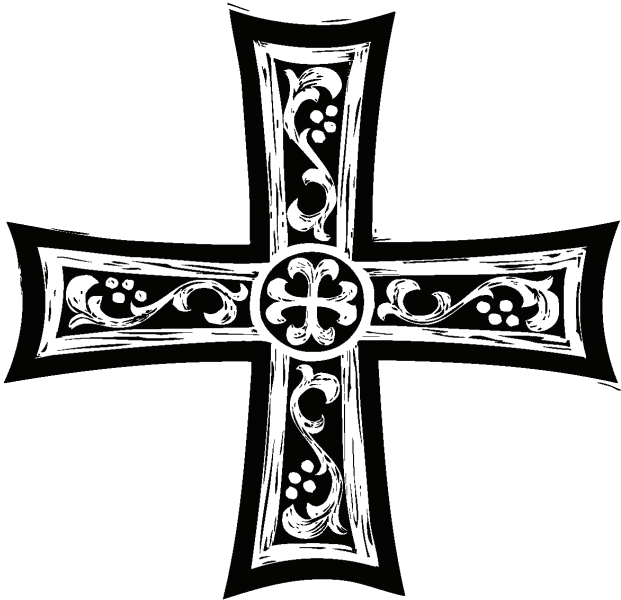


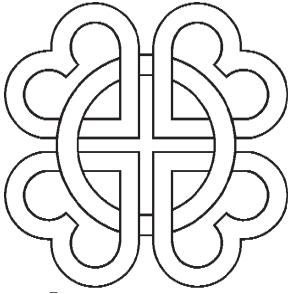
# Messiah Lutheran Church

## Wedding Policy



Messiah Lutheran Church  
6900 Kingston Pike  
Knoxville, Tennessee

*Approved by Congregation Council: March 2006*  
*Revised: March 2014*  
*Revised & Approved by Council: 07.21.2024*



## ***Congratulations!***

*It is our joy and privilege to assist in making your wedding a time of celebration. Careful planning will help make it more meaningful. For this reason, we are pleased to offer this booklet outlining the accepted customs, policies, and procedures relating to weddings at Messiah Lutheran Church.*

*Marriage is a gift from God, a sacred institution. Weddings are worship services focused on God, not ceremonies focused on people. The congregation gathers to worship God who is the source of love, and in that worship, to witness the marriage of two persons. When this is kept in mind, many issues regarding preparation for weddings are clarified.*

## **Initial steps to schedule your wedding**

We are pleased that you are considering Messiah Lutheran Church for your wedding. As soon as you have chosen a tentative date, contact the church administrative assistant to check the church calendar for availability and tentatively reserve your date. They will also put you in touch with the pastor and wedding facilitator.

## **Who may be married at Messiah Lutheran?**

- ❖ Members and immediate family of members may be married at Messiah Lutheran Church.
- ❖ Non-members. Messiah Lutheran was built and is maintained by its members. We are willing to share our facilities with others but require separate utilization fees and some restrictions for those who are not members of this congregation. We invite non-member couples to schedule a conference with the pastor to discuss requirements for marriage at the church.

## **Dates**

- ❖ The dates of the wedding rehearsal and ceremony will be finalized after being cleared with the pastor's schedule, the wedding facilitator and the church calendar, and after the "Use of Church Facilities and Grounds" form has been signed and returned with the required deposit.
- ❖ Weddings are not appropriate during Lent and Holy Week because of the solemn and penitential nature of the season.
- ❖ Invitations should not be ordered until the date has been reserved and confirmed and the pastor has agreed to perform the ceremony.
- ❖ Messiah Lutheran Church will schedule only one wedding per day.

## **Ministers**

- ❖ Weddings at Messiah Lutheran Church are officiated by the pastor of Messiah unless specific approval of another officiant has been approved by the current pastor.
- ❖ A guest minister must be approved by the pastor who may invite him or her to assist or take part in the service.
- ❖ The service will follow the church's usual order for weddings. The pastor must approve any adaptations. Further guidelines for planning a wedding service may be found in the *Lutheran Book of Worship—Manual on the Liturgy*.

## **Counseling**

Premarital counseling with the couple is required and must be arranged with the pastor three to eight months in advance of the wedding date.

Knox County Certificate of Completion for premarital preparation course will be signed upon completion of counseling thus exempting the couple from the fee otherwise imposed by the City of Knoxville.

