

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

AND

SAVE THE DATE

← AT →

GLORIA DEI

WEDDING  
GUIDE

◆  ◆  
&



HANDBOOK



MARK 10:8

TWO SHALL BECOME ONE



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Congratulations on your upcoming wedding! We are pleased you are considering Gloria Dei Lutheran Church for your wedding and we will do what we can to assist in making your wedding a Christ-centered, joy-filled, and memorable occasion that gives glory and honor to God.

Your wedding service will be a worshipful celebration of unity that emphasizes Christian marriage, officiated by one of our Gloria Dei pastors, in consultation with you. As written in the Bible, we believe that marriage was given by God to be the life-long union of one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24) and a gift to be held in honor and kept pure (Hebrews 13:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:2-5). Therefore, marriage is far more than a social contract or a mere interpersonal bond; it is a covenant bond of God's grace as you live out your faithfulness and love to one another. Your marriage is both purposeful and beautiful. Its purposes include the procreation and nurture of children, the mutual joy, support and encouragement given to one another by husband and wife, and the restraint of selfishness and sin as each seeks to serve the other's needs. Such purposes reveal a beauty so great that Ephesians 5:21-33 connects marriage to the holy union of Christ and His "bride," the church. The apostle Paul writes that even as Christ, the bridegroom, pours forth sacrificial love for his church, the bride, and she trustingly commits her life to him, so also husbands are called to sacrificial love toward their wives and wives to a willing respect for their husbands.

Because we believe that marriage is a sacred union of one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24-25), and that God gave marriage as a picture of the relationship between Christ and His bride the Church (Ephesians 5:32), our pastors will not officiate over any marriages inconsistent with these beliefs and our church property may not be used for any marriage ceremony, reception or other activity that would be inconsistent with our beliefs and this policy.

On behalf of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, it is our privilege and blessing to walk alongside of you during this very special time in your life. We give thanks to God for you and pray God's richest blessings on your marriage.

*Pastor Dan Schepmann*

Pastor Dan Schepmann

## SCHEDULING

As you prepare for your special day, our staff and wedding coordinators have put together this wedding manual to ensure your preparations and special day go as smoothly as possible.

Weddings held at Gloria Dei are reserved for members only, or those who are in the process of becoming church members. Weddings are generally scheduled on Fridays and Saturdays. Dates excluded during the year are: Sundays in December, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day and Holy Week. To begin the process of confirming a wedding date, please contact Andee Hasty at 281-333-4535 x1055. She will answer any initial questions you may have about the wedding guidelines and application process. The guidelines and application are available online at [gdlc.org/next-steps/weddings](http://gdlc.org/next-steps/weddings).

Once we have received a completed application, along with the appropriate deposit, your application will be submitted for review. You will then have pastoral consultation within two weeks of application receipt. No date should be announced until you have received confirmation from the church.

## PRE-MARRIAGE COUNSELING

Pre-marriage counseling will be conducted by one of our pastoral staff; either by appointment, or by attending our Engagement Experience class (Friday evening-Saturday evening). Prior to the first counseling appointment, the couple will complete an online marriage assessment. Upon completion of the assessment, the counseling pastor will schedule a meeting with the couple to discuss the results of the assessment. During these sessions, the couple will discuss strengths of their relationship, growth areas, and the Biblical application of a Christ-centered marriage. The length and duration of future sessions will be determined after the first visit.

## WEDDING FEES

Please know that Gloria Dei considers it a privilege to host your wedding and reception. As with any other part of your wedding planning, there are specific fees associated with those assisting in your special day. Many of those serving you before, during, and after your wedding are serving in a volunteer role. However, we believe it is not only important, but appropriate to partially compensate them for their time away from family and other duties.

\$200 • Wedding deposit (refundable post-wedding, provided that guidelines were followed) This fee is due when the wedding application is submitted.

