

# WEDDING POLICY



*Congratulations on your engagement!* We are excited to assist you in preparing for your wedding and your future life together. The following information will be helpful to you in your planning to making this day special.

The church will assist you in understanding the Christian mystery of the Sacrament of Marriage and provide you with assistance and support as you prepare to receive this very important Sacrament.

Weddings at St. Luke's are scheduled on Friday evenings at 6:00 pm or Saturday 1:30 pm. Rehearsals are normally held the evening before the wedding. Because we celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation on Saturdays at 3:30 pm, the church should be clean and ready for Reconciliation by 3:00 pm.

If you are planning to celebrate your marriage at another location outside of our parish or Diocese and are doing your marriage preparation at St. Luke's, you will need to get in touch with your own pastor and learn what that church and/or that Diocese requires.

## Requirements

A wedding date will be firmed up for St. Luke's Church upon the completing all of the following: (1) reservation/contract form, (2) receiving the deposit/fee, and (3) the initial meeting with the priest.

Marriage in the Catholic Church is celebrated between 1) a fully initiated Catholic Christian man and woman; 2) between Catholics and baptized men and women of other Christian churches; or 3) between a Catholic Christian and a non-baptized person.

Both the man and woman must be free to marry, that is, they must never have been married before. If they were married before, they must have obtained a declaration of nullity (annulment) from the Catholic Church. Or if your spouse is deceased, a copy of the death certificate. If you have questions regarding the annulment process, please discuss this with the priest/deacon preparing you for marriage.

Both must be of legal age, and mentally and physically capable of fulfilling the requirements of marriage.

## **State of Iowa — Marriage License**

In Iowa you must obtain a marriage license from the County Clerk of any county in Iowa. There is a State Copy and an Officiant's Copy and they are contained in a self-addressed envelope. Check with the County Clerk's office for their requirements, it is valid for six months. Please bring your marriage license and marriage record form with you to the rehearsal. The priest or deacon will see that the marriage record is mailed after the wedding.

### **Preparation Time**

We will need a minimum of six months for your marriage preparation. The priest will also be the celebrant at your wedding unless you let him know you have someone else you wish to have for a celebrant or you will be having your wedding at another location. If you are having a priest or deacon from another parish or diocese, permission must be acquired from the diocesan office.

### **Baptism Certification**

For the Catholic party, a newly issued, six months or newer, certified baptismal certificate, with your church of baptism's seal is required. This certificate verifies you were baptized in the Catholic Church plus provides any notations on the back of the new certificate. Please contact the parish where you were baptized and request they forward a copy to you or to St. Luke's. For those baptized in another Christian faith, we ask that you provide a copy of your Baptism certificate or some other proof of baptism. If this is not possible, please let the priest or deacon know.

### **Marriage Preparation**

You will be asked to take the FOCCUS Inventory. FOCCUS (**F**acilitating **O**pen **C**ouple **C**ommunication, **U**nderstanding, and **S**tudy) provides individual couples feedback on where each partner stands in regard to topic areas important to marriage.

You will be assigned to one of our trained Sponsor Couples who will go over the FOCCUS questions and answers with you. You will meet in their home three to five times for discussion and sharing. Plus, couples are required to participate in a one day sacramental marriage preparation retreat, "Joy Filled Marriage" facilitated by the Diocese of Des Moines. The priests will provide you with a schedule listing the dates & times of the retreats. You can also go to the Diocesan web site, [dmdiocese.org](http://dmdiocese.org) to obtain the schedule.

**Once you have finished meeting with your Sponsor Couple you will then contact the priest and set up a follow-up appointment with him.** You can call him at the parish

office at 515-964-1278 and let him know that you have completed your meeting with your assigned couple.

If you are doing your marriage preparation in another parish or Diocese and are being married at St. Luke's, your church/Diocese will provide St. Luke's with the completed paperwork of your preparation program.

If your marriage will be performed at another parish and you are doing the marriage preparation at St. Luke's, we will complete the paperwork and forward it to the Diocese/church of marriage.

### **Fees**

For registered and non-registered members of St. Luke's there is a \$300.00 non-refundable fee to hold a wedding date. Please make checks payable to St. Luke The Evangelist Church and put "wedding" in the memo section.

