



Luther Memorial Church Wedding Guide

**Luther Memorial Church
1021 University Avenue
Madison, Wisconsin 53715**

(608) 258-3160

office@luthermem.org
www.luthermem.org

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Preparing for your wedding

The following is a timeline of tasks to help your wedding ceremony at Luther Memorial go smoothly. For further explanation of the following tasks, please consult the referenced sections in the wedding handbook.

6-8 months before your wedding:

- A presiding minister is selected for your wedding and will be in contact with you. Normally the presiding minister is selected at the end of December for weddings the next calendar year.
- If not done already, sign up for a Saturday pre-marriage class at Luther Memorial.

4-5 months before your wedding:

- Contact presiding minister to begin planning the wedding ceremony.
- Contact the music director to plan music for the wedding ceremony, if not done already at the Saturday pre-marriage class.

1 month before your wedding:

- Turn in *Service Plan* and Wedding Party forms
- Turn in *Building Use* form with payment of fees due.
- Proof the wedding bulletin, which will be sent to the couple electronically as a pdf for review and direct any changes or adjustments to the communication coordinator.

1 day before your wedding:

- Wedding Rehearsal
The presiding minister will direct the rehearsal. It is best if all members of the wedding party, including attendants, parents, additional clergy, readers, attend the rehearsal.

Remember to bring your marriage license to the rehearsal!

Scheduling your wedding

While many customs and traditions have varied cultural origins, the purpose of a Christian wedding is worship before God: to acknowledge God's gracious love in which the marriage of two persons might grow, to hear words of guidance from Scripture, to pray for this marriage and all marriages, and to make a public promise of faithfulness to each other in the marriage vows. Couples desiring a wedding at Luther Memorial must be willing to affirm these sacred purposes when making arrangements for the church.

Who can get married at Luther Memorial?

Luther Memorial does not prohibit any couple who can be legally married in the state of Wisconsin from having their wedding at the church. However, the pastors of Luther Memorial may decide this church is not appropriate for a couple's wedding. All weddings are subject to final approval by the pastors. Congregational membership at Luther Memorial is not necessary to holding your wedding here.

How to schedule your wedding

1. Request

- Check the church calendar to see if your wedding date is available
- Download and read the *Wedding Guide*, which will answer FAQs
- Contact one of the pastors to discuss your wedding at Luther Memorial

2. Apply

- Fill out & submit the *Application*
- Fill out & submit the *Building Use* form
- Make your deposit payment online or via mail

3. Plan

- Register for a Saturday pre-marriage event
- Complete the *Service Plan* with the presiding minister

Date and time availability

Weddings are normally scheduled to begin between 10 am and 6 pm Monday through Saturday. Because of other church events, weddings are not held at Luther Memorial during Holy Week and the week between Christmas and New Year's Day. In addition, couples should be wary of scheduling a wedding on days that the UW football team plays a home game. Parking near Luther Memorial can be very restricted on game days. Luther Memorial does not schedule more than one wedding per day.

Service and Fees

Luther Memorial charges a flat fee and does not itemize the expenses of a wedding. The comprehensive fee for a non-member wedding is \$1,900.* The following services are included in the wedding fee:

- A presiding minister.
- A Saturday pre-marriage event at Luther Memorial and follow-up meetings with the presiding minister.
- An organist.
- A custodian who will provide janitorial services.
- A sound technician
- A wedding host
- Some flower stands and candelabras.
- Bulletins/programs published by the church office.

The fee does not cover outside services, such as a cellist instead of our organist. Florists, photographers, and additional musicians or ministers are paid directly by the couple.

The following church facilities are made available during the four (4) hours allotted to weddings held at Luther Memorial:

- The nave for the ceremony
- Dressing rooms for the bridal party
- Our underground garage, accessible from N. Mills St. via Conklin Place.

A non-refundable deposit of 50% of the total wedding fee is to be paid when the wedding is scheduled. The remaining half shall be paid one month prior to the wedding service.

Please contact a Pastor for member fee pricing

Payment methods

Checks shall be made to “Luther Memorial Church.” Please be sure to note the couple’s names and the wedding date on the check. Visa, MasterCard and Discover credit cards are also acceptable forms of payment. Fees may be paid online with a credit card through the church website: <http://www.luthermem.org/giving/>.

