



*Planning Your Wedding at
West Nidaros Lutheran Church*

Marriage and the Church

We are pleased that you want to have your wedding at West Nidaros. We will work with you to make your wedding enjoyable and meaningful, and to help prepare you for a happy and fulfilling marriage.

Marriage does not belong exclusively to the church. Although marriage is ordained by God and supported by the church, it is a social contract, governed and regulated by the state for the purpose of lending order to society, protecting individuals, and providing stability to the social order. But to the Christian, it is more:

We believe that God instituted marriage to provide happiness and fulfillment to the man and woman involved.

We believe that God's intention for marriage is that it be forever, that it is a lifelong relationship based on the promise of faithfulness by the man to the woman and the woman to the man.

We believe that God's self-giving love and faithfulness toward us is the model for the relationship between wife and husband. As God is toward us, so should we be toward each other.

We believe that God, along with the church, desires marriage to be full of faithfulness, joy, love, growth, and fulfillment, and that marriages rooted in God's steadfast love will be the most likely to experience these qualities.

God does not perform your wedding. You do. By your promises before God and in the presence of the gathered community, you bind yourselves to each other as husband and wife. You do so in the presence of the pastor, who represents both church and state in this ceremony and who is the principal witness to your action. You make your promises in the presence of God, trusting that God will bless and support you both as you work to fulfill them.

Thus, to be married in the church is to recognize God's intentions for marriage and to affirm those intentions as your intentions for your marriage. It is to share the church's interest in marriage and recognize that in the face of our own sinfulness and self-centeredness we must seek God's blessing, strength, and support for our marriages. Because you are asking to be married at West Nidaros, your marriage service will be consistent with the Christian understanding of marriage as expressed in the Order for Marriage on pages 286 through 291 of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*.

Some First Steps

The following arrangements should be completed before making further plans for the wedding.

The Date and Time

Weddings are scheduled through the West Nidaros Office Administrator and the pastor. Call the Church Office, (605) 543-5215, to check on the availability of the church for the date you desire. After we have received the information the pastor will check their calendar and availability for final approval. The reservation is not finalized until the pastor has approved the date and the required deposit is received in the Church Office. On occasion there are congregational events taking place that will make it impossible to hold a wedding the same day.

Please note that weddings will not be scheduled on the following days or holiday weekends:

Sundays

New Year's Eve and New Year's Day

Holy Week (Palm Sunday through Easter)

Memorial Day

Independence Day (July 4th)

Thanksgiving Day and Weekend

Christmas Eve or Christmas Day

Synod Assembly Weekend (Usually held the first weekend of June)

The sanctuary, including the balcony, seats approximately 340 people. The dining room can seat 125 guests, and the Family Life Center seats 300.

Rehearsal

Typically, a rehearsal is scheduled the evening before the wedding. All members of the wedding party and the ushers are asked to attend, and everyone's promptness is appreciated. If your vocalists are not at the rehearsal, they may do a "sound check" prior to the wedding worship. Please let the wedding coordinator or pastor know if they will not be at the rehearsal.

The Pastor

The pastor at West Nidaros is responsible for working with each couple. Pastors from other congregations may participate in weddings at West Nidaros at the discretion of West Nidaros' pastor and the congregational council. ELCA pastors may preside at West Nidaros weddings without West Nidaros' pastor present. Non-ELCA pastor may participate in West Nidaros weddings, but West Nidaros' pastor will preside over the ceremony.

Marriage Preparation

All couples being married at West Nidaros should plan to participate in pre-marriage counseling. West Nidaros has a relationship with a certified counselor in Sioux Falls who does pre-marriage counseling at a discounted rate. The time and money for these sessions should be considered an investment in your marriage. If there are conflicts or financial reasons that couples cannot attend these sessions other arrangements can be made through the pastor.

The License

South Dakota law requires couples to secure a license to marry. It can be secured at any Register of Deeds office in the state. Both couples must be present with a valid driver's license and Social Security number. Cost of the licenses is \$40. The license to marry

is valid for 20 days. The license must be brought to the rehearsal. The licenses is signed by you, your witnesses, and the pastor.

Reception

West Nidaros has two rooms available for wedding receptions: The Heritage Dining Room, which seats approximately 125 people and is located in the basement. The Family Life Center seats approximately 300 people and is located on the south end of the church.