\$950 • Wedding Ceremony

These wedding fees include:

Wedding Coordinator, Facilities Coordinator, Officiating Pastor, Organist or Pianist, audio/visual support and pre-marital counseling

### Reception Fees

\$250 • Reception Deposit (refundable)

\$500 • Life Center Reception (includes facility use, wedding coordinator and facility coordinator)

If alcohol will be served, a uniformed police officer is required to be present during the reception. There must be one (1) police officer for every 100 guests. It is the responsibility of the couple to hire an officer(s) and pay them directly.

Questions about the availability of alternate or additional facilities should be directed to the Wedding Coordinator and approved by Gloria Dei's Chief of Staff and Operations.

Should the wedding be canceled, deposits are refundable 30 days prior to the wedding date with appropriate notification to the Wedding Coordinator and the Officiating Pastor. Additional fees may be charged for music and technical personnel (see notes under Music and Technical sections). The remaining fees payable to Gloria Dei are due to the Wedding Coordinator 2 weeks prior to your wedding.

## WEDDING COORDINATOR

A Wedding Coordinator will be assigned to you, to assist with the planning process and arrangements, prior to, and including your wedding day. The Wedding Coordinator is a representative of Gloria Dei whose organizational skills and knowledge will assist you in making your wedding meaningful. She will contact you to set up an appointment to discuss the specifics of the wedding arrangements, the rehearsal and the wedding service, including the reception (if applicable). The officiating pastor will be your first point of contact, followed by your wedding coordinator once your wedding application is approved.

Your Wedding Coordinator will be responsible for the following:

- Contact you upon approval of your wedding application to begin the wedding planning
- Assist with planning your Christian wedding service
- Serve as liaison with the staff and pastors
- Direct the one hour wedding rehearsal/usher training in a timely manner
- Facilitate, direct and coordinate wedding day activities and open the facilities to all parties
- Provide direction and assistance before and during the wedding

## MUSIC

Reverence and dignity appropriate for a Christian marriage should be the basis for selecting the wedding music. The Assistant Director of Traditional Worship or the Director of Contemporary Worship can assist you with appropriate selections. Secular “pop” songs and Broadway show music would be appropriate at rehearsal dinners and wedding receptions, but are not considered to be appropriate for the wedding ceremony.

The Assistant Director of Traditional Worship or the Director of Contemporary Worship will schedule accompanists for weddings conducted in the Chapel or Worship Center. If you would like to hire a soloist or an additional instrumentalist, they can also assist you in the selection of such musicians. Once music has been selected, please update the “Suggested Order of Service” form.

The organist/pianist for your wedding will consult with you and can suggest appropriate musical selections that will enhance your ceremony. The wedding fee includes a music consultation, a music rehearsal (one hour maximum) and during the ceremony. It does not include musician attendance at the wedding rehearsal or additional rehearsals. If you request musicians at the wedding rehearsal, an additional \$50 will be charged per player, if they are available. It is the couple's responsibility to schedule an appointment for the music consultation at least 8 weeks prior to the wedding date.

Sheet music for any additional soloist or instrumentalist must be provided to the organist or pianist no later than 4 weeks before the wedding. The soloist or instrumentalist must schedule a rehearsal time with the organist/pianist at a time convenient for both parties. If additional rehearsal time is necessary, an additional fee of \$35 per hour will be due.

## TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Since amplified sound is needed at weddings in both the Chapel and the Worship Center, a Gloria Dei technical assistant must be present to operate the audio/visual systems. The technical assistant is scheduled through the Wedding Coordinator. Basic support includes:

- a microphone for the Officiating Pastor
- a microphone for the pulpit/lectern (if necessary)
- a microphone for one singer/vocalist
- an audio recording of the ceremony on CD
- possible microphone for groom

The basic sound-check begins approximately 45 minutes prior to the ceremony start time. Vocalists and guest readers are to be present at the scheduled sound-check. If your ceremony requires additional technical support, please discuss this with the Wedding Coordinator and the organist/pianist at least 4 weeks prior to the ceremony. Additional charges may apply for additional support and additional time may be necessary prior to the ceremony for the sound-check.

Visual projection and video streaming for the wedding must be arranged directly with the Director of Creative Arts and Wedding Coordinator at least two weeks prior to the wedding. An additional charge will be added for this service.

