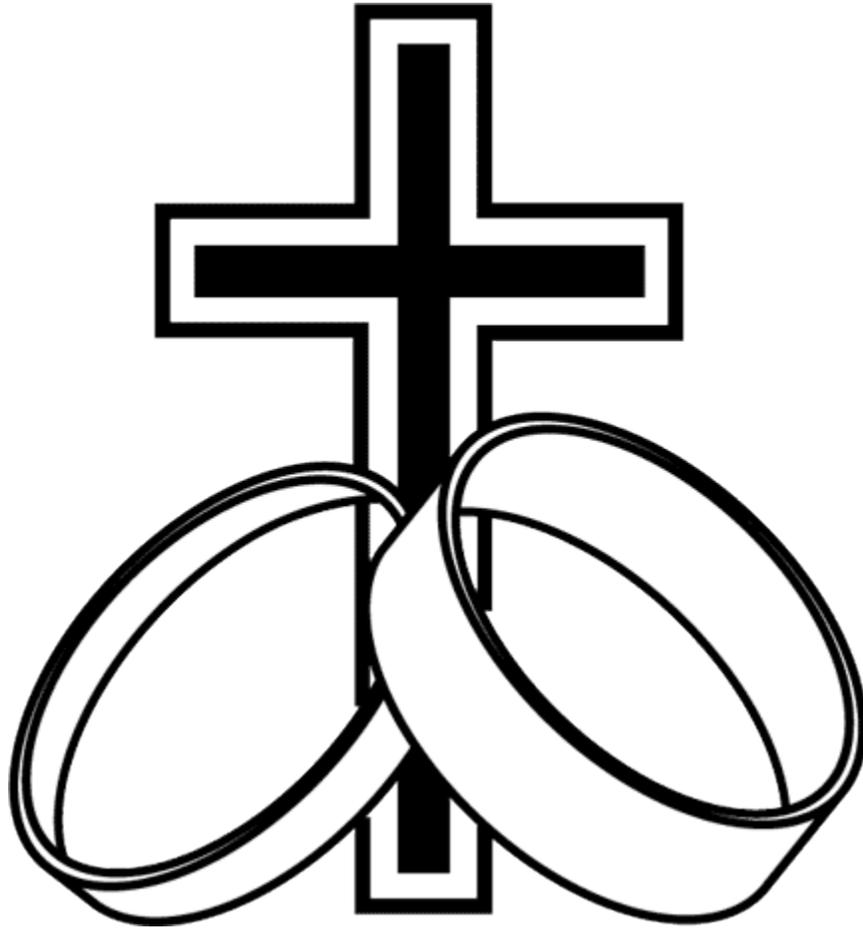


***A Wedding at Faith Lutheran Church
Seguin, TX***



Faith's Wedding Guide

**Faith Lutheran Church
1326 E. Cedar St
Seguin, Texas 78155
(830)-379-7036**

You're getting married!

Congratulations on your upcoming wedding. We're so glad you're considering Faith Lutheran Church as a place that can help prepare you for the journey ahead! We view marriage as something much bigger than just a ceremony . . . it is the start of a lifelong commitment and the celebration of a relationship between a man and a woman that is both unique and sacred.

Although marriage can be the most rewarding of relationships, it can also present many challenges. It is our desire to invest into your lives at this significant time in your life - equipping you with biblical wisdom, helping you to plan a meaningful ceremony, and providing you with some practical tools that will help you build a solid foundation for a dynamic and lasting relationship with Christ at the center.

Your wedding is a service of worship. Keep this in mind as you plan. As a service of worship, your wedding can be a celebrative, joyous, and beautiful event. Your first priority is to plan a service which will allow you and the congregation assembled to give praise, thanks, and glory to God. God is your creator. He has formed you and brought you into this relationship, and it is God who will bless and sustain you in your life together.

It is with all of this in mind that this wedding policy booklet was prepared. It is based upon the ideas which you have just read, and hopefully it will help you make plans for your Christian wedding. It contains information regarding the policies and practices established by the congregation. Please read it carefully.

God's View of Marriage

The relationship of marriage is a gift from God and is intended to bring joy, companionship, intimacy, and family into the lives of a man and woman who choose to become husband and wife. The Bible teaches that when a couple is joined in marriage, two become one. It is within this experience of relational oneness that a couple can discover the deepest joys of marriage.

We believe that marriage is a holy and sacred gift from God, so it is our intent that members approach marriage according to Biblical standards, in a way that is pleasing to God. Because we believe that marriage is a sacred union of one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24-25), and that God gave marriage as a picture of the relationship between Christ and His bride, the Church (Ephesians 5:32), our pastors will not officiate over any marriages inconsistent with these beliefs and our church property may not be used for any marriage ceremony, reception or other activity that would be inconsistent with our beliefs and this policy.

