



Wedding Guide



Celebrate. Share. Renew.

Website: unitybrookfield.org
Phone: (262) 781-7600

Cross of Life Campus
20700 W. North Avenue
Brookfield, WI 53045

Christ the King Campus
4600 Pilgrim Road
Brookfield, WI 53005

Table of Contents

1. Your Wedding: A True Celebration.....1

2. Getting Started: Attending to the Details.....1

 2.2 Location1

 2.3 Flowers and Candles.....1

 2.4 Chancel Arrangement1

 2.5 Musicians1

 2.6 Photography and Videos2

 2.7 Wedding License2

 2.8 Pre-Marital Sessions With the Pastor2

3. Music.....2

4. Service Details3

 4.1 Bulletins3

 4.2 Wedding Party3

 4.3 Guests and Ushers.....3

 4.4 Readings.....3

 4.5 Readers.....3

5. Symbolic Exchanges4

6. Order of Worship4

7. Receiving Line4

8. Family Considerations.....4

9. Couples4

10. The Rehearsal.....5

11. Reception5

12. Miscellaneous Facts5

13. Fees.....5

14. Contact Information5

1. Your Wedding: A True Celebration

Our philosophy concerning weddings is simple. As your church, we celebrate with you as you make an enduring commitment to each other as a couple. The celebration takes place in the context of a Christian worship service.

Like any worship service, there are some standard components to a wedding, as well as plenty of variables. The process of planning is a partnership between the couple and the Pastor leading the service. Our intent is to make sure your wedding reflects both its Christian foundation and your preferences as a couple.

What follows is a starting point. This booklet lifts up things for you to consider as you begin making decisions about the wedding service. Not everything listed will apply to your situation. Likewise, not every one of your questions or ideas will be found in these pages. All the specifics will be worked out in your meetings with the Pastor who leads your service. Feel free to call the Pastors; John Horner- Ibler, Sherrie Lorbeck, or Muriel Otto as questions arise.

2. Getting Started: Attending to the Details

Weddings can be scheduled for any member of UNITY Lutheran Church.

2.1 Selecting a Date and Time

To reserve a date, contact one of the Pastors to see if the date is open on the church calendar.

- There is only one wedding a day, so please make arrangements well in advance of your preferred date.
- Dates must be scheduled at least four months in advance.
- Late morning, afternoon, and early evening services are all time of day possibilities.
- Saturday weddings at the Cross of Life Campus can begin no later than 2:30 PM.

The Pastor who will officiate at your service will contact you shortly after the date is placed on the church calendar to go over any questions you might have about this booklet.

2.2 Location

Our church sanctuaries are the anticipated location, but alternative sites off the church property can also be considered. Discuss your requests with a Pastor.

2.3 Flowers and Candles

Flowers and candles are the responsibility of the couple. Flowers may be placed on or before the altar and/or tastefully in other locations throughout the sanctuary. The church does not own candelabras or a unity candle stand. If you desire to use either, they will need to be rented or purchased. Drip guards should be placed under all candles. Please do not drop natural flower petals anywhere in the sanctuary. Dropping silk or other artificial flower petals is acceptable.

2.4 Chancel Arrangement

The placement of musical instruments, furniture and banners in the front of the church cannot be adjusted for individual weddings.

2.5 Musicians

Members of the UNITY Lutheran Church staff will play all organ and keyboard music. Vocalists and other instrumentalists are a welcome addition to any service. Those musicians do not need to be connected to UNITY Lutheran Church. Discuss your plans with the Pastor.

2.6 Photography and Videos

Both are permitted during the service. We ask that neither guests nor your photographer use a flash during the service. Photographers and videographers should consult with the Pastor in advance, since some locations provide better angles than others. In general, we simply ask photographers to use common sense and good taste.

2.7 Wedding License

A wedding license can be purchased a month in advance at the courthouse in the county where you live. This needs to be done *in person, by both people*. No tests or appointments are necessary. Fees vary by county but generally rise in the last week before the wedding. Give the license to the Pastor *before* the wedding!

The original will be signed during or after the service and then sent to the Waukesha County Register of Deeds. Copies can be obtained *from them* about 2 weeks after the service.

2.8 Pre-Marital Sessions With the Pastor

Three 60-90 minute sessions with one of our Pastors are part of the planning process. These sessions include time taken to plan the service and time set aside to take and discuss a marital inventory called “Prepare.” There is a \$35.00 processing fee for the inventory.

