



Maricopa  
Lutheran Church  
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# MLC WEDDING PLANNING GUIDE

## Blessings and Congratulations!

You are beginning an important journey, and we are honored that you want Maricopa Lutheran Church (MLC) to share in your joy. We want you to have a beautiful wedding and a lifetime of love for each other.

### Date

The date of your church wedding should be decided in consultation with the pastor and the wedding planner at least three months in advance.

### Location

MLC does not currently own a building, so you are responsible for finding and reserving an appropriate location. Outdoor weddings are acceptable, but keep in mind the unpredictability of the weather. Please consult with the pastor before finalizing the location.

### Officiating Pastor

The Pastor of Maricopa Lutheran will officiate at all weddings. Where it is the wish of the bride or groom to invite another pastor to participate in the ceremony, they should make this known to the MLC pastor who will then extend the invitation to the guest pastor.

### Premarital Counseling

Completion of premarital counseling is a prerequisite for the Pastor to perform the wedding. During the four to six sessions, details of the marriage service, personal relationships, home, church, and community will be discussed. Each session lasts 1.5 to 2 hours. The Pastor may choose to lead group sessions with multiple couples. The basis for the discussion will be your responses to a relationship assessment tool called "Prepare & Enrich" that is administered online. You will be notified by email when you can take the assessment, which takes 30-45 minutes.

### Marriage License

Please contact the appropriate government agencies in plenty of time to assure you have the marriage license in hand before the rehearsal.

### Honorarium

The honorarium for the pastor is \$250. For travel outside of Maricopa, mileage shall be per IRS guidelines plus food and lodging if suitable. These must be paid at least one week prior to the wedding.

## Wedding Checklist, cont....

Father Gives Away the Bride:  Yes  No  \_\_\_\_\_

Hymns:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Instrument:  Piano  Organ  \_\_\_\_\_

Scripture Readings (up to four; must include a Gospel):

1st \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm \_\_\_\_\_

3rd \_\_\_\_\_

Gospel \_\_\_\_\_

Unity Candle or Unity Sand (circle one):  Yes  No

Optional Special Music: \_\_ \_

\_\_\_\_\_

Instrument:  Piano  Organ  \_\_\_\_\_

Communion:  Yes  No

Communion Assistants (if applicable; verify number required with pastor):

\_\_\_\_\_

Recessional: \_\_\_\_\_ Instrument: \_\_\_\_\_

Piano  Organ  \_\_\_\_\_

Postlude Music: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Receiving Line at Church:  Yes  No

## Wedding Checklist

Rehearsal Date and Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Wedding Date and Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Wedding Location \_\_\_\_\_

Reception Time and Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated number attending (including wedding party): \_\_\_\_\_

Number of bridesmaids (including maid/matron of honor): \_\_\_\_\_

Number of groomsmen (including best man): \_\_\_\_\_

Flower girl (optional):\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Ring bearer (optional):\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Ushers (if not the groomsmen): \_\_\_\_\_

Honorarium and Fees paid:     Yes     No  
(Pay Honorarium and Fees at least one week prior to wedding.)

Wedding Rings Obtained:     Yes     No

Who will have the rings during the service:\_ \_\_\_\_\_

Marriage License Obtained:     Yes     No

Candle Lighter: \_\_\_\_\_

Music submitted at least 2 weeks before wedding:     Yes     No

Prelude: \_\_\_\_\_

Instrument:     Piano     Organ     : \_\_\_\_\_

Processional: \_\_\_\_\_

Instrument:     Piano     Organ     : \_\_\_\_\_

## What is a Wedding?

Your decision to be married in the Church suggests that you expect the character of your wedding to be explicitly Christian. That is our expectation also. Keep in mind that your wedding is first and foremost a worship service. Therefore, it should include only rituals and music appropriate to Christian worship.

See the Order of Worship on page 4 and the Wedding Checklist on pages 9 and 10.

The Christian wedding is about God who created you in his image and unites you as one flesh. It is the occasion to thank God for establishing marriage, for bringing the two of you together, and for continuing to bless you with his ever-present and abundant support. Marriage is a covenant (promise) made between a man and a woman which is grounded in the steadfast love of God. God's abiding faithfulness is the model.

To make the wedding more meaningful, remember that the invited guests are not mere spectators, but participants. Choose ways that they can participate, such as in the singing of hymns and songs. Marriage is a glad occasion overflowing with joy, and those who celebrate it rejoice in the gifts of God— life, health, strength, sexuality, the family—all that God declared from the beginning to be “very good.”

