

# Christian Wedding Guide for Holy Cross Lutheran Church

*"For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two*



*will become one flesh. So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore, what God has joined together, let man not separate."*

*Matthew 19:5-6*

Dear Engaged Couple,

Congratulations on your upcoming marriage! As the Holy Cross Wedding Coordinator, I work with Pastor and the Ceremony Assistants to help make your special day at Holy Cross as stress-free as possible. We can answer any questions you might have about our Wedding policies and procedures found in this Wedding Guide.

We are praying for you as you plan your wedding day and for a lifetime of a healthy and dynamic marriage.

Read over this guide very carefully and call or email me with any questions or concerns. We are looking forward helping you make wonderful memories. Let us know how we can help.

Blessings,

Shawn Smith  
Wedding Coordinator  
office@holycrossjenison.org  
616.457.2420

Your Officiating Pastor is \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Church office phone 616.457.2420

Your Ceremony Assistant is \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

The Color on the Altar for your wedding date will be \_\_\_\_\_

(See page 7 for more explanation)

## Preparing for a Christian Marriage

As your Pastors and your faith community we are honored to prepare and guide you in your quest to be husband and wife—in a healthy and dynamic life-long relationship. We are excited that you are turning to your church during this formative time in your relationship as an engaged couple. This is the ideal time to partner with one of our Pastors who will serve as a guide and encourager as you prepare for this new and challenging chapter in life.

Your pre-marriage guide has lots of experience walking along side of couples who are navigating the sometimes turbulent waters that arise in wedding planning and getting ready to start a Christian marriage and home life together in your new roles as husband and wife.

Your Pre-Marriage Experience with your Pastor will be based on God’s design for Christian Marriage as found in the Bible. Why? Because it really works in everyday real life. This Pre-Marriage Experience has the potential to set you up for success as a couple as you work for the healthy and dynamic marriage of your dreams.

Our Pre-Marriage Experience includes

- **“Discovering God’s Design for Marriage”**, an interactive study with your Pastor guide that leads to practical insights strong enough to build a lasting marriage as you prepare for your new role as husband and wife and your daily life together as Jesus Followers.
- The **“Prepare Inventory”**, an online tool and feedback session with your Pastor guide who will safely lead you to better see and celebrate your relational strengths and to see and address your relational growth areas using practical and faith based skills and principles to enhance your day to day relationship with your spouse and others. Cost to the couple is \$35.
- **“The Colors Inventory”**, a simple yet insightful personality profile tool interpreted by your Pastor guide using humor and real life stories to help you and your fiancé better understand yourself and each other.
- **“The 5-minute Miracle”**, your Pastor guide will share a 5-minute habit to daily care for each other and feed your faith as a Jesus Follower—user friendly and easily practiced at home.
- **“Designing a Christ-Centered Wedding Ceremony”**, with the help of your Pastor guide you will personally select the bible readings that everyone will hear on your wedding day. You will also get to select music that reflects a Jesus-focused worship service.

This Pre-Marriage Experience involves taking practical and faith-filled next steps together, preparing to start your Christian home and marriage with the help of a Pastor guide. We hope it feels like an experience that will set you up for success as you prepare for the challenges and blessings that come with living together as husband and wife in Christian Marriage.

As your Pastors and faith community we congratulate you on your engagement and are honored to be partnering with you at this exciting time in your life!!

Pastor Brian West

Pastor Adam Peck

## **Your Wedding Day and Life Together – An Act of Worship**

Your wedding day is one of the most important days in your lives. Holy Cross is pleased to share this happy occasion with you. It is our prayer that your wedding be both beautiful and meaningful. Our intention is to maintain a worshipful atmosphere that glorifies God and centers on Jesus Christ. The guidelines contained in this packet will help insure the reverence and devotion which is to surround all aspects of your wedding day.

The following is a prayer that we encourage you to pray with your fiancé as you begin the preparations for your wedding day. Pray together...