Drinking/Smoking

West Nidaros is a smoke-free building. Alcohol is prohibited anywhere on the West Nidaros grounds, including the parking lot. All members of the wedding party are asked to abstain from alcohol before the rehearsal and wedding ceremony. We reserve the right to remove anyone from the premises who is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and the pastor has the authority to cancel the wedding if the bride or groom are under the influence.

Building Clean-up

The custodian will clean the space used during the wedding. However, please be considerate in your use of the building. If you provide snacks for the wedding party before the ceremony, please dispose of garbage before the service. All decorations must be removed from the sanctuary following the service. The sanctuary, and the rest of the facility must be returned to its pre-wedding condition so that it is ready for Sunday morning worship.

Planning the Wedding

Working with the Pastor

You will work with the pastor to plan your wedding service. When you meet with pastor, you are encouraged to bring your ideas about ways in which you would like to personalize your wedding service and to discuss these ideas with them. Because the wedding ceremony is set within the context of Christian worship, what is done at the service must be appropriate to a worship

service and in keeping with the church's understanding of marriage. The pastor presides at the wedding service and makes the final decisions as to what is appropriate.

Musicians

West Nidaros has an organ, a piano, and an electric keyboard. We have several organists/pianists who might be available to play for your wedding ceremony. If you choose your own organist, then you will need to have one of West Nidaros' organists acquaint them with our pipe organ.

The Order of Service

The basic order of service, on pages 286 through 291 of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, is as follows:

Prelude

*Musical Selection

Procession (or Processional Hymn)

Greeting

Declaration of Intention

Prayer

*Hymn/Solo

Scripture Readings

Sermon

*Hymn/Solo

Exchange of Vows and *Rings

Acclamation of Marriage

Marriage Blessing

*Unity Candle/*Solo

Prayers and the Lord's Prayer

**Holy Communion, if desired, begins after the Prayers*

*Hymn/Solo

Benediction

Presentation of the Couple

Recession (or Recessional Hymn)

*optional elements

The service allows for a variety of options. You are encouraged you to read the service carefully and to discuss together what the service says about marriage. If you are considering Holy Communion for the congregation at your wedding, you should discuss this with the pastor. [Please note that we will not do communion for only the wedding couple, Holy Communion will be for the entire congregation.] Assisting ministers may be used in the service to read the readings and/or to assist in the prayers.

Decorations

The color of the paraments is determined by the church-year calendar, upon request, the Wedding Coordinator will change the paraments color to white.

The West Nidaros sanctuary is beautiful all by itself, but you may provide some of your own special decorations. Only real flowers are appropriate for placement on or near the altar. We have candelabras and a stand plus outer candles for the unity candle; you will need to provide your own center candle. We only allow candles that prevent wax from dripping if additional candles or candelabras are used.

All of the worship furnishings in the sanctuary will remain in place during your wedding.

Ushers

At least two ushers are necessary to seat guests. More ushers may be needed depending upon the number of guests you are anticipating at your wedding.

Bulletins

It is helpful, but not necessary, to have a printed bulletin to inform guests of the order of service and the names of the participants in the wedding party. You should discuss bulletins with the pastor and have the contents approved before printing. West Nidaros does not print wedding bulletins.

Pictures and Video

Most couples choose to take formal photographs before the wedding. Flash pictures are not appropriate during the wedding worship between the Invocation and the Benediction. Taste and discretion is greatly appreciated. The service may be videotaped, but the size of the altar area does not allow for videotaping from there. We recommend using the balcony area.

Sound

West Nidaros has the capability of audio-taping your ceremony but this can only be done by one of our P.A. operators. If you have vocalists, the P.A. operator will set up microphones for their use.

Conduct of Guests

Since the wedding is set within the context of worship, participants and guests should conduct themselves accordingly. The use of alcohol, controlled substances, or tobacco on church premises, including the parking lot, is prohibited, and persons under the influence of alcohol or other controlled substances will be asked to leave the premises. The pastor reserves the right to halt the ceremony if a member of the wedding party or a guest in the church is not conducting him- or herself appropriately.

The practice of throwing rice, birdseed, or confetti on the newly married couple following the ceremony is prohibited.

Music

Guidelines in Selecting Music

The Marriage Service is an order of worship of the church. In this service a man and woman publicly commit themselves to a lifelong relationship with each other and ask God's blessings on their life together. The service also offers praise and thanks to God for the gift of marriage and love, and for God's ever-present support in marriage.