Don’t worry! The inventory is not a predictor of marital success or an outsider’s assessment of your relationship. Rather, it allows couples to self-identify their own strengths and work areas and to discuss them briefly with a third party. The details of these discussions with the Pastor are confidential, but the process of sharing time together does allow the Pastor to know the couple better. One of the results is a more personal wedding service. The other result is a couple more attuned to the history and potential of their relationship.

Couples should contact the Pastor 4 months in advance of their wedding date to schedule their first pre-marital session.

3. Music

Music is wonderfully expressive. It is able to evoke the many emotions of a relationship in a way words cannot. Music selected for a wedding celebration should reflect both the tastes of the couple and the Christian context in which the service takes place.

Janet Day, UNITY Music Director, is an important part of the music planning process. The Music Director will typically meet with the couple around the time of the first pre-marital session. It is the responsibility of the couple to contact Janet and set up a time for their meeting. During the meeting, Janet will be able to demonstrate classical and contemporary wedding pieces and provide feedback on selections the couple is considering. All musical decisions should be made no later than a month prior to the wedding.

As you make your selections, keep the following in mind:

- Hymns sung by the congregation are an option that involves your guests as something more than spectators.
- Vocal soloists/groups and instrumentalists add to the richness of the service.
- Music can function as both a featured moment in the worship as well as a transition from one part of the service to the next.

Guest vocalists and instrumentalists should contact Janet well in advance of the wedding to schedule a rehearsal if she is accompanying them. To make efficient use of everyone's time, please encourage guest musicians to be well prepared for the music rehearsal.

4. Service Details

4.1 Bulletins

There are lots of options. The Pastor or Administrative staff can show you examples of pre-printed covers available through Church publishing houses. The cost for the pre-printed covers is about \$15 per 100 bulletins. The inside is then personalized for your wedding, either here at church or at a printer of your choice. If UNITY Lutheran Church is printing the inside, all wedding party information needs to be turned in 2 weeks prior to the wedding. If the couple produces the bulletin at an outside source, the Pastor needs to see it before printing, and receive a final copy one week prior to the rehearsal.

Beyond this option, the couple is free to go design or select a bulletin of their own and to produce it at a place of their choosing. Here too, please consult with the Pastor, and have a copy of the final version in the Pastor's hands one week prior to the rehearsal.

4.2 Wedding Party

Make the following decisions months in advance of your wedding:

- Will there be attendants, and if so, how many?
- Will there be ring and/or flower bearers?
- How will the wedding party enter (as couples or individually)?

Please note that wedding parties do not need to be equal in number on both sides. Also, those that stand up for the bride or groom do not need to be of the same gender with whom they stand.

4.3 Guests and Ushers

The seating capacity of Cross of Life Campus sanctuary is 340 and 200 at Christ the King Campus sanctuary. If you expect 50 or more guests, you should plan on having at least 2 ushers. "Open," or "Groom's-side/Bride's-side" seating is the decision of the couple.

Ushers should be oriented accordingly. Beyond the seating of guests, ushers have the additional duties of candle lighting, bulletin distribution, and the dismissal of guests after the service. They should plan to attend the rehearsal so they can be briefed on these tasks.

4.4 Readings

Like music, the readings should reflect you as a couple. At least one of the readings should be from Scripture. Feel free to also include poetry, stories, or other writings of meaning to you. A total of one to three readings is typical. You are encouraged to pick a Bible passage that has special significance to you as a couple. If you aren't sure of where to begin, the Pastors can be helpful in this process.

4.5 Readers

Readings are an excellent opportunity to include others in leading the service. Our suggestion is that the reader(s) be selected from among your family and friends. The Pastor is also available to do the readings.

5. *Symbolic Exchanges*

The exchange of rings and the lighting of a unity candle are included in most services. Other symbolic exchanges (e.g. presenting a rose, thank you letter or other gift to the parents) are common, often varying with family or ethnic tradition. Discuss your wishes with the Pastor.

The vows are the core of the service. They are the words of promise and fidelity that you offer to each other in the presence of God and witnesses. These should be words that are chosen with care and treasured for a lifetime. About half the couples we marry write their own vows. The other half speaks pre-written vows from the Lutheran or other hymnals. The choice is yours. Whatever the source, most couples choose to repeat the vows after the pastor. Make sure the pastor has a copy of the vows you have chosen/written. The Pastor can provide you with examples of vows.