## RECEPTIONS AT GLORIA DEI

The Life Center Auditorium is available for wedding receptions if the wedding is held at Gloria Dei. The details for the room arrangement will be discussed and communicated through the Wedding Coordinator. Requests for a reception in a different space in the building must be approved through your Wedding Coordinator. Tables and chairs are provided, and the kitchen is available for the caterer. All existing decorations previously installed by the church for seasonal events are to remain in place. Saturday evening receptions must end by 9pm to allow time to ready the campus for Sunday morning worship.

## CATERING

Please schedule the reception caterer to meet with the Wedding Coordinator and bride or groom at least two weeks prior to your wedding to review the guidelines.

The following guidelines are to be followed:

- All church equipment is to remain at the church
- Red-colored punch is not allowed in the facilities
- Floor mats are required under beer kegs for safety purposes and floor protection
- If beer, wine and/or champagne is served, a uniformed police officer is required to be present (1 police officer for every 100 guests)
- All catering equipment must be removed and the kitchen cleaned immediately following the reception. Gloria Dei is not responsible for catering equipment left at the church.

## FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT

The facilities are provided for worship and activities supporting the mission of Gloria Dei. The wedding party is expected to respect the house of God and to not alter, remove or hide any of the existing furnishings in the church.

After you select your florist and/or decorators for the wedding and/or reception, your Wedding Coordinator will contact them to approve decorations and schedule the set-up time. All decorations should be in place so that the pre-service photographs can be taken and be completed at least 30 minutes before the service begins. Florists and decorators will be asked to observe the following rules:

- Furnishings may not be moved or relocated

- Tacks, pins, nails or glue may not be used to fasten decorations to the furniture or building
- Aisle runners are prohibited due to a tripping hazard
- Aisle candles (of any kind) are prohibited. They pose a fire hazard.
- All boxes and trash must be removed before the wedding begins
- All florist equipment must be removed immediately following the wedding and/or the reception
- Throwing rice, birdseed, or confetti is not permitted.

Size-appropriate flowers are permitted on the table behind the altar. The wedding party may consider leaving the floral arrangements for the following Sunday worship services. If so, please communicate your intentions to the Wedding Coordinator so she can arrange for proper acknowledgements.

Corsages and boutonnieres may be distributed by the florist or labeled (bride's mother, groomsmen, etc.) for distribution by the Wedding Coordinator.

Florists and decorators will be held financially responsible for any damage to the building, furniture, or carpet. Gloria Dei is not responsible for equipment left at the church.

### **Capacity**

The Chapel seats 350 people. If the expected guest ceremony attendance exceeds 350, consult with your Wedding Coordinator regarding the possible use of the Worship Center, which seats 1000. The Life Center will easily accommodate a reception for 300 people.

### **Unity/Christ Candelabra**

A Unity/Christ candelabra, matching the Chapel altar, is available for your use. The wedding party is responsible for providing the large center candle and tapers.

### **Chapel Kneeler**

The kneeler is an optional item during Chapel weddings. If you want to use the kneeler for prayer during the wedding ceremony, please inform the Officiating Pastor at your wedding service consultation and the Wedding Coordinator before the rehearsal, so that plans are in place to include it and place it at the altar.

## **Use of Church Equipment**

Coffeemakers are available for the reception upon request. Use of any other equipment (except technical equipment) is at the discretion of the Wedding Coordinator. GDLC's technical audio/visual (sound, video, lighting, projection) equipment may only be operated, set-up, moved, disconnected or otherwise handled by Gloria Dei trained technical assistants.

## **LEGAL AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS**

### **Smoking**

Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the building.

### **Alcohol Policy**

Beer, wine and champagne are the only alcoholic beverages allowed at the reception. These beverages may be consumed only in the designated dinner or reception area and during the designated time period. No hard liquor is permitted anywhere on the church campus, including the parking lot. A uniformed police officer must be on duty during the time that alcoholic beverages are served at the wedding reception. The Wedding Coordinator will provide information on hiring an officer.

No alcoholic beverages are to be consumed by any member of the wedding party prior to the wedding or wedding rehearsal on church property. No illegal