Those who plan to be married should begin with prayerful consideration of God's love, the sanctity of marriage, and their own faith and commitment.

## Wedding Coordinator

Generally, all weddings require consultation with a Wedding Coordinator. The Wedding Coordinator will meet with you and work with you to help make your wedding a cherished memory. Check with the facility that will host your wedding to verify their requirements.

## Pianist / Organist

Please note the Musician's fee typically covers a brief rehearsal the day of the wedding. Additional rehearsals may incur additional fees. The couple is responsible for getting printed music to the musician **not less than two weeks** prior to the wedding date. Please notify the Pastor if you need help in identifying a pianist or organist for the wedding.

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## Music Selection

Since the wedding ceremony is *first and foremost a worship service*, selections must be appropriate for use at any worship service (i.e. sacred in nature.) Save secular selections for the reception.

- Does this music/text praise and/or give thanks to God?
- Is it based on, or does it reflect, a scriptural theme?
- Is this song in the form of a prayer?

The Pastor and the Music Coordinator will make the final decisions regarding acceptability of hymns and special music. Solos must be submitted to the pastor and the music coordinator **at least two weeks** prior to the wedding and before printing of the worship bulletin. See pages 5-6 for music suggestions.

## Rehearsal

*Please be on time!* Be sure all members of the wedding party are present: bride, groom, parents of the bride and groom, best man, maid (matron) of honor, bridesmaids, groomsmen, and ushers. Bring the marriage license to the rehearsal. The rehearsal lasts from 30-45 minutes.  
Photography

Pictures may be taken of the wedding party before or after the ceremony. Flash photography is *not allowed* during the marriage service—this includes the processional by the bride.

## Custodial

Be sure to coordinate with the custodians at the facility. You are typically responsible for putting all your materials away after the ceremony.  
Security

The Pastors and staff assume no responsibility for lost, stolen, or broken items. Leave all valuable personal belongings and gifts in the care of family or friends and ask them to remove them at the end of the wedding.  
Alcohol and Drugs

There is a *no alcohol or drug tolerance policy*. Please ask your family, attendants, and ushers to refrain from alcohol or drugs before and during the rehearsal as well as the ceremony. The Pastor may decline to participate if he/she determines anyone in the wedding party has been consuming alcohol or drugs. In that case, the honorarium and fees are forfeited.

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## Scripture Selections, continued

### New Testament

Romans 8:31-35, 37-39	If God is for us
Romans 12:1-2, 9-18	A living sacrifice and genuine love
1 Corinthians 13:1-13	The greatest gift is love
Ephesians 3:14-19	The breadth, length, height and depth of Christ's love
Ephesians 5:1-2, 21-33	Walk in love, as Christ loves us
Philippians 2:5-11	The same attitude as Christ
Philippians 4:4-9	Rejoice in the Lord always
Colossians 3:12-17	Clothed in compassion, kindness, meekness, and patience
1 John 3:18-24	Let us love in truth and action
1 John 4:7-16	Let us love one another for love is of God

### Gospels

Matthew 5:1-10	The beatitudes
Matthew 5:13-16	You are the light, let your light shine
Matthew 7:21, 24-29	A wise person builds upon the rock
Matthew 19:3-6	What God has united must not be divided
Matthew 22:35-40	Love, the greatest commandment
Mark 10:6-9	They are no longer two but one
John 2:1-11	The wedding at Cana
John 15:9-17	Love one another as I have loved you

## Scripture Suggestions

Two to four Scripture passages are read and the brief sermon may be based on one of these or yet another passage of the Pastor's choosing. Communicate with your pastor regarding your choices at least two weeks prior to the wedding. Below are some Scripture suggestions to help you. Feel free to explore other Scripture options that are meaningful to you.

### Old Testament

Genesis 1:26-31	Woman and man created in the image of God
Genesis 2:18-24	Companionship rather than loneliness
Proverbs 3:3-6	Loyalty and faithfulness written on the heart
Song of Solomon 2:10-13	The voice of the beloved
Song of Solomon 8:6-7	Many waters cannot quench love
Isaiah 63:7-9	God's mercy is remembered
Jeremiah 31:31-34	The new covenant of the people of God

### Psalms

Psalms 67	May God be merciful to us and bless us
Psalms 100	We are God's people; the sheep of God's pasture
Psalms 117	The steadfast love of the Lord
Psalms 121	The Lord keeps watch over you
Psalms 127	Unless the Lord builds the house
Psalms 128	Blessed are those who walk in the Lord's ways
Psalms 150	Let everything that breathes praise the Lord