## **The Wedding Facilitator**

The wedding facilitator acts as a representative of Messiah Lutheran Church to insure that policies, decorum, and respect of the facility and space are adhered to. They will help assist the couple with the preliminary plans of the wedding, ceremony as a representative of the church. The facilitator is familiar with the policies of the church and will be able to answer questions concerning the service, rehearsal, and church reception. They will help guide the service, flowers, music, rehearsal and reception if needed. They are the main contact, other than the pastor, for questions about your wedding.

### **Additionally, the facilitator will:**

- ❖ Direct the couple to the church organist to confirm date. If the church organist is not available for that date, other musicians may be engaged with the approval of the organist and/or pastor.
- ❖ Ensure that the couple has received and read the wedding policy booklet and has completed and returned all information sheets.
- ❖ Meet with the couple at church to review physical arrangements—flowers, candles, etc. and answer any questions they may have.

### **Eight weeks prior, the wedding facilitator will:**

- ❖ Inform altar guild of specific needs—non-drip candles, communion, etc.
- ❖ Arrange for the hanging of wedding banners if they are being used.
- ❖ Provide copy of information sheet to church office.
- ❖ Confirm availability of janitorial services for wedding and advise couple of anticipated fees which will depend on space used, number in bridal party, and number of guests..

**At the rehearsal, the wedding facilitator will:**

- ❖ Open the building and gather the wedding party for pastor's instruction.
- ❖ Rehearse the entrance, placement, seating and exit of the wedding party.
- ❖ Train ushers to seat guests and family members and to light candles.
- ❖ Obtain guest seating information from each family.
- ❖ Coordinate mothers' usher preference.
- ❖ Confirm time with the couple as to when to open the church on the day of the wedding.
- ❖ Confirm that the couple has given the marriage license to the pastor.
- ❖ Assure the building is locked and secured when rehearsal is over.

**On the wedding day, the wedding facilitator will:**

- ❖ Open the building, welcome the wedding party, prepare the sanctuary for service.
- ❖ Guide people to appropriate waiting and dressing areas.
- ❖ Assist with flowers and corsages.
- ❖ Review photography guidelines with photographer/videographer.
- ❖ Arrange for communication to guests that flash photography is not permitted during the ceremony and that all cell phones must be turned off.
- ❖ Instruct ushers when to seat guests and family members.
- ❖ Lock (or appoint designee to lock) dressing area doors during the ceremony and unlock following the ceremony.
- ❖ Guide wedding party for procession.
- ❖ Assist wedding party in retrieving guest book, items from the dressing areas, and any other personal items.

- ❖ Insure that a copy of the signed marriage license has been left in the church office for church records.
- ❖ Assist in restoring the sanctuary for regular services.
- ❖ Assure the building is locked and secured when wedding is over.

**Please note:** If you have hired your own personal wedding coordinator, while in the church facilities and for matters pertaining to the ceremony and decoration of the church, decisions and directions of Messiah's wedding facilitator and the pastor will supersede those of your personal wedding coordinator.

### **Rehearsal**

- ❖ A detailed rehearsal helps assure a dignified and beautiful ceremony. The wedding facilitator will schedule your time and outline details.
- ❖ Impress upon your wedding party that attendance and punctuality are vital.

### **Marriage License**

The marriage license must be given to the pastor at the time of the rehearsal. State law requires the license to be in the pastor's possession before the marriage can be performed.

Knox County marriage licenses may be obtained from the County Clerk's office. Visit <http://www.knoxcounty.org/clerk/marriagelicense.php> for information on when to apply, what identification is required, costs, and locations of County Clerk offices.

See page 4 - Counseling - for further information.



## The Service

- ❖ If both members of the couple are baptized and eligible to commune according to church policy, and they so desire, the marriage service may be celebrated with the liturgy for Holy Communion. Holy Communion is never received by the couple alone because it is always a congregational celebration.
- ❖ The Order of Marriage is to be in keeping with the liturgical tradition of the Lutheran Church. The pastor will assist you in planning the marriage service.

