

GUIDELINES FOR A WEDDING OR BLESSING OF A CIVIL UNION

The people of St. Luke's wish you every happiness and God's blessing on the day of your liturgy. We hope that blessing your relationship in a public gathering will always be a sign of God's grace and presence to you and to others. In a Christian liturgy of commitment, such as a wedding, the couple invites their guest to join them in asking God's blessing on their marriage. It is meant to be festive and joyous with all present invited to participate in prayer, hymns, and thanksgiving to God.

The following guidelines concur with the regulations of the Church, the rubrics of the Book of Common Prayer, the law of the state and the policies of the parish. We ask that you consider them carefully as we want your liturgy to be planned as smoothly as possible, and your ceremony to be a meaningful and memorable occasion.

SETTING THE DATE

The wedding date is considered confirmed after the couple has spoken to the St. Luke's clergy and wedding coordinator, submitted a \$150 deposit, and received a counter-signed *Record of Intent* from St. Luke's clergy.

YOUR POINT OF CONTACT

To help take some of the work off of your plate during the planning, St. Luke's wedding coordinator will work with you to cover the general logistics, schedule calls with clergy, musicians, and other staff members, work with your vendors (such as photographers or florists) who may be in providing services for your ceremony, and to provide you with the final fees.

WHAT IS REQUIRED?

Generally, a wedding at St. Luke's will entail four sessions of premarital counseling, the fourth of which will include a walk-through of the wedding liturgy. You can anticipate that each session will last about 45 minutes and will have some advance preparation.

Church regulation requires at least 30 days' notice before a wedding takes place. If either party has been married before, a document must be completed by the couple and the officiating clergy person and submitted to the Diocese at least 60 days prior to the wedding date and following at least the first three pre-marital counseling sessions.

For Episcopal weddings, it is also required that at least one of the parties will have been baptized. For a Blessing of a Civil Union, there is no requirement of baptism.



MARRIAGE LICENSE

A license from the state is a prerequisite to the Solemnization of Matrimony or Blessing of a Civil Union. The state of Illinois requires a one-day waiting period before the use of the license. Both members of the couple must apply at the same time for a license at the Skokie Court House (847-470-7233) or any of the other five sites authorized by the Registrar of Cook County. The license may be used in any of the Illinois counties and should be deposited with St. Luke's clergy a minimum of three days prior to the ceremony. The appropriate certificates will be signed and the completed license will be mailed to the County Clerk's office following the ceremony. Note that Licenses are not required for a public blessing of a previously held legal marriage ceremony.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

as suggested in the *Book of Common Prayer*, Page 426

FIRST LESSON

- Genesis 1:26-28 (Male and female he created them)
- Genesis 2:4-9, 15-24 (A man cleaves to his wife and they become one flesh)
- Song of Solomon 2:10-13; 8:6-7 (Many waters cannot quench love)
- Tobit 8:5b-8 (New England Bible) (That she and I may grow old together)

SECOND LESSON

- 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 (Love is patient and kind)
- Ephesians 3:14-19 (The Father from whom every family is named)
- Ephesians 5:1-2, 21-33 (Walk in love, as Christ loved us)
- Colossians 3:12-17 (Love which binds everything together in harmony)

PSALM

- Psalm 67
- Psalm 127
- Psalm 128

GOSPEL

- Matthew 5:1-10 (The Beatitudes)
- Matthew 5:13-16 (You are the light...Let your light so shine)
- Matthew 7:21, 24-29 (Like a wise man who built his house upon the rock)
- Mark 10:6-9, 13-16 (They are no longer two but one)
- John 15:9-12 (Love one another as I have loved you)

PLANNING THE CEREMONY

All ceremonies at St. Luke's are done in accordance with the Book of Common Prayer or authorized rites as approved by the Bishop of Chicago. However, within these rites, there is room for creativity and special observances that are important to you. The clergy and St. Luke's wedding coordinator will do their best to make sure that your liturgy reflects your values as a couple.

WEDDING PLANNERS & COORDINATORS

If you are working with a wedding planner or coordinator to handle your reception and coordinate other events for the day, it is important to remember that the wedding itself is a liturgy of the church. As such, your planner is welcome to attend the rehearsal and/or ceremony but will not be involved in any aspect of the planning (service elements, program, communication with participants, church seating, processions, vendor arrivals, etc.). St. Luke's will generally limit communication with planners/coordinators to expected arrival, departure, rehearsal, and service times.

SCRIPTURE AND OTHER TEXTS

In most services, there is space for between one and three texts to be read or sung with additional texts possible for opening and closing statements. At least one reading should be biblical, and if there is going to be communion there will need to be at least one reading from one of the gospels. While there are customary texts (see *The Book of Common Prayer*, pages 426), we find that the most meaningful services are drawn from favorite or emblematic passages of the person. Our clergy can often be of assistance with options for texts. Readings are also a meaningful place to involve those who are close to the couple as there can be readers for each lesson, as well as between one and five readers for prayers.

MUSIC

It is St. Luke's policy that the parish organist plays for all liturgies. Other musicians may be invited to participate at the organist's discretion, but the Organist's fee will still apply. St. Luke's organist has a suggested repertoire depending on the style and size of your wedding, and you'll be selecting music together based on what is appropriate for the instruments, gathering, and setting.

The Choir of St. Luke's is an all-volunteer ensemble and, as such, may or may not be available for weddings. However, on occasion and at the discretion of the rector and choirmaster, the choir may indeed be available to offer a choral introit, the singing of hymns and mass settings, a hymn descant, an Anglican Chant psalm and up to two anthems.