## Order Of Worship

### GATHERING

Prelude and Processional  
Greeting  
Declaration of Intention  
Prayer of the Day  
Hymn

### WORD

Scripture Readings (See pages 7-8 for suggestions)  
Message  
Hymn

### MARRIAGE

Vows  
Giving of Rings  
Acclamation  
[Optional Unity Candle or Sand]  
[Optional Special Music]  
Marriage Blessing  
Prayers of Intercession  
[Holy Communion is optional]  
[Optional Special Music]

### SENDING

Blessing  
Presentation of the Couple  
Dismissal  
Recessional and Postlude

#### Note:

- 1) See pages 5-6 for Music Suggestions.
- 2) See pages 7-8 for Scripture Suggestions.
- 3) Holy Communion is optional. Please discuss with the Pastor.
- 4) A wedding program is optional. If you decide to print one, the design and printing is your responsibility. Please submit a draft copy to the Pastor and the Wedding Planner for approval at least one week before you will have it printed.



## Processional Music Suggestions

Air on a G String (Bach)  
 Air (from Water Music) (Handel)  
 Arioso (Bach)  
 Ave Maria (Schubert)  
 Bridal Chorus (Wagner)  
 Canon in D (Pachelbel)  
 Canon in F (O'Neil)  
 Festival Bridal Chorus (Wyrzten)  
 Hymne (Vangelis)  
 Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring (Bach)  
 Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee or Ode to Joy (Beethoven)  
 Prelude in C (Bach)  
 Threads of Love (Line)  
 Trumpet Voluntary (Clarke)

## Congregational Hymn Suggestions

Abide with Us, Our Savior ..... 539  
 Beautiful Savior ..... 838  
 Be Thou My Vision ..... 793  
 Blessed Assurance ..... 638  
 Blest Be the Tie that Binds ..... 656  
 Borning Cry ..... 732  
 Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing ..... 807  
 For the Beauty of the Earth ..... 879  
 For the Fruits of All Creation ..... 679  
 Give to Our God Immortal Praise! ..... 848  
 Great is Thy Faithfulness ..... 733  
 Hear Us Now, Our God and Father ..... 585  
 Joy to the World ..... 267  
 Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee ..... 836  
 Let All Things Now Living ..... 881  
 Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus ..... 802  
 Lord of All Hopefulness ..... 765  
 Lord, Take My Hand and Lead Me ..... 767  
 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling ..... 631  
 Now Thank We All Our God ..... 839,840  
 O God, Our Help in Ages Past ..... 632  
 Oh, That I Had a Thousand Voices ..... 833  
 O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts ..... 658  
 Open Now Thy Gates of Beauty ..... 533  
 Our Father, By Whose Name ..... 640

Praise, God, from Whom All Blessings ..... 884  
 Praise the Lord! O Heavens ..... 823  
 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty ..... 858, 859  
 Shout to the Lord ..... 821  
 Spirit of Gentleness ..... 396

## Recessional Suggestions

Entrance (or Arrival) of the Queen of Sheba (Handel) Finale (from Water Music) (Handel)  
 Hornpipe (Handel)  
 Ode to Joy (Beethoven) Rondeau (Mouret)  
 Spring (From the Four Seasons) (Vivaldi) Trumpet Tune or Trumpet Air Purcell) Trumpet Voluntary (Clarke)  
 Wedding March (Mendelssohn)

## Special Music (Solos) Suggestions

Amazed (Anderson)  
 Answered Prayer (Little and Jones) Ave Maria (Schubert)  
 Be the Center (Frye)—often used for unity candle  
 Breathe (Barnett)  
 Can't Live a Day (Beck, Harrington, Lacy) Center (Hall)—*often used for unity candle*  
 God Causes All Things to Grow (Chapman, Green) Household of Faith (Lamb, Rosasco)  
 How Beautiful (Paris)  
 I Could Sing of Your Love Forever (Moore/ Chapman)  
 I've Always Loved You (Third Day)  
 If You Could See What I See (Moore)  
 In This Very Room (Harris and Harris) Jesus Messiah (Tomlin)  
 Love Never Fails (Quilala)  
 Only God Could Love You More (Borop, Liles)  
 Shine on Us (Smith)—often used for unity candle  
 Take My Life (Here am I) (Havergal, Tomlin)— *often used for unity candle*  
 The Lord's Prayer (Malotte) This Day (Lavik)  
 Wedding Song (Stookey) When I Call on Jesus Mullen)  
 When Love Takes You In (Chapman)  
 Your Love is Extravagant (Evans/Casting Crowns)