6. *Order of Worship*

There is considerable flexibility in the way in which the service is structured. Just as there is no longer a set etiquette for weddings, neither is there a set way to conduct the service. The primary variables are the number of readings and music selections you choose to include in your wedding. The following example would be typical for a service which would last 30 minutes.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <i>a. Processional</i> | <i>i. Lighting of Unity Candle</i> |
| <i>b. Greeting and Opening Prayer</i> | <i>j. Music (Vocal or Instrumental)</i> |
| <i>c. Blessing of the Couple by the Congregation</i> | <i>k. Prayers and Lord's Prayer</i> |
| <i>d. Music (Hymn, Vocal, or Instrumental)</i> | <i>l. Blessing and Benediction</i> |
| <i>e. Readings</i> | <i>m. Announcement of the Marriage</i> |
| <i>f. Brief Sermon</i> | <i>n. Introduction of the Couple</i> |
| <i>g. Exchange of Vows</i> | <i>o. Recessional</i> |
| <i>h. Exchange of Rings</i> | |

Lutheran weddings can, but do not necessarily include the serving of communion. Discuss your wishes with the Pastor. Try to include the congregation at one or two points in the service. This allows your guests to be participants rather than spectators.

7. *Receiving Line*

The receiving line is a chance for you to greet your guests after the service, if you choose. Talk to the Pastor about the best location. Another option is for the couple to return to the center aisle and personally release the guests.

8. *Family Considerations*

It is not unusual for one or both members of a couple to have parents who are deceased, divorced or separated in some other way. Other couples have children from prior relationships. Each situation is unique and can pose particular needs or challenges. Please talk to the Pastor about your concerns; we will be helpful in finding workable solutions.

9. *Couples*

Some couples ask whether we marry couples already living together. While it is our understanding that the sexual expression of a loving relationship is best saved for married life, we make no judgment on couples already living together and celebrate their wedding as we would any other. We embrace weddings by couples across the spectrum of sexual orientations and gender identities.

10. The Rehearsal

The rehearsal is usually held the night before the service and takes 50 minutes if the members of the wedding party are punctual. Arrange for the time of the rehearsal at your first pre-marital session with the Pastor.

11. Reception

You should typically leave at least two and preferably three hours between the start of the wedding service and the start of your reception.

If you are interested in having your reception or rehearsal dinner at the church, please discuss this with the pastor. Additional Custodial and Administrator fees may apply. The couple assumes responsibility for the conduct of their guests and for returning the Fellowship Hall, Kitchen and other public areas to proper order following the event.

12. Miscellaneous Facts

- The sanctuary aisle at Cross of Life Campus is 54 feet in length and 32 feet at Christ the King Campus. If you are planning to use an aisle runner, we'd suggest using a 75-foot, rented cloth runner. Paper or vinyl runners are acceptable, but do not work as effectively.
- The entire building at Cross of Life Campus and Christ the King Campus is climate controlled.
- Birdseed can be thrown outside either building. Rice and confetti are difficult to clean up and hard on the birds. Please do not use them.
- Natural flower petals are not allowed to be dropped in the sanctuaries. Silk or other artificial flower petals are acceptable.
- As part of the care of our facilities and everyone's health we ask that no smoking and no consumption of alcoholic beverages take place on site.
- The seating capacity of Cross of Life Campus sanctuary is 340 and 200 at Christ the King Campus sanctuary.

13. Fees

There is no required fee for the Pastor's time or the use of the building when a member is being married. Other fees apply and should be paid no later than one week prior to the service using one check made payable to UNITY Lutheran Church. The fees include:

Organist:	\$200, plus \$50 if accompanying or working with other musicians/vocalists
Wedding Administrator:	\$150
Custodian:	\$50

Additional fees for the pre-marital inventory (section 2.8), bulletins (section 4.1), and receptions (section 11), are covered in the noted sections in this Guide.

14. Contact Information

John Horner-Ibler, Pastor	john@unitybrookfield.org	(262) 686-2138
Sherrie Lorbeck, Pastor	sherrie@unitybrookfield.org	(262) 686-2139
Muriel Otto, Pastor	muriel@unitybrookfield.org	(262) 686-2150
Janet Day, Music Director	janet@unitybrookfield.org	(262) 686-2137