FLOWERS & DECORATIONS

Flowers are a traditional and beautiful part of a liturgy. Your budget and tastes determine the type and amount of flowers to be displayed in the church. St. Luke's floral team includes professional floral designers who can work with you to accommodate floral arrangements for the front of the church, high altar, pews, or other locations in the church.

Any decoration questions can be discussed with the St. Luke's Wedding Coordinator.

PRINTED PROGRAMS

St. Luke's will produce a wedding bulletin for your service in line with our standard template based on the service designed with the clergy, wedding coordinator, and musician.

REHARSAL

Your rehearsal will involve all possible persons with roles in the ceremony, including any speaking or movement roles. Depending upon the type of ceremony, you can expect your rehearsal to last approximately 45-60 minutes. All fees will also be due at the rehearsal. The St. Luke's Wedding Coordinator will work with you to provide a listing of checks that will be required.

ALTAR GUILD

A member of St. Luke's Altar Guild will be present for the care and handling of St. Luke's vestments, to provide assistance with Communion, if needed, and to assist with cueing of the entry procession. Clergy and/or the St. Luke's Wedding Coordinator will work closely with that person to ensure that key elements of your ceremony are communicated.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND LIVESTREAMING

Photography and videography is permitted during the ceremony within a set of guidelines that ensures that the photographer and/or videographer does not interfere with the liturgy. Your photographer/videographer will need to review and sign off on our guidelines and will be expected to arrive early on the date of your ceremony to review our policy with the St. Luke's Wedding Coordinator.

Provided that St. Luke's Audio/Visual team is available, your ceremony can also be livestreamed. Livestreaming does not involve moving cameras within the church, however, so is similar in nature to Sunday livestreams. Once the ceremony is complete, you'll have access to the video on YouTube through a private (or public, if preferred) link.



FEES

When you decide to have your liturgy at St. Luke's, you will be asked to sign a Fee Agreement in order that all fees and charges are clear to all. Normal fees are listed on our fee schedule, however, the St. Luke's Wedding Coordinator will provide you with a final list of fees prior to your ceremony. As noted earlier in this document, a \$150 deposit for the church is required when your ceremony is booked. All fees will be due at your rehearsal. It should be noted that separate checks will need to be written for various participants. If your wedding is cancelled within two months of the date of the rehearsal, half of the deposit will be returned to you. If a cancellation occurs on the rehearsal date or planned ceremony date, no deposit will be returned.

In addition to the listed fees, all couples are encouraged to consider giving 10% of their total valued wedding gifts away to charitable organizations as a mark of God's blessing and generosity on the marriage. In the Christian tradition, this is known as the wedding tithe.

PLANNING TIMELINE

12+ MONTHS

- Contact St. Luke's to begin the planning process, review guidelines, and confirm an available date.
- Complete the Record of Intent and submit with your deposit to St. Luke's.
- Meet with the St. Luke's Wedding Coordinator to go over preliminary details

6-12 MONTHS

- Meet with the St. Luke's Wedding Coordinator as needed to update details
- Schedule rehearsal time and notify those with roles in the wedding who may need to make early travel arrangements.

4-6 MONTHS

- Pre-marital counseling sessions 1 and 2 with clergy
- Meet with the St. Luke's Wedding Coordinator as needed to update details
- Preliminary music planning
- Confirm rehearsal time

2-4 MONTHS

- Pre-marital counseling sessions 3 and 4 with clergy (Session 4 will be a walk-through of your service)
- Meet with the St. Luke's Wedding Coordinator as needed to update details
- Meet with musician as needed to select music

4-6 WEEKS

- Finalize all service and music details
- Review early draft of service bulletin

2-4 WEEKS

- Review proof copy of service bulletin
- Finalize expected guest count and any special needs for guests

REHEARSAL

- Bring your marriage license with you (or bring it to the church a few days prior to your ceremony)
- Payment of all fees



THINGS TO KNOW...

REHEARSALS

- A wedding rehearsal is **required** for all participants who have walking or speaking roles. Please notify all participants as early as possible so that they can make travel/work arrangements.
- St. Luke's reserves the option to simplify your service in the event that participants are not rehearsed.
- It is recommended that children younger than 5 not attend the rehearsal.
- We ask that you respect the time of the clergy and staff by ensuring that everyone arrives 15 minutes ahead of the start time and is prepared to listen to all instructions.

YOUNG CHILDREN

- Child care is not available during weddings or rehearsals.
- If you plan to have children younger than age 5 in your wedding party, please ensure that they will have someone to walk/sit with them. If parents are also in the wedding party, children should have a different person assisting them.
- A quiet play area containing soft toys is available on the south side of the nave. If children become bored during the ceremony, they are welcome to explore that area with an adult.

BEFORE THE SERVICE

- St. Luke's can provide space where each partner and their attendants may gather prior to the ceremony. We do not have areas where the wedding party may dress, however.
- St. Luke's cannot be responsible for the loss or theft of any gifts, personal items, or clothing.

DURING THE SERVICE

- No cloth or disposable aisle runners or flower petals are permitted in the aisle as both can be slippery and the petals can stain the tile floor. Flower girls may carry small bouquets or baskets of flowers.
- Unity candles are not a part of the service or Rite of Blessing in the *Book of Common Prayer*.

AFTER THE SERVICE

- Throwing rice, confetti, birdseed, etc. after the service is strictly prohibited. Blowing bubbles is an attractive and popular alternative.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Food and/or alcoholic beverages are not permitted at the rehearsal or on the campus on the day of the ceremony.
- St. Luke's is a non-smoking campus.
- St. Luke's nave is not air conditioned. Please remind guests to dress accordingly during the summer months.