

Your Wedding



WHERE DO WE BEGIN?

Before you make any wedding plans you need to:

Talk with one of our pastors. The pastor will expect to meet with you at least three times for pre-marital counseling. Try to begin the sessions **no later than** two months before the wedding. The sooner the counseling begins, the better; it is not helpful as a “crash course.”

During your first session with the pastor you will be asked to complete a pre-marriage inventory that will guide the remainder of the sessions. The processing fee for this is \$35. Make the check payable to: Life Innovations, Inc.

Wedding plans will also be discussed during the sessions with the pastor.

Request the use of the building. Call the church office to schedule the use of the sanctuary. This should be done at least six months in advance since our facilities are used by many groups and a pastor may not always be available. Our administrative assistant will reserve the sanctuary and make arrangements for custodial service, as well as the fellowship hall if it will be needed.

We request that formal weddings not be scheduled during the season of Lent if at all possible. The somber nature of the season focuses on the suffering and death of Christ and is in stark contrast to the joy of a wedding ceremony.

Contact the organist. We prefer that you use Advent’s church organist. If you want to use another organist he/she must be approved by our organist. He will also recommend appropriate music for the ceremony as well as other musicians or vocalists.

Call our wedding coordinator (if it is a wedding with over 25 guests in attendance) to arrange a meeting before you plan any specific details related to the wedding, especially those related to flowers and decorations.

If you are planning on a church reception, **contact our kitchen coordinator** about the use of the kitchen and fellowship hall.

A WEDDING IS A WORSHIP SERVICE

The marriage of a man and woman is one of the most significant occasions in their lives. We are pleased that you want to have your wedding at Advent because this reflects your desire to include Christ in your marriage.

For Lutherans, the marriage ceremony is a worship service, and as in all worship services, it is an opportunity for praise and thanksgiving to God. In the context of this worship service the bride and groom publicly proclaim their lifelong commitment to one another before God.

Our goal is to maintain the holy nature of your wedding ceremony and to ensure that both you and Advent Lutheran Church understand each other’s responsibilities so that this is the best possible experience for you.

Here are some things to keep in mind as you plan your wedding ceremony:

1. **The pastor(s).** One of Advent’s pastors will preside at the wedding and will be responsible for all that happens in the worship service. For weddings of members, both of the pastors may participate, if requested. You may also invite another pastor to participate from another congregation, including those of other de-

nominations. Our pastor will officiate and the other pastor will be involved in the service as well. Please talk with us before much planning and before inviting your friend.

2. **Music.** At several places in the ceremony music can be a meaningful addition to the service, especially if at least one of these is a hymn that the congregation can sing, too. At most, two musical selections (not counting the processional and recessional) are enough; more than that and the service starts to feel awfully long for those who are standing up front.

Because the wedding is a worship service, music should express the message of Christian love. Our organist will help you choose the appropriate sacred music for the service. Please understand that although there are many beautiful and inspiring songs, not all of them are appropriate for use in a worship service. Some may be best reserved for the reception.

3. **Holy Communion.** For those who share faith and tradition, this is especially meaningful. Communion is always celebrated with the entire congregation (not just with the bride and groom). You may choose to have a family member bake the bread for communion.

The bride and groom may also be a part of the distribution of communion.

3. **Readers.** You may ask another person to read scripture lessons. We'll assume s/he will practice beforehand.
4. **Worship folder.** We suggest this especially if you're planning a worship in which all the people participate. This folder includes the order of worship; the responses, hymns and prayers; a list of the persons in your wedding party, parents, etc. Attractive bulletin covers are available for minimal cost. If you would like our church secretary to type and/or copy the bulletin for you, please contact her at least one month before the wedding.
5. **Procession.** There are many ways for the wedding party to process into the church. The traditional way with the bride entering last on the arm of her father is still meaningful to many. However, other options are also possible. For example, the men could escort the women down the aisle. Or both parents could walk down the center aisle with the bride and the groom. Discuss your ideas with the pastor.