## Decorations

- ❖ A beautiful sanctuary for worship requires only simple decorations; therefore, flowers and decorations must be in keeping with the dignity of the church. Balloons, paper streamers, and the like may not be used. Seasonal decorations are to remain in place.
- ❖ Please show your respect for the church by refraining from the use of anything damaging to the building or furnishings; tacks, tape, glitter, confetti, candle wax, etc. The janitorial service and wedding facilitator will inspect the premises after decorations are removed. The cost of any necessary repair will be deducted from your damage deposit; **you will be responsible for paying for any damages or additional cleaning fees exceeding the damage deposit.**
- ❖ Equipment and decorations that are the property of florists or caterers must be removed from the building immediately following the wedding and church belongings must be returned to their proper place.
- ❖ Please communicate the floral delivery arrangements to the wedding facilitator to ensure that the church will be unlocked.

## **Altar Preparation**

- ❖ Paraments for weddings are in the liturgical color for the day or season of the church year. White paraments may not be used unless white is the appointed color in the church year.
- ❖ Floral pieces and candelabra should not interfere with the movement in the liturgy and should be appropriate for corporate worship. Flowers are not permitted on top of the altar, which is reserved for Holy Communion vessels, the missal stand and two altar candles.
- ❖ Candles near the altar are only those normally used for worship. The church has candelabras that may be used if desired and may be requested through the wedding facilitator. Because the altar area is a liturgical space, any modification must be approved in advance by the pastor and the wedding facilitator.

## **Music**



- ❖ Music is chosen in consultation with the pastor and the church organist who are pleased to share their professional experience and assist you in selecting the appropriate music for your wedding. The church organist, in consultation with the pastor, will have final approval in all instances.
- ❖ Music of a secular nature must be reserved for the reception.
- ❖ The organist prepares chosen selections to be played in advance of the ceremony (usually about 20 minutes.)
- ❖ The wedding service, including processional and recessional, may include hymns or anthems sung by the congregation or choir.
- ❖ The organist of the church has first right of refusal to play for weddings.
- ❖ If other musicians are to be used, the church organist and pastor must be consulted. Musicians must contact the church organist to arrange rehearsal times at least four weeks before the wedding.



## **Use of the Church**

- ❖ Dressing areas will be designated by the wedding facilitator and made available for the use of the couple and their attendants.
- ❖ If the reception is to be held at the church, arrangements should be made through the wedding facilitator so that janitorial services can be arranged and time can be reserved on the church calendar.
- ❖ The church has some equipment for use at the reception.
  - ◆ Sound System - an audio tech can be requested. If available, they must be paid as per fee schedule.
  - ◆ Kitchen - see fee schedule. (Any linens, dishes, glasses, or serving ware belonging to Messiah must be cleaned and returned to their proper places.)

**If the use of any of these items is needed, the wedding facilitator should be contacted.**

- ❖ Equipment, decorations, property of florists/caterers must be removed from the building, and the church belongings returned to their proper places, immediately following the service.
- ❖ Alcoholic beverages can be permitted on a case by case basis in consultation with the pastor and wedding facilitator.
- ❖ Smoking is not permitted in the church or immediately outside entrance/exit doors.
- ❖ Throwing of birdseed, or other approved material is permitted outside the building only. Confetti, rice, and glitter are not permitted. The use of sparklers or fireworks is not permitted.

## **Firearms**

- ❖ Firearms are not permitted anywhere on church property.

## **Janitorial Services**

- ❖ Janitorial services are required for clean up of sanctuary, dressing rooms, bathrooms, entrances, and fellowship hall (if used for reception.) The deposit outlined in the fee schedule will be applied to services rendered as determined by the janitorial service. A refund of some of this fee may be in order. Speak with the wedding facilitator for more specific information.



## **Photography**

- ❖ The couple are responsible for reviewing the church's guidelines with the photographer. They must sign the photography agreement and return it to the church office at least one month prior to your wedding date. *Only* photographers who have returned the form as requested may take photos at the wedding.
- ❖ Photographs of the couple and other members of the wedding party should be taken prior to or following the service. No flash pictures are permitted during the service with the following exceptions:
  1. Flash picture of the procession of the couple at the beginning of the service.
  2. Flash picture of the couple recessing at the end of the service.
- ❖ Timed or non-flash pictures with a quiet shutter may only be taken during the service by the photographer hired by the couple. The pastor must approve videotaping. The pastor's or facilitator's recommendations for placement and timing must be adhered to.
- ❖ It is recommended that the photographer arrange to come by several days before the ceremony to test lighting and exposure. Messiah's sanctuary provides a unique lighting challenge.

