

ST. MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

CHURCH USE POLICY

St. Mark's Lutheran Church of Olathe, Kansas is dedicated to the glory of God and for joyful worship. In keeping with its orderly use as a house of worship, the Church Council has established a Church Use Policy. The Church may be used by non-profit organizations and also by Lutheran affiliated organizations such as Thrivent for Lutherans. The Church facilities may not be used for business purposes. Ceremonies of lodges or other such organizations shall not be permitted in the church or on the church premises of the congregation. St. Mark's may terminate the organization's use of the premises at any time.

WEDDING GUIDELINES - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Congratulations on your upcoming wedding! We know these times of planning and preparation will be packed with joyful anticipation, and we are happy for you. We want your wedding service to be a memorable occasion that you can cherish for a lifetime. To help accomplish this, we have prepared this list of frequently asked questions.

1. Who may be married at St. Mark's Lutheran Church?

Any couple, members or non-members, are welcome to have their wedding at St. Mark's. Each couple must meet with the Pastor for 3-4 pre-marriage sessions before their wedding. Wedding dates are first-come, first served. (Only one wedding per day).

2. How do I schedule my wedding?

Contact the church office. The Parish Secretary will help you schedule an initial interview with St. Mark's Pastor. Ordinarily at least three (3) months lead-time is needed. After you have agreed on a date and time with the officiating Pastor, it will be placed upon the official church calendar when the security deposits are received.

3. Are there premarital counseling requirements?

Yes. You will be meeting with the pastor from St. Mark's who will officiate at the service. There will be a minimum of three marriage preparation sessions, which are designed to help you focus on the issues common to every marriage. These meetings are scheduled at times mutually convenient to you and the Pastor. Both bride and groom are to attend.

4. Are any other preparations expected of us?

Yes. A church wedding is a worship service. In addition to the exchange of their vows, the bride and groom will be asking God to bless their home and be a part of their life together. Thus spiritual preparation is also important. During the weeks and months prior to your marriage, we desire for you to attend worship on a regular basis, either here at St. Mark's or at your home congregation.

5. What about music, photography and special decorations?

Our contract with our parish organist requires that the wedding party pay him a fee of \$125 (\$175 for holiday weekends) when there is music. This fee is to be paid at the time of the rehearsal. If additional musicians are desired, their financial compensation is the responsibility of the wedding party. Music for the ceremony is to be chosen in consultation with the parish organist. Since a church wedding is a worship service, all music must be appropriate for use in worship. The parish organist will have final approval over all wedding music.

While most couples choose to remember their wedding day with pictures, a church wedding is a worship service. Photography without flash or video without lights is permissible if taken from unobtrusive place in the room. Ushers are to inform guests with cameras of these restrictions. It is suggested that formal posed pictures be taken prior to the ceremony.

Our local florists have considerable artistic skill and are generally knowledgeable about church wedding protocol. Trust their professional expertise and allow them to assist you. No decoration shall be used that will hide from clear view our worship furnishings and appointments. No chancel furnishings are to be moved. Lutheran practice does not call for any change of seasonal paraments colors for weddings. If a unity candle is desired, it is to be provided by the wedding party. All decorations should either be placed upon the floor or tied on with ribbons.

6. Will we need a wedding rehearsal?

A rehearsal is necessary for all weddings, (at the church or offsite). Everyone in the wedding party should attend. A rehearsal will ordinarily last less than one hour and it should begin and end on time. The bride and groom are responsible for seeing that everyone is present at the appointed time.

7. How are decisions made about the service?

The officiating Pastor from St. Mark's will work with you on the service. There will be some options for you to consider. We will try our best to help you keep your plans simple, so that you may relax and concentrate on the significance of your marriage itself. Enjoy! Don't worry about the technicalities of the ceremony! We want your wedding day to be beautiful and meaningful.

8. May I have a reception here at St. Mark's?

You may use our Fellowship Hall for a reception if you desire. No catering service is available through the church, however. Your caterer needs to furnish whatever is used, and must leave the premises in the clean condition in which they were found. Sorry, tables and chairs from St. Mark's cannot be removed for off-premises use. Please advise your guests that no rice, birdseed or confetti may be thrown on the premises. Smoking, alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs are not permitted. The maximum capacity of the Fellowship hall is 100.

9. Where may I apply for a marriage license?

You may apply for a Kansas license at the Courthouse in downtown Olathe. You will need positive identification, preferably a birth certificate. Plan on being asked to make sworn statements about your identity and eligibility. It is not possible to perform a marriage ceremony here without a valid Kansas marriage license in hand.