WHAT READINGS CAN WE USE?

The most appropriate readings are those parts of Scripture that mean the most to you – your favorite psalm or verse or chapter. The following are possibilities:

Genesis 1:26-31 - the creation of human beings

Genesis 2:18-24 - the creation of woman

Isaiah 63:7-9 - God's goodness

Jeremiah 31:31-34 - God's new covenant with us
from Romans 12 - the life of the Christian couple

1 Corinthians 13 - Paul's expression of love

Ephesians 5:21-33 - talking to newlyweds

Matthew 5:1-12 - The Beatitudes

Matthew 7:24-29 - the house built on the rock

Matthew 19:4-6 - marriage as union of male and female

Matthew 22:35-40 - love, the greatest commandment

John 2:10-11 - Jesus at the wedding feast in Cana

John 15:9-16 - Christ's love and our love

parts of John 17 - Jesus' prayer "that they may be one"

Psalms 45 - the king's royal wedding song

Psalms 1 - life with God

Psalms 23 - you know what that is!

Song of Solomon 2:10-13 – the joy of loving

Song of Solomon 8:6-7 – the power of loving

Praise Psalms:

Psalms 33, 100, 117, 127, 128, 136, 150

Other readings of literature, poetry, etc. from outside the Bible may be appropriate. Let us know your ideas.

WHAT WILL I SAY?

There are two things you'll be saying during The Rite of Marriage:

- ~ that you do indeed hereby legally join together in marriage. (The Vows)
- ~ that you share rings as a sign of your faithful love. (The Exchange of Rings)

YOU MAY write out your own words. That could be quite meaningful for you. There are also some good choices if you don't feel creative enough to write your own.

THE VOWS

(memorized and spoken by you or repeated phrase-by-phrase after the pastor)

I, _____, in the presence of God and these witnesses, take you, _____, to be my wedded wife/husband and pledge you my troth, till death us do part.

I, _____, in God's presence and before family and friends, take you, _____, to be my wife/husband, to have and to hold from this day on, to love and to cherish as long as God gives us life.

I, _____, give myself to you _____, to serve as your wife/husband from this day forward, to join with you and share all that is to come, and, with the help of God, I promise to be faithful to you as God gives us life together.

_____, I take you to be my wife/husband from this time onward, to join with you and to share all that is to come, to give and to receive, to speak and to listen, to inspire and to respond, and in all circumstances of our life together, to be loyal to you with my whole life and with all my being.

4. I take you, _____, to be my wife/husband. I promise before God and these witnesses to be your faithful wife/husband, to share with you in plenty and want, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, to forgive and strengthen you and to join with you so that together we may serve God and others as long as we both shall live.

5.

6. I take you, _____, to be my wife/husband from this day forward, to join with you and share all that is to come, and I promise to be faithful to you until death parts us.

7.

8. I take you, _____, to be my wife/husband, and these things I promise you: I will be faithful to you and honest with you; I will respect, trust, help, and care for you; I will forgive you as we have been for-

given; and I will try with you better to understand ourselves, the world, and God; through the best and the worst of what is to come as long as we live.

9.

10. In the name of God, I take you, _____, to be my wife/husband from this day forward. For better, for worse; for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health; to love and to cherish until we are parted by death. This is my solemn vow.

WE THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER ASK!

What about the rehearsal?

The rehearsal time and day will be set with the pastor. This usually is the evening before the wedding. We ask that all members of your wedding party be at the rehearsal on time so that your wedding ceremony will go smoothly and the rehearsal can begin and end on time. Plan for an hour for the rehearsal. Everyone who is involved in the ceremony and worship should be there, including the organist, ushers, wedding party and usually the parents.

Can we take pictures or videotape?

We desire with every worship service to praise God, so we seek to minimize distractions. This includes photographers moving about during the worship service.