## **Miscellaneous items of interest**

- ❖ Some couples may desire to extend a blanket invitation to the church family by means of newsletter or bulletin announcement. To do so, your printed invitation must be received in the church office at least one month prior to your wedding date.
- ❖ If you wish to use pre-printed wedding bulletin covers, ask the administrative assistant to show you the current selection. These must be ordered at least two months in advance. You will be asked to make reimbursement for the cost.

## **Care of Valuables**

- ❖ It is the responsibility of the wedding party to arrange for the care of their property before, during, and after the ceremony. All valuables, personal belongings and gifts should be in the care of parents, friends, or attendants.
- ❖ The church cannot be responsible for any lost or stolen articles.

## **Fees**

- ❖ Messiah Lutheran Church was built and is maintained by its members. We are willing to share our facilities with others but require additional utilization fees from those who are not members of this congregation. Fee schedules follow.
- ❖ **A deposit is required to hold your date.** The deposit is due when the reservation is confirmed. Date is not confirmed until deposit is paid. Remaining fees are due and payable 14 days prior to the wedding date. These should be given to the wedding facilitator. In case of cancellation, fees are refundable based on any services performed.

**Fee Schedule for Members**

**Checks for the following fees should be made payable to  
*Messiah Lutheran Church.***

Date Hold/Damage Deposit/Janitorial Services .....	\$75.00 (ceremony only)
	\$125.00 (ceremony and reception)
Materials for premarital counseling .....	\$35.00
Administrative services .....	Actual cost of any supplies & materials used
Church for Rehearsal & Ceremony .....	\$0.00
Fellowship Hall .....	\$0.00
Kitchen.....	\$0.00

**Checks for the following fees should be made to the individual  
rendering the service.**

Organist (consultation, rehearsal & ceremony).....	\$200.00
Extra rehearsal with organist (if needed).....	\$75.00
Wedding Facilitator (ceremony only) .....	\$125.00
Wedding Facilitator (ceremony with reception held at church).....	\$200.00
Pastor .....	Discretionary Honorarium
Audio Technician (if requested and available).....	\$100.00
Video Technician (if requested and available; for broadcast of ceremony)	\$100.00

**Fee Schedule for Non-Members**

**Checks for the following fees should be made payable to  
*Messiah Lutheran Church.***

Date Hold/Damage Deposit/Janitorial Services .....	\$500.00
Materials for premarital counseling.....	\$35.00
Secretarial services (preparation of bulletin) .....	\$85.00*
* PLUS actual cost of any supplies & materials used	
Church for Rehearsal & Ceremony .....	\$350.00
Fellowship Hall .....	\$250.00
Kitchen.....	\$125.00

<sup>1</sup> Some of these funds may be refunded depending on amount of janitorial services required and whether any damages have been incurred.

**Checks for the following fees should be made to the individual  
rendering the service.**

Organist (consultation, rehearsal & ceremony).....	\$300.00
Extra rehearsal with organist (if needed).....	\$100.00
Wedding Facilitator (ceremony only) .....	\$200.00
Wedding Facilitator (ceremony with reception held at church).....	\$325.00
Pastor .....	\$350.00
Audio Technician (if requested and available).....	\$150.00
Video Technician (if requested and available; for broadcast of ceremony)	\$150.00





*Messiah Lutheran Church offers the preceding policies and guidelines in the hope that they will be helpful to you in prayerfully planning your important day. Please feel free to call us should you have any questions. God bless you as you prepare for your wedding and the establishment of your Christian home.*

### **Contacts**

#### **Messiah Lutheran Church**

6900 Kingston Pike  
Knoxville, TN 37919  
865-588-9753

#### **Wedding Facilitator**

Current vacant

#### **Pastor**

The Reverend Mark Cerniglia  
Phone: 865-588-9753

Email: [pastormark@messiahknoxville.org](mailto:pastormark@messiahknoxville.org)

#### **Organist**

Mary Phillips  
Phone: 865-588-9753, ext. 103  
Email: [music@messiahknoxville.org](mailto:music@messiahknoxville.org)

#### **Administrative Assistant**

Kristin Kennedy  
Phone: 865-588-9753, ext. 100  
Email: [office@messiahknoxville.org](mailto:office@messiahknoxville.org)