*Gracious Lord and Heavenly Father, You created marriage when You observed it was not good for man to be alone. We thank you for the wonderful blessing of shared love and ask Your favor upon our wedding preparations. We desire to establish a lasting and faithful life guided by Your Word and blessed by Your presence.*

*Bless also the day of our wedding in the same way that Your Son once favored the celebration of the wedding in Cana. Multiply our joy and help us to establish attitudes and practices that are a reflection of Your love and acceptance of us. As we begin the formal plans for the occasion of our wedding, please remove all worries and stress from our minds. Fill our hearts with Your love; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord. Amen*

## Ceremony Assistant

A Ceremony Assistant has been assigned to you and is listed on page 1 of this guide. She is experienced in hospitality and will help your wedding day run smoothly and as worry-free as possible. The Ceremony Assistant serves as a liaison between the Wedding Coordinator and the Officiating Pastor, the church and the couple. Most couples appoint a Master and Mistress of Ceremonies as well.

### Ceremony Assistant – Required

The Ceremony Assistant is designated by the church and is a necessary part of your wedding. This person knows Holy Cross Lutheran Church, the facilities, where to find things, what to do in an emergency, and the church policies. It is her job to help answer any questions, to provide any needed suggestions in placement and coordination of family members, to handle the collection and distribution of fees, and any last minute glitches on the day of the wedding. She will do her best to make everyone feel cared for and comfortable.

The Ceremony Assistant will attend the wedding rehearsal to assist with the arrangements of the attendants in the front of the church, and to offer any guidance needed for various procedures during the wedding.

On the wedding day she will direct the procession of all wedding participants and help with the removal of wedding decorations in the church or narthex after the service.

The Ceremony Assistant will open the church **4 hours prior** to the ceremony on the wedding day. Please see page 9 for the fee structure for your Ceremony Assistant. This includes up to 3 meetings prior to the wedding day, rehearsal, and **6 hours on the wedding day** (4 hours before ceremony and 2 hours after).

**Please note:** If you would like the church open earlier than 4 hours prior to the start of the ceremony or additional meetings this should be arranged with your Ceremony Assistant and will be charged at the hourly rate.

### Master and Mistress of Ceremonies – Optional but highly recommended

They are the official host and hostess. It is their job to welcome people as they arrive and direct them to sign the guest book. They distribute corsages, assist the ushers and help the Ceremony Assistant as needed. Also seeing that the wedding reception runs smoothly is one of their biggest responsibilities, and they often have a major part in orchestrating toasts, speakers or music if a program is planned at the reception.

The Master and Mistress of Ceremonies are designated by the bridal couple. They are more acquainted with the families and arriving guests. At the church, their primary function is hospitality.

## Officiating Pastor

The officiating Pastor for all wedding services held at Holy Cross will be a Pastor from Holy Cross.

Please note: If you would like another clergyman to participate in your wedding, this invitation should only be extended by the Officiating Pastor from Holy Cross. To avoid embarrassment, discuss your request with the Holy Cross Officiating Pastor **before** consulting with any visiting clergy. Church fellowship policies limit the ways in which clergymen of other denominations can take part, so this must be carefully planned in the initial meeting with your Officiating Pastor.

## Order of Worship

The wedding ceremony is a worship service that is Christ-centered. The following is the order of a typical wedding service.

- Pre-service Music
- Processional
- Invocation
- Statement of Purpose
- Scripture Readings
- Homily
- Vows
- Exchange of Rings
- Faith Symbol (Unity Candle/Sand)
- Wedding Prayer
- Lord's Prayer
- Benediction
- Introduction of the Couple
- Recessional
- Postlude

If you will be using a printed wedding program the Officiating Pastor will need to approve a rough draft at least 2 weeks prior to the wedding date. Please also make sure that the following statement is printed on the bottom of the wedding program.

*No flash photography during the ceremony.  
Please turn off all phones.*

## Faith Symbols

During the worship service there is a time for you to take an active role in your service to symbolize how your faith in Jesus will be a part of your Christian marriage. This can be done in a couple of ways:

Unity Candle: This is 3 candles, one represents the groom, one represents the bride and the middle candle represents both of you coming together in Christian marriage. We have a wooden holder that can be used if needed. You are responsible for purchasing non-drip candles. This symbolizes that two become one.

Matthew 19:6

Sand: This option consists of 3 colors of sand. One to represent the groom, one to represent the bride and the third color to represent God whose love and mercy hold you together every day as husband and wife in your Christian marriage. Bride and groom pour in their colored sand and the Pastor will assist by pouring in the sand representing your faith in God. You will need to supply all holders and sand. This symbolizes a cord of 3 strands is not quickly broken. Ecclesiastes 4:12

## Music for the Service

Only Christ-centered music is used. The Officiating Pastor will approve all music sung or played. There is a list of approved and appropriate musical selections on page 11 of this packet.