We ask that no still or flash pictures be taken during the ceremony after the processional. Please inform your guests. You may have photos taken inside the sanctuary after your ceremony.

We have found that stationary video cameras do not distract worshipers. If you wish to videotape your service, you may place a stationary video camera (that is, one on a tripod) in the back corner of the church by our cry room. The camera must use existing light, and we ask that the camera operator remain stationary throughout the service.

If you have a professional photographer or a videographer, please have these people talk with the pastor before the ceremony.

How can we decorate?

We have two torches (candles), two flower stands and a kneeler that you may use. It's also important that you discuss any additional decorations and their placement with the wedding coordinator before buying or renting them. We would hate for someone to trip over a misplaced decoration or incur expense for an item that can't be used.

No flowers, candles or any other decorations may be placed on the altar.

Candles are a particular concern, since much of the sanctuary is carpeted and the pews have seat cushions. Dripped wax is very hard to remove from fabric. You will be responsible for any wax removal required.

Only live flowers may be used for worship. We ask the florist to deliver the flowers on the day of the wedding so that the church may be decorated at least two hours before the service.

Please tell the wedding director how the flowers will be used after the ceremony. Many couples leave their flowers for our worship services the next Sunday.

Paraments are cloth hangings that adorn our altar and pulpit. The colors of these hangings reflect the seasons of the church year and cannot be changed. The pastor or wedding coordinator can tell you what the color of the paraments will be the day of your wedding.

Can we use the nursery for children in attendance?

The nursery is available for children age three and younger. If you want to have it available for guests during the wedding, a nursery attendant will be required. Discuss this with your wedding coordinator **What about acolytes?**

For the good order of your worship service, we ask that the acolytes and crucifer be properly trained. Acolytes light the candles, while the crucifer carries the cross. Advent has members who are trained and available to serve in your wedding service, or you may use older children (at least 10 years of age) or adults of your own choosing. However, they will need to receive brief instructions prior to the rehearsal. Please discuss your wishes with the pastor or altar guild.

Do we send invitations to the pastors?

It's good courtesy to send the pastors an invitation, most especially if you're expecting them at the rehearsal dinner or the reception. They won't always be able to attend, but if you invite them, they will tell you one way or the other. They usually turn down last minute, after-thought invitations.

Can we throw rice?

We do not permit the throwing of rice or birdseed at Advent. As an alternative, we suggest releasing environmentally safe balloons, ringing small bells, releasing doves, blowing bubbles, etc.

When can the fees be paid and to whom?

If the reception is held at Advent, the refundable security deposit is required at the time the wedding is booked to reserve the space. All other fees are due and payable to Advent Lutheran Church to the Church Administrator no later than one week prior to the wedding.

Wedding Fees

	Members	Nonmembers
Pastor	Honorarium – optional	\$300.00
Organist	\$125.00	\$125.00
Organist playing for vocalist	\$150.00	\$150.00
Bulletins	None	.30 each
Acolyte/Crucifer	\$20.00/each	\$20.00/each
Nursery Attendant	\$25.00	\$25.00
Use of Sanctuary	None	\$150.00
Custodian	\$40.00	\$40.00
Use of Fellowship Hall	\$100.00	\$200.00/4 hrs, \$50/each add'l hr
*Security Deposit	\$200.00	\$200.00
Set up	None	Starting at \$25.00
Custodian	\$40.00	\$40.00
Kitchen usage	None	\$25.00
Kitchen Equipment		
Usage (coordinator required)	\$100.00	\$150.00
Sound Engineer	Starting at \$50.00	Starting at \$75.00
Wedding Coordinator	\$100.00	\$100.00

- The security deposit will be refunded a week after the wedding upon satisfactory inspection of the facility.

Advent Lutheran Church

8840 University City Blvd.
Charlotte, North Carolina 28213 Phone: 704-549-1555
website: www.adventlu.org
E-mail: advent@adventlu.org