Oneness

Relational oneness can be experienced when a husband and wife dedicate themselves fully to God and to the well-being of each other. Within the context of an intimate, committed, exclusive relationship a man and woman can know the security of being truly loved and accepted. Together they can enjoy the significance of making a substantial, lasting, positive impact on one another and in the world around them. This oneness demonstrates the highest ideal for relationship and powerfully illustrates God's purposes for the world He's created.

Engagement Commitments

We believe that marriage is a holy and sacred gift from God, so it is our intent that couples approach marriage according to Biblical standards and in a way that is pleasing to God. Therefore, we require that you make the following engagement commitments in order to be married at Faith Lutheran Church.

- **Beliefs:** God has intended Christians to marry only Christians. The Bible shows the challenges and heartbreak when Christian believers marry non-Christians. We urge that both the bride and groom demonstrate an active and visible commitment to follow Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.
- **Purity:** The sexual relationship has been designed and intended for marriage, so we ask that you agree to abstain from any sexual relationship until after the wedding. If you have been sexually active, we urge you to commit to chaste conduct in anticipation of your wedding day. A living arrangement that includes cohabitation prior to the wedding is a compromise of Christian guidelines and a confusing example to the community. We urge you to live separately and to abstain from sexual intimacy.
- **Faithfulness:** The church is one of God's important tools for building strong marriages, so we ask that you find a place to serve within the church and pursue a lifestyle of faithfulness to your church family.

Sexual Intimacy

One of the most beautiful expressions of intimacy in a marriage relationship is experienced through sex. A gift from God, sex provides us joy in relationship and fulfillment through family. Because of its importance, sexual intimacy is to be carefully safeguarded by the parameters of the marriage relationship. It is for this reason that we strongly urge couples to abstain from sexual intimacy until their wedding day. Those who are physically intimate or are living together are asked to move apart and covenant with God to abstain from their sexual relationship until they are married.

Preparing for your wedding and marriage at Faith Lutheran Church

If you are going to be married by a Faith Lutheran Church pastor, we ask that you begin the process about six months before your wedding date. You will then schedule an interview with that pastor, after which you will meet with your pastor at least three times for counseling before your wedding.

Frequently Asked Questions

What topics are covered during your meetings with the Pastor?

When meeting with a pastor, many topics that are critical to a healthy marriage will be discussed. These subjects often include: marital roles and responsibilities; skills for communicating and resolving conflicts; realistic management of finances; sexual expectations; family of origin; and each individual's spiritual journey. Relationship strengths will be discussed, as well as areas for potential growth. The goal of these sessions is to better prepare you for a rich and wonderful marriage relationship.

Can I have my reception at Faith?

The Family Life Center is available for your wedding reception and should be reserved when your wedding date is placed on the church calendar. The hall can accommodate approximately 350 guests.

The kitchen is supplied with coffee pots, punch bowls, glass plates and cups and eating utensils. These items may be used, but if anything is broken it must be replaced. You are responsible for washing and putting away all dishes and other items used from the kitchen. The custodian will come in after the reception and clean the building.

Who will help us plan and perform our Wedding?

The Pastor will help you with most of your planning. Our Wedding Facilitators will also be involved. These ladies will be able to help you with the arrangements at the church and will let you know what is available and what is allowed. This person will be present both at the rehearsal and at the wedding to assist you. Check with the church office for the name of the current facilitators.

We have found that it is helpful to have a wedding assistants present at the church. This person will be the one who sees that everything runs smoothly at the church. They will need to be present at the rehearsal because they will be given instructions by the pastor as to what they will be doing on the day of the wedding. This person needs to be someone who is assertive, can give instructions, directions, keep people corralled and help keep things running on schedule. Faith Lutheran has trained assistants that we suggest you use, see the Pastor for details.

Is there a place for the wedding party to relax and dress before the service?

We have several rooms in which the bride and her attendants may dress. One is our Activity Center with a restroom across the hall and several classrooms are also available. We only provide you with a room, please bring everything you need to dress. Please assign someone to make sure that everything is removed and clean immediately after the service.

Can we decorate with flowers and candles?

All arrangements for flowers and the costs of them will be made between you and the florist of your choice. Only fresh flowers, greenery, or plants should be used. Flowers may be placed in the altar vases or brass standing vases (which will be used inside the altar rail). Other flowers may be placed outside the altar rail and in other areas of the church. No greenery is allowed on the brass candelabra nor on the altar rail. Flowers, bows and candle torches are allowed on the end of the pews, but they may not be attached with tape. If screws are used, something must be placed under them to protect the pews. Flowers may be left for Sunday's worship service.

The church provides the altar candles. Plastic carpet coverings should be placed under any other candelabra used in the church.

Unity Candle - Unity Candle is most appropriate for a wedding and many couples are using them because of the symbolism of the two becoming one. The church has a couple of different ways the unity candle may be set up. The Wedding Assistants will show you what we have and how it may be used. Many florists have unity candle stands that you may rent from them. Many of them now have drip less candles. For safety reasons, runners are not allowed on the center aisle.