Please inform the Pastor of your musical intentions (soloists, pianists, other musicians, etc.) and he will be the first contact with them.

Organist: Only approved organists are permitted to play the organ in our sanctuary.

Contact information of Organists are: Rae Reed – [mikeandrae1973@yahoo.com](mailto:mikeandrae1973@yahoo.com)

Tammy Schram – [schramt@michigan.gov](mailto:schramt@michigan.gov)

Johanna Dexter – [jdexter@holycrossjenison.org](mailto:jdexter@holycrossjenison.org)

## Pictures, Video Recording and Sound

Pictures can be taken before the ceremony and must be completed at least a **half hour** before the ceremony is to begin. Flash photography is not allowed in the sanctuary during the wedding service, either by a professional photographer or the guests. Only “time exposure” is allowed during the service. Pictures may be taken following the ceremony and **must be completed within one hour after the wedding service.**

Videotaping is permitted from a stationary tripod using only natural light. Two locations are permitted: the back of the sanctuary or the back corner of the chancel area. The camera must be unattended if used in the back corner of the chancel area. Arrangements should be made with the Ceremony Assistant.

Holy Cross will schedule a qualified and trained sound technician to run the sound and AV booth during the rehearsal and the wedding service. They will work with the musicians and vocalists to make sure that the best possible sound is achieved. A sound technician is required for weddings at Holy Cross. Please note the fee set for this service in the list of fees on page 9 which includes participation during the rehearsal and wedding.

The Holy Cross office will create a ceremony slide that will be presented on the sanctuary screens during the worship ceremony. Videos or picture slide shows are not allowed to be shown in the sanctuary.

## **Decorations**

Decorations and floral arrangements add to the festive atmosphere of this day. All flowers placed on the Altar must be live plants or cut flowers, other arrangements may be materials of your choice. If using a florist, arrange a delivery time with your Ceremony Assistant to be sure the building is open. Be sure to consider the color of the Altar Paraments. These paraments reflect the season of the church year and will not be changed for the wedding. The color on the Altar for your wedding date is listed on page 1.

The candles on the Altar will remain and will be lit for the wedding service. You are responsible for any additional candles. All additional candles will be placed on the Altar only. Please place clear plastic under all floral and candle arrangements to protect the flooring and Altar linens.

Pew decorations may be used if secured with long ribbons or non-marring attachments.

Aisle runners are not recommended for safety purposes.

## **Small Children As Attendants**

If you choose to use a flower girl and/or ring bearer it is recommended that they be at least 3 years of age or older. It has been our experience that children younger than 3 are often overwhelmed and then become a distraction during your ceremony. After the young children have processed in for the ceremony we prefer that they then be seated with an adult whom they feel comfortable.

## **Rehearsal**

The rehearsal is under the direction of the Officiating Pastor and normally takes place the evening before the wedding and typically lasts about one hour. The rehearsal is an important and vital part of preparation for your wedding service. All members of the wedding party, parents, ushers, and musicians should plan on attending the rehearsal. Please be prompt.

## **Marriage License**

Be certain to allow enough time to obtain your marriage license. About 3 weeks prior to the wedding you should apply for a Marriage License at the county court house of your residence. Your marriage license must be presented to the Ceremony Assistant at the rehearsal.



## General Rules

The following guidelines apply to all weddings at Holy Cross. We list them here to inform you so that you may inform the members of your families, your wedding party and your guests, as needed.

- Two rooms will be provided; one for the bride and her attendants and one for the groom and his attendants designated by the Ceremony Assistant. Other rooms are not to be used. Food and drinks may only be served in these rooms and the adjoining hallway.
- Alcoholic beverages are NOT permitted, at any time, in Holy Cross or on the church grounds including the parking lot. Daily Shepherd, our preschool and childcare center could lose their license if the state were to find alcohol on the premises. A fine of \$1,000 will be charged and billed to the wedding couple if alcohol is found.
- Our building is smoke free.
- The scattering of confetti, rice or birdseed is prohibited.
- Holy Cross is not responsible for any lost or stolen articles. We urge you to place valuables in secure areas.
- If a reception at Holy Cross is desired, please contact the Wedding Coordinator for information.

