, please call the Saint James Wedding Coordinator who will be assisting you in the planning of your wedding. Be sure and share this information with those persons who will be providing services for your wedding; such as the photographer, florist, etc.

Please complete the information below, copy this page, and return it to the Wedding Coordinator as soon as possible.

Rehearsal Date: _____ Time: _____

Wedding Date: _____ Time: _____

Name _____

Address _____

Bride's Signature _____

Groom's Signature _____