Pre-marriage Preparation

When your wedding date is scheduled at Luther Memorial please plan to attend a Saturday pre-marriage session a minimum of three months before your wedding date. These are required for all couples married at Luther Memorial. The sessions are led by the pastors and staff of Luther Memorial and normally run 10 am to 2 pm and include lunch.

Planning the Service

The Order for Christian Marriage is a beautiful service in the life of the Church. Preparations should be made with this in mind. It is the desire of Luther Memorial that your wedding be a memorable event - beautiful, sacred, and meaningful. It is to this end that the following guidelines and policies have been established.

The Wedding Service

The format for weddings at Luther Memorial follows the order for marriage in the *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. Couples, in consultation with the presiding minister, may adjust the service to meet their family needs within the parameters of the church.

Clergy

Luther Memorial will assign a presiding minister to each wedding. Additional ministers may be invited by the presiding minister to also be a part of the service, should the couple request it. The presiding minister will determine what role additional ministers will play and have final authority on all matters related to the service and the use of Luther Memorial’s building.

The presiding minister will meet with you to plan the service, finalize the details of the wedding bulletin and answer questions. At the Saturday pre-marriage event, you will be given the *Application*, *Building Use* and *Service Plan* forms. The *Building Use* form helps our staff prepare the building for your wedding. The *Service Plan* information will guide you through decisions about the liturgy and will assist your planning session with your presiding minister. The following sections describe some choices you need to consider in planning your ceremony:

Readings

The couple will work with the presiding minister to select bible passages to be read during the ceremony. In addition to readings from the Bible, a selection from a secular source may be used if it is in harmony with the spirit of a Christian worship service and with the biblical understanding of marriage. You may choose one or more friends or family members to serve as lectors.

Vows

A list of suggested vows is found in the *Service Plan*. You may choose one of these, or you may write your own vows. Written vows should make clear that the promises are a life-long commitment. They must be submitted to the presiding minister for approval.

Holy Communion

Holy Communion is an appropriate part of Christian weddings. Couples may choose to include Holy Communion in the wedding worship service, provided that the sacrament is celebrated by all persons attending the wedding.

Bulletins

As part of the services of the church, wedding bulletins will be printed by Luther Memorial. Your bulletin outline and wedding party list must be given to the church **one month** prior to the wedding in order to allow ample time for review and printing.

If you are printing your own bulletins you are still required to turn in a completed *Service Plan* to the church office one month prior to the wedding. The completed bulletin must also be submitted to the presiding minister for approval before printing.

Music

Music for the service is under the direction and supervision of Andrew Schaeffer, director of music. Andrew will meet with all couples at the Saturday pre-marriage events. In addition, couples may want to schedule a meeting after the Saturday event to further discuss the selection of music. All music used in the service must be approved by the director of music.

The music for a wedding typically consists of the following:

- Prelude as the guests are arriving and being seated.
- Processional as the wedding party enters the nave.
- Service music: may include congregational hymns, psalms or solo pieces during the service.
- Recessional as the wedding party leaves the nave.
- Postlude as guests leave the nave.

All music, whether traditional or contemporary, used in the service will be sacred. Recorded music is not used in any worship service at Luther Memorial and in addition, our sound system is not designed for pre-recorded music to play. Some songs are not appropriate for worship services at Luther Memorial. Secular or popular songs of special meaning to you

should be reserved for the wedding reception.

In addition to helping you plan the music for your service, Andrew Schaeffer or another Luther Memorial organist will play the organ at the wedding. The service of an organist provided by Luther Memorial is covered by the comprehensive fee. If you desire a guest organist or other musicians, Luther Memorial follows the policy of the American Guild of Organists: a guest organist must meet with Andrew, who will assess the musician's competence and experience. If the musician is approved for the service, it will be your responsibility to arrange for and pay the musician's fee. If you wish to have a friend or family member sing or play at the service, arrangements must be made with the Andrew when you meet with him to select music. Additional instrumentalists or vocalists are paid directly by the wedding party.

Use of the Building

In all matters pertaining to the building, authority rests with the presiding minister. Everyone associated with the wedding, including the wedding party, guests, and contracted service providers, are expected to abide by the policies of Luther Memorial.