## Fees

All fees should be paid to the Ceremony Assistant at the rehearsal. You will receive a reminder from the Ceremony Assistant one week prior to the wedding date indicating the amounts and to whom the checks are to be made payable.

1. Sanctuary & Building use	Complimentary
2. Officiating Pastor (on-site)	Honorarium (suggested \$150 - \$300)
3. Officiating Pastor (off-site)	\$400
4. Ceremony Assistant	\$200 <i>(Includes Pre-Wedding sessions, rehearsal, and up to 6 hours on Wedding Day. Additional hours will be charged at \$25/hour.)</i>
5. Organist/Pianist	\$150
6. Soloist	\$75
7. Solo accompanist	\$50
8. Sound Technician	\$75
9. Custodian	\$75

## **Marriage Policy of Holy Cross Lutheran Church**

The Marriage Policy of Holy Cross Lutheran Church, a member congregation of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, is and always has been consistent with God’s Word and the Synod’s beliefs on marriage. We believe that marriage is a sacred union of one man and one woman (Gen. 2:23-25), and that God gave marriage as a picture of the relationship between Christ and His bride the Church (Eph. 5:32). This then means that same sex unions are contrary to the Creator’s design as stated in the Old and New Testaments (Lev. 18:22, Rom. 1:26-27). Therefore, our pastors shall not officiate over any marriage inconsistent with these beliefs and this policy and our church property may not be used for any marriage ceremony, reception or other activity that would be inconsistent with our beliefs or this policy.

While we acknowledge that same-sex marriage is contrary to God’s Word, we care about individuals who live with same-sex attraction, and seek to love them and call them to faithfully follow Jesus. We entreat them to live in a manner marked by holiness, repentance and faith in Jesus’ forgiveness, just as we do for all people. We cannot bless same-sex marriage (just as we cannot bless sexual intercourse outside of the marriage of one man and one woman) because we cannot bless what God calls sin. To do so would be to place those who engage in such behavior outside the need for repentance and forgiveness, and thus outside the need for salvation in Jesus. Our concerns are always ultimately pastoral, focused on the care of the whole person in Jesus’ name. We seek to be faithful to the Word of God because we care about people.

## Approved Music for a Christian Wedding Service

### Processional Music

Largo - Handel  
Canon in D - Pachelbel  
Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring - Bach  
Serenade – Clarke  
Air From Water Music - Handel  
St Anthony's Chorale – Haydn  
Gavotte – Handel  
Trumpet Tune – Mouret  
Trumpet Tune – Stanley  
Trumpet Tune – Corelli  
Trumpet Tune – Clarke  
Trumpet Procession – Frey  
Petite Trumpet Tune – Sobaje  
Trumpet Tune in F – Sobaje  
\*How Great is Our God – C. Tomlin  
\*How Deep the Father's Love For Us  
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling – Hymn  
Jesus Loves Me – Instrumental  
Be Thou My Vision – Hymn  
Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing – Hymn  
Take My Life & Let it Be – Hymn

### Recessional Music

Ode to Joy - Beethoven  
Largo – Handel  
Passacaglia – Young  
Trumpet Procession – Frey  
Sent Forth by God's Blessing (hymn)  
Allegro Vivace from Water Music – Handel  
Going Forth – Medley  
Trumpet Voluntary – Clarke  
Recessional March – Konkel  
Fanfare – Mouret  
Trumpet Voluntary – Young  
\*10,000 Reasons – Matt Maher

### Unity Candle/Sand

O Perfect Love  
Lord Take My (Our) Hand and Lead Us  
Whither Thou Goest  
Let Us Ever Walk With Jesus  
Wedding Song – Kenny G

### Vocal Suggestions

O Perfect Love - hymn  
Wedding Prayer - Dunlap  
Whither Thou Goest - Singer  
Wherever You Go – Anon.  
Blessed - Morgan/Davis  
Bless This House - Brahe  
Song For A Joyous Wedding - Leech  
The Gift of Love – Hopson  
His and Hers - Madsen  
Wedding Song - Stookey (Christian words)  
Household of Faith - Lamb/Rososco  
He Has Chosen You For Me - Terry  
\*How Great is Our God – C. Tomlin  
\*In Christ Alone – Getty  
\*Love Never Fails You – Brandon Heath  
\*Captivate Us - Watermark  
\*How Deep is the Father's Love For Us  
\*How He Loves – David Crowder Band  
\*Unfailing Love – Chris Tomlin

\*Contemporary Songs

## Wedding Text

You are invited to select Scripture passages for your wedding day that have special meaning for both of you to be included in the special service you will plan with your Officiating Pastor. You are encouraged to consider the following choices which are particularly appropriate for weddings. Typically, an Old Testament, Epistle, and a Gospel reading are chosen. Your Pastor will guide you and let you know when this is to be reviewed together.

### Old Testament

Genesis 1:26-31	Creation and commissioning of mankind
Genesis 2:18-24	God's creation of marriage
Ruth 1:16-17	Life-long commitments
Proverbs 3:3-6	Love, faithfulness and trust

### Epistle

Romans 12:1-2	Christian worship
1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13	A hymn of love
Ephesians 5:21-33	Christian marriage
Philippians 4:4-7	Advice and blessing
Colossians 3:12-14	Christian virtues
1 John 4:7-12	Loving with God's love

### Gospel

Matthew 19:4-6	Jesus' teaching on marriage
John 2:1-10	The wedding at Cana
John 15:9-12	Loving each other as Christ loves us

## Wedding Promises

Please read the following wedding promises which describe how you will live together on a daily basis as husband and wife.

### ***The Pastor asks the bridegroom:***

P     Name of groom    , will you have this woman to be your wedded wife, to live together in the holy estate of matrimony as God ordained it? Will you nourish and cherish her as Christ loved His body, the Church, giving Himself up for her? Will you love, honor, and keep her in sickness and in health and, forsaking all others, remain united to her alone, so long as you both shall live? Then say, I will. *(Ephesians 5:29)*

G I will.

P     Name of bride    , will you have this man to be your wedded husband, to live together in the holy estate of matrimony as God ordained it? Will you submit to him as the church submits to Christ? Will you love, honor, and keep him in sickness and in health and, forsaking all others, remain united to him alone, so long as you both shall live? Then say, I will. *(Ephesians 5:24)*

B I will.

### ***The Pastor leads the bridegroom and bride to the altar. The bridegroom, taking the right hand of the bride and facing her, says after the Pastor:***

G I,     Name of groom    ,  
take you,     name of bride    ,  
to be my wedded wife,  
to have and to hold from this day forward,  
for better, for worse,  
for richer, for poorer,  
in sickness and in health,  
to love and to cherish,  
till death parts us,  
according to God's holy will;  
and I pledge to you my faithfulness.

### ***The bride, in the same way, says after the Pastor:***

B I,     Name of bride    ,  
take you,     name of groom    ,  
to be my wedded husband,  
to have and to hold from this day forward,  
for better, for worse,  
for richer, for poorer,  
in sickness and in health,  
to love and to cherish,  
till death parts us,  
according to God's holy will;  
and I pledge to you my faithfulness.

***The rings are presented to the Pastor; then the following prayer is said:***

**P** Almighty Father, You have generously created all things to serve us for our good. Send Your blessing upon this couple who shall wear these (†) rings as a constant reminder of their marital fidelity. Grant that by Your mercy they may live gladly and faithfully in this holy estate; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C** Amen.

***The bridegroom and bride exchange rings, beginning with the bridegroom. While giving the ring, each says after the Pastor one of the following: (Couple selects the version they want to use)***

Receive this ring  
as a pledge and token  
of wedded love and faithfulness.  
In the name of the Father  
and of the Son  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

With this ring I marry you,  
my worldly goods I give to you,  
and with my body I honor you.  
In the name of the Father  
and of the Son  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## Marriage Checklist

To Do:

Completed

1. If you were pre-approved for more than 1 date, please contact Shawn Smith, 616.457.2420 or office@holycrossjenison.org to confirm the wedding date you decided on. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Meet with your Officiating Pastor to begin the Pre-Marriage Experience 4 – 6 months prior to the wedding date. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Schedule time to meet with Ceremony Assistant 2-3 months prior. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Schedule time to meet with organist or musicians 2-3 months prior. \_\_\_\_\_
5. All music should be chosen and approved by Pastor one month prior. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Apply for marriage license 3 weeks prior at the county building. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Program to be approved by Pastor 2 weeks prior to wedding date. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Bring license, checks and programs to the rehearsal. \_\_\_\_\_