

ST. JAMES LUTHERAN CHURCH  
GETTYSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

Number	3.20
Subject	Wedding Guidelines
Effective Date	10/6/04 (edited 11/15)
Committee	Worship

*A wedding is the occasion for a service of worship and praise in which you, the couple, declare your love and commitment to each other before God and the congregation, and receive assurance of God's blessing and support. The service affirms that marriage goes beyond intimacy and companionship; it is a place for you to live out your baptismal calling to glorify God and love your neighbor, and to learn what mutual, faithful love entails. The congregation bears witness to your exchange of promises, pledges its support and rejoices with you. When communion is celebrated as part of the marriage service all baptized Christians present are invited to commune.*

1. A pastor of St. James normally officiates at all weddings in the church. A couple desiring another minister to participate in the service should make this known to a pastor of St. James. Church practices permitting, an invitation shall be extended to the other minister. Lay persons, especially members of the family of the bride or groom, are welcome to participate in the service by reading lessons, offering prayers or serving as assisting ministers.
2. All members of the congregation are entitled to use the church building for a marriage. Others may use the building at the discretion of the Executive Committee of the Congregational Council. Determination of church membership—those who are currently active members of St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church—is defined by the church's governing documents. Membership status may be determined by contacting the church office.
3. It is wise to make your wedding plans as early as possible since the dates of your wedding and rehearsal need to be cleared and reserved with the church office, the officiating pastor, and the minister of music. The following times are not available for scheduling: 3:00–7:00 p.m. on Saturdays, Sundays except when the wedding is part of a regularly scheduled worship service, Flea Market days, Holy Week, the Saturday before Easter, Christmas Eve, or Christmas Day.
4. The rehearsal is usually held on the day prior to the wedding. All members of the wedding party must be present and on time for the rehearsal. The marriage license should be given to the pastor at the rehearsal.
5. Premarital preparation is required. In addition to sessions with the officiating pastor, each couple is expected to attend a one-day Pre-Marital Retreat usually offered each spring and fall.
6. Once you have reserved your wedding date with the church office and have scheduled an appointment with the officiating pastor, contact the Minister of Music, (334-2012 ext. 209) to schedule a meeting time with him. He serves as organist for weddings at St James

and is a most valuable resource for planning service music. If the Minister of Music is unable to play for a wedding, he will provide a list of possible substitutes. We require that you use our Wedding Coordinator, so you will need to arrange to meet with her as well in the early stages of your planning. *It bears repeating that it is wise to make these reservations and appointments as soon as possible.*

7. The building supervisor or assistant will be on duty during your wedding and will be glad to assist you. He/she will unlock the building approximately one hour before the service. Earlier access to the building will need to be arranged through the church office (334-2012). Please keep in mind that you are responsible for any decorations and clean up of the dressing rooms, decorations, etc. after the marriage service and or reception.

8. The dining room of the church building is available for receptions when the church schedule permits and accommodates 325–350 people. The dining room must be reserved with the church office. There are no groups of the church available to serve at receptions, but outside catering is permitted.

9. Parking is available in our church parking lot. On Saturdays please make sure that the parking lot is cleared by 4:00 p.m. to make room for the worshipers who are attending the Saturday worship service. If you wish to have reserved spaces on York and/or Stratton Streets, you may arrange this with the Gettysburg Borough Parking Department (334-3222).

10. Rooms are available if you wish to dress at the church. The bride's party may dress in Room 201, which includes a restroom. The groom's party may dress in Room 106.

11. The church office will print wedding bulletins if you provide the bulletin covers. (These can be purchased or ordered at most Christian bookstores in the area.) Please keep the back of the bulletins blank, so that the names of the wedding party may be printed there. You will need to provide the names of participants, covers, etc., one month before the wedding and make arrangements to proofread the bulletin prior to the wedding. The pastor will then bring your bulletins to the wedding rehearsal, unless you make other arrangements.

12. St. James has two five-foot candelabras that you may use. You'll need to provide a Unity Candle if you wish to have that as part of the worship service. Although flower arrangements may not be placed on the altar or organ console, they may be placed on the two tables on either side of the chancel area or on the front platforms.

We do have some prohibitions: No throwing of rice or birdseed and the like; No flash pictures may be taken during the service as they detract from worship; likewise during the marriage service, the photographer and/or videographer should shoot from a fixed position in the back or side aisles only. Neither smoking nor consumption of alcoholic beverages is permitted in the church or building anywhere. If you wish to smoke outside please use the covered Stratton Street porch where an ashtray has been provided.