Accessibility

A wedding rehearsal is normally held the day before the wedding ceremony and lasts 30-45 minutes. Couples may bring items (candles, flowers, dresses, etc.) for their wedding to the rehearsal for storing overnight. Couples should be aware that although all items are stored in locked rooms, the couple assumes all financial responsibility for any stolen items.

Wedding parties may use the building for up to 4 hours on the wedding day. Use begins 2 hours before the scheduled start of the wedding service. For example, a wedding scheduled at 2 pm allows the wedding party to use the building from noon until 4 pm. Any deliveries, such as from florists, or set-up by photographers must be completed during the 4-hour window.

Parking is available for the 4 hours of building access. The church has an underground parking garage immediately west of the church facility which holds a total of approximately 20 cars. Nearby street parking may also be available. Metered parking is available inside Grainger Hall on Brooks Street, one half block east of Luther Memorial. The City of Madison Lake Street Ramp has ample parking and is located approximately three blocks east of church.

Our parking garage offers reserved parking and wheelchair accessibility to the lower level of the church. Our two elevators make almost all areas of the church wheelchair accessible. For those needing hearing assistance, there is a T-coil system in the nave.

Nave

All weddings at Luther Memorial are held in the nave which can comfortably hold 400 people. The nave is the central location for worship by the people of God. It is a place that is held in reverence because of its purpose. All preparations for the wedding service and the service itself will be conducted in the spirit of this reverence.

Photographs/Video recordings

In order to assure a proper working relationship between the photographer and the church, the following policy is offered:

The use of Luther Memorial as a setting for photographs is a privilege, not a right that comes with the employment of the photographer. Every attempt will be made to assist the photographers in accomplishing their task, so long as these policies are observed.

Guidelines and policies preceding and following the wedding service are different from those during the service itself.

Before and after service

Formal photographs of the wedding party can be taken in the nave before the service and following the closing recessional.

Photographers are expected to bring their own extension cords. Under no circumstance shall the altar or other furniture of the congregation be moved for photographs. The altar table is used exclusively for sacramental purposes. Nothing should be placed upon that table.

During the ceremony

To ensure that worship itself remains the focus during the service, the following policies have been established:

Because the wedding liturgy is a worship service of the church, no flash photographs may be taken during the service.

Video Cameras

The same rules (above) apply to video cameras; however, it is possible to put a video camera on a stationary tripod in the west or east transept of the nave.

Drones

The use of drones inside the church building is prohibited.

Decoration

As part of the comprehensive fee, couples may use Luther Memorial candelabras and candles. Luther Memorial does not furnish candles or candle holders for a unity candle or memorial candles but will provide a stand/table for them. Luther Memorial will provide stands for flower arrangements.

Floral bouquets of real flowers are permitted for use on the high altar for wedding services. Saturday weddings can often make use of the altar flowers ordered for Sunday worship. Note that altar flowers are not always available. If you wish to make the wedding flower arrangements available for the Sunday morning worship services, let the church office know at least two weeks before your wedding.

The furnishings in the sanctuary may not be moved or altered for the wedding service. The only pieces of furniture to be added to the usual setting are the prayer desk and a table for the unity candle and/or memorial flowers or candles. The railings and altar is not to be decorated; however, bows and/or candle standards may be attached to the pews. No adhesive tape or clamps that will scratch the pews or remove the varnish will be allowed. Ribbons may be attached to the exterior handrails leading into the narthex from University Avenue.

Under no circumstances are rice, birdseed, flower petals, or other similar objects to be used inside the church building or on its grounds. Aisle runners are also strictly prohibited due to safety considerations.

Dressing Areas

Two rooms will be made available as dressing spaces for the wedding party. Time for dressing is part of the four hours of building availability. Couples may store dresses and other items in these spaces overnight after the rehearsal if needed.

The wedding party may provide finger food for participants in the wedding. The wedding party is responsible for leaving the area reasonably clean and for cleaning up any messes made by the wedding party or guests. The custodian will make a trash can available to dispose of unwanted food and dirty tableware and will empty the trash can after the wedding.

Wedding Host

To reduce the stress of your wedding and allow you to enjoy the occasion we usually provide a wedding host prior to and during the wedding ceremony to assist with logistical details and to help ensure things run smoothly. For some smaller weddings, a wedding host is not needed.