The *Manual on the Liturgy* reads: "...the music therefore must be carefully and discriminatingly chosen. It should embody high standards of quality and the texts should reflect the praise of God, the steadfast love of Christ for his church as the foundation and model for love and fidelity in marriage, the invocation of God's presence and blessing." Many popular love songs that focus solely on the relationship of the couple, without including the spiritual dimensions of the relationship, are not appropriate in the wedding service. Such songs may be used as part of the prelude.

Music used in the service may be instrumental and/or vocal. It may be organ music or other instrumental music, such as strings, brass, woodwind, keyboard, or guitar performed by a soloist or an ensemble. It may be music with text sung by a single voice, duet, small ensemble, or full choir, or congregational hymns.

In every case, music selected "should be of a high quality and not cloud the mood of the service with triteness or sentimentality. It should moreover be within the ability of the performers at hand to play or sing with assurance" (*Manual on the Liturgy*). If you can answer "yes" to any of the following questions, the music is probably appropriate:

1. Does the music/text reflect praise and/or thanksgiving to God?
2. Is it based on, or does it reflect, a scriptural theme?
3. Is this music appropriate for use in a Sunday morning worship service?

If you have questions about the appropriateness of any music for your wedding, check with the pastor.

Congregational Hymns

Because the wedding service is a worship service, congregational hymns are encouraged. Hymns may be sung in place of other music. The following hymns from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* are suggested:

At the beginning of the service:

- We Praise You, O God* – No. 870
- Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now*– No. 527
- Praise and Thanksgiving*– No. 689
- Holy God, We Praise Your Name*– No. 414
- Praise to the Lord, the Almighty*– No. 858
- Here In This Place*– No. 532
- God Is Here!*– No. 526
- This Is a Day, Lord, Gladly Awaited*– No. 586

During the service:

- Where Charity and Love Prevail*– No. 359
- O Perfect Love*– LBW(green hymnal), No. 287
- Hear Us Now, Our God and Father*– No. 585
- Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*– No. 631
- Blest Be the Tie that Binds*– No. 656
- The King of Love My Shepherd Is*– No. 502
- Let us Ever Walk with Jesus*– No. 802
- Although I Speak with Angel's Tongue*– No. 644
- Beloved, God's Chosen*– No. 648
- Beautiful Savior*– No. 838
- I Was There to Hear Your Borning Cry*– No. 732
- O Christ the Same*– No. 760

At the end of the service:

- Come with Us, O Blessed Jesus*– No. 501
- Lord of All Hopefulness*– No. 765
- All Creatures, Worship God Most High*– No. 835
- Now Thank We All Our God*– No. 840
- Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven*– No. 864, 865
- Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee*– No. 836
- For the Beauty of the Earth*– No. 879
- Let All Things Now Living*– No. 881
- Go, My Children, with My Blessing*– No. 543

Other Matters

Wedding Coordinator

After the wedding date is set, a wedding coordinator will be assigned to you. The wedding coordinator will be present for the rehearsal and before and during the wedding to assist with details, procedures, and protocol. The coordinator is a member of West Nidaros who is trained to help make your wedding day run smoothly. The coordinator will contact you after you have scheduled your wedding with the Church Office.

Dressing Rooms

We have rooms available for the bridal party, the brides room is available for the bride and attendants the day of the wedding (Martin Luther Room), and a room is available for the groom and groomsmen (downstairs classrooms). These rooms are not able to be locked. West Nidaros is not responsible for valuables left in these rooms during your wedding.

WEST NIDAROS LUTHERAN CHURCH WEDDING FEES

	<u>Members</u>	<u>Non-Members</u>
Use of Sanctuary	No fee	\$500
Reception		
Heritage Dining Room	No fee	\$200
*Family Life Center	\$200	\$400
Pastor	\$200	\$300
P.A. Operator	\$125	\$200
Wedding Coordinator	\$175	\$250
**Organist	\$100	\$200
Vocalist	As Arranged	As Arranged
Custodian		
Wedding only	\$100	\$150
with reception	\$175	\$200

All fees are to be paid three (3) days prior to the wedding. Individual checks are to be given to the wedding coordinator who will distribute them.

*Reservation of the Family Life Center requires a \$200 deposit and a signed Facility Reservation Contract. A portion of the deposit (\$75) will be refunded provided the Family Life Center is left in satisfactory condition in the opinion of the pastor and custodian.

**If you are using an organist not from West Nidaros, they must be approved by West Nidaros' Director of Worship.

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