If Saint Luke's is doing the marriage preparation but your marriage will be performed at another parish the FOCCUS inventory and processing fee is \$75.00.

Separate fees (suggested): Cantor (\$150) and accompanist (\$200) - Fees are paid directly to them.

### **The Marriage Ceremony**

Before your wedding, make arrangements with the priest celebrating your wedding to go over the Marriage Ceremony. You will receive a binder with additional information regarding the details of your wedding. You will also receive a book titled, "Together for Life" which will guide you through your choices for prayers and readings that will be used in the marriage ceremony. During the liturgy someone needs to read the Old and New Testament readings. The Psalm may be read or may be sung and the priest or deacon will read the Gospel you have chosen.

### **Music**

All music arrangements and the use of St. Luke's musicians must be coordinated through our Parish Music Coordinator, Cari Higgins: 712) 540-8619. The music should reflect the Sacramental and Liturgical setting of your wedding. Secular songs and / or prerecorded music may not be used as part of your ceremony. These type of songs are best used at your reception. *Please contact the Parish Music Coordinator as soon as possible.*

## Wedding pictures

Wedding pictures are only to be taken before the wedding because of scheduling difficulties. Please instruct your photographer that picture taking can begin two hours before the time reserved for your wedding. Your photographer may use a camera without flash during the ceremony but is not permitted on the same platform as the altar. You may videotape your wedding if you desire, from the back of the church. Please tell your photographer to be respectful of the sacredness of the sanctuary space and poses for photography should reflect that sacredness. Drones are not allowed inside the church or on church property.

## Church Decorations

Flowers: (optional) Our liturgical guidelines do not permit flowers to be placed on the altar. Flowers on carpet protecting bases are to be placed on the floor level (not on the altar platform).

Candelabra: (optional) are permitted to be brought in but are not recommended. If they are used, they are to be placed on the floor level (not on the altar platform). *Any candles brought in must be the "no-drip" type.*

Flower pedals: if they are artificial may be dropped by the flower girl down the aisle.

Pew Decorations: (optional) Although not recommended, bows are allowed if they have non-stick attachment. Clips may be used.

Worship Aid Handout: (optional) **These need to be approved** by the priest/deacon presiding at your wedding. These are provided by the couple getting married. We ask that you have them reflect a religious ceremony. Please ask your ushers to gather those left in the pews after the ceremony.

Liturgical Church Decorations: The church is decorated for the Liturgical season (Lent, Easter, Pentecost, Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas). If your wedding takes place during these liturgical seasons these decorations must remain in place in the church. Please take this into account when planning your wedding and your flowers.

All decorations, including flowers, that are brought in are to be removed immediately after the ceremony is over.

## **Bride's Room & Wedding Party**

Dressing Rooms: Rooms are available for the wedding preparation. Prior to rehearsal day, come to the Church office and obtain a key to these rooms. (Parish office hours: 7:30 am to 4 pm Monday -Friday—In June and July office closes at 3:30 pm) Room 109 is for the bride and her attendants to dress and to prepare for pictures and the wedding. There is a full length mirror in this room. Room 124 is available for the groom and groomsmen. Please clear the classrooms following the wedding ceremony, leaving the rooms available for the next activity.

## **Miscellaneous Items**

Food and drink: You may have food and drinks in the dressing rooms. We ask that there be no food or drink brought into the Church.

No Alcohol, Tobacco, Vaping: St. Luke's campus is a no alcohol, no tobacco, no vaping campus. NO alcohol is to be consumed prior to the wedding service or allowed on the premises.

Rice and Birdseed: These items can be tracked back into the Gathering Space and Church and are not permitted. Please inform your guests of this restriction.

Sparklers/fireworks: These are not allowed on church property.

Reception Center: St. Luke's does not have a reception space available for Saturday weddings since the Parish Hall (gym) is too close to the church and a reception would interfere with Saturday's Mass at 4:30 pm.

## **Final Words**

These details are written to help inform you of what is involved in a St. Luke The Evangelist Church wedding. Hopefully it will answer some of the questions you might have. Your priest/preparer will be happy to answer any others you might have. We wish you a happy and blessed marriage.