Unity Box - The bride and groom are asked to each write a letter to one another, expressing their thoughts about the good qualities that they found in their future partner and their reasons for falling in love with each other. Under no condition can they read each other's letter. They are to seal them and put them in the box with other items of importance to them. Upon finalizing the wedding ceremony, the officiant will announce to the guests that he / she had asked the couple to write letters to each other and put them in the box. The officiant will explain that should the couple ever find their marriage in serious trouble, before making any irrational decisions, they must open the box and read the letter that they wrote to one another to reflect on why they fell in love with each other in the first place. The hope is that there will never be a reason to have to open the box until a pre-determined date.

What are the policies regarding photographers?

Pictures may be taken in the church before or after the ceremony. Pictures without flash may be taken from the back of the Church during the ceremony. But since flash pictures are highly distracting, we ask that no flash pictures be taken in the church during the ceremony. The use of audio or video taping is possible, work with the Pastor regarding logistics.

What color will the paraments be when I get married?

Altar cloths, etc. always remain in the liturgical color for the season of the church year in which the wedding is held. The Altar Guild is responsible for changing the paraments. Check with them to see what color is appropriate for your wedding date.

What do I need to know about the music for my wedding?

"Music selected should embody high standards of quality and, in general, reflect the praise of God, God's steadfast love in Christ as the foundation of and model for marriage, and the asking of God's presence and blessing." (Manual on the Liturgy, page 347.) Solos should be selected carefully, and should be appropriate for a worship service. If a popular secular song is desired, you might consider having it sung instead at the beginning of the reception, which would add to the beauty of that event. An excellent way to encourage congregational participation is through the singing of hymns and praise songs. Congregational singing can greatly enhance the spirit of community and celebration.

Musicians - The organist of the church should be consulted where organ music is desired. If the organist is not available to play, or if an outside organist is desired, that person should be approved by the pastor and must be under the supervision of the church organist.

Policies regarding the Wedding rehearsal and ceremony

- A Faith Lutheran Church pastor will be in charge of all rehearsals and Weddings. Other clergy may participate, please work with our pastor in planning this. If our Pastor is not available, please make arrangements with our pastor or the clergy you would like to lead you.
- The use of our church by non-members for weddings at which someone other than our pastor officiates will be allowed only by special request to meet the needs of one of our sister congregations or a Christian church in the community. That request must be sent by

the church council (or equivalent board) of the requesting church, to the church council of Faith at least a month prior to the date of the wedding, provided the request is not due to an emergency situation, in which case appropriate action may be taken by the pastor and the president of Faith Lutheran Church.

- All rehearsals will begin promptly at the scheduled time
- All music to be played or sung must be cleared with the pastor performing the ceremony
- Smoking and the use of alcohol is not permitted anywhere on our campus.
- All formal Photography may be taken prior to or following the ceremony. Flash photography is not permitted during the ceremony until the recessional begins. Videographers (and photographers) may discreetly work from the sides of the church.
- Furniture and candles may not be moved without the consent of the Wedding Coordinators.
- Cell phones must be in the silent mode during the service.
- Men are not to wear hats or caps in the church building.
- Neither rice nor confetti is to be thrown inside or outside the buildings

What costs are associated with our wedding preparation and ceremony at Faith Lutheran?

Members:

Premarital Inventory	\$35.00
Weddings in the sanctuary	no charge
Showers	no charge
Life Enrichment Center	no charge
Custodial fee	\$100.00
Wedding Facilitator	\$100.00
Organist fee	\$150.00
Vocalist fee	Per agreement with vocalists and pianists.
Pastor / Counselor	Suggested honorarium of \$200

Non-Members:

Premarital Inventory	\$35.00
Weddings in the sanctuary	\$750.00
Wedding Facilitator	\$ 100.00
Life Enrichment Center	\$100.00 per hour
Custodial fee	\$ 100.00
Organist fee	\$150.00
Vocalist fee	Per agreement with vocalists and pianists.
Pastor / Counselor	Suggested honorarium of \$200

How do I get started? See the APPLICATION TO USE THE FACILITIES OF FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH FOR WEDDINGS at the end of this document

The facilities of Faith Lutheran Church are made available to members and their families under the following conditions:

- Date availability is determined by the church calendar. Weddings are scheduled on a first-come basis, but ministry events have precedence.
- No alcohol or smoking is permitted in the buildings.

*Payment in full for the facility costs must be submitted with this application. Checks made payable to Faith Lutheran Church.

BRIDE & GROOM: _____

Contact Info: (Bride) _____

(Groom) _____

WEDDING: Date: _____ Hour: _____

REHEARSAL: Date _____ Hour: _____

Officiating Pastor: _____

Reception at Faith Lutheran Church? (yes) ___ (no) ___

Signed _____ Today's date: _____