

GETTING MARRIED AT ST. MATTHEWS LUTHERAN CHURCH



MARRIAGE AND THE WEDDING SERVICE

Christians hold that the foundation for the love that marriage partners feel for one another rests within the ultimate love God has shown to us in Jesus Christ. It must be understood, first and foremost, that a Marriage Service is as much a Service of Worship as is any other worship service held in God's house. Its primary object is to be an expression of praise and thanksgiving to our gracious and almighty God. It is therefore assumed that reverence will be observed at all times. Guests should understand that they are present in God's house, not as spectators, but as worshippers.

St. Matthews, its members, officers, agents and pastors will continue to facilitate marriages according to the laws of the province of Ontario, including marriages of same gendered couples.

A CHURCH HOME

It is hoped that couples intending to marry at St. Matthews would also choose St. Matthews as their church home, or would already be actively involved in this or another faith community.

A married couple needs the emotional and spiritual support of a community that extends beyond the couple's immediate circle of friends and family. For that reason, a church home will be important to you in the days and years ahead. It is important that you have one in which you feel comfortable, in which the foundation of your marriage can be established, and in which you can be actively involved and nurtured in faith.

PLANNING FOR YOUR WEDDING

Preparation for your wedding begins by first choosing a tentative date and time for it. Then you may call the church office (519-742-0462) to reserve tentatively the church building for your wedding day. The earlier you do this, the better. The exact time and day of your wedding, however, will be confirmed following your meeting with the Pastor. It is best if you meet with the Pastor before making any other wedding plans.

Notes:

THINGS YOU WILL DISCUSS WITH THE PASTOR

Dates and Times

Both of you and the Pastor will confirm the wedding day and time. You will also set the time for the wedding rehearsal. Normally the wedding rehearsal takes place the evening before the wedding (usually a Friday evening). It may be before or after the supper hour, depending on your plans for the rehearsal party that night. You will need to remember to let the Pastor know of any time changes to either wedding or rehearsal in the weeks and months to follow.

Reception Involvement

You will consult with the Pastor about the time of the reception. Allowing enough time for pictures, a receiving line, travel between church and hall, and consideration of guests are all factors determining the best time for the reception. Please let the Pastor know as soon as possible what your expectations are of his/her presence and involvement at the reception (i.e. prayer before the meal). If you do want the Pastor present and/or involved, send him/her an invitation as you will to other guests.

Pre-Marriage Counselling

Your time before getting married is well spent in marriage preparation. It is expected that all couples getting married at St. Matthews Church take part in marriage preparation counselling. K-W Counselling Services is located at 480 Charles St. East, Kitchener. Their phone number is 519-884-0000 (or email at intake@kwcounselling.com) and the sessions are scheduled through Intake with a counsellor. The cost is approximately \$125 per session.

The Pastor may also wish to set up a meeting with you specifically for the purpose of marriage preparation.

Marriage License/Banns

To legalize your marriage in the Province of Ontario, you will need either to acquire a Marriage License or be married by Banns. (Marriage banns or “announcement” of your upcoming wedding is made during a regular Sunday morning worship service. Note that in order to be married by Banns, both bride and groom need to be actively involved and regularly worshipping in a church community.) The Marriage License is more common among marrying couples, even among those who are actively involved in a church home. You will need to acquire one at the Kitchener City Hall which costs about \$147. Please bring the license papers, including the envelope provided, to the church as soon as possible. They will be kept here, completed by the Pastor and prepared for signing on your wedding day. The church office is normally open from 8:30 to 12:00 am and 1:00 – 4:00 pm. Ring the doorbell and identify yourself as a wedding couple dropping off the wedding license for the Pastor.

Wedding Particulars

Getting to know one another, discussing what marriage is, your thoughts and desires for the wedding, and wedding service details will form the bulk of your initial meeting with the Pastor.

Music

You will need to contact Corinne Dutton (519-742-0462 x 15 or cdutton@stmattskw.com) and set up an appointment with her to discuss all aspects of music in your wedding service, including hymns and use of other musical instruments and personnel. Keep in mind that there is music more appropriate for a wedding service in God's house, and music that would be best reserved for the reception.

Decorations

You may decorate the sanctuary with bows and flowers, either on the rehearsal night or before the wedding. The church building is normally open two hours before the start of the service. Candle decorations, ideally for late afternoon or evening weddings, and any other special decorations may be arranged through the church office (519-742-0462).

Photography

Your photographer is allowed to take pictures throughout the wedding service in a discreet and quiet manner. He/she is requested to refrain from entering the chancel (altar area) at all times. The congregation may take photographs only during the processional, the signing of the register and the recessional. A videographer may also wish to set up in the gallery, a perfect viewing point. Please let the Pastor know if you plan to have pictures taken anywhere in or around the church building after the service.

Expectations

A note on alcohol and drugs: The wedding service will not be conducted if you, your fiancé(e) or members of your wedding party are intoxicated or under the influence of drugs.

Vows/Scripture Readings/Unity Candle

You will be asked to prepare your vows, choose scripture readings, consider preparing a wedding service guide (normally the responsibility of the bride and groom) and having a "unity candle". If you wish to light a unity candle during the service, it is your responsibility to acquire your own unity candle set.

Taping/Recording

Arrangements to have your wedding service recorded through the sound system in the main sanctuary must be made as soon as possible as a volunteer from the church is needed to operate the controls in the sound room. Please contact the church office (519-742-0462 x 10 or info@stmattskw.com) for information regarding the preferred audio recording format or any applicable fees for this service.

Notes:

Like the gold of the sun
Like the light of the day
May God's love and protection
Shine Bright on Your Way

- An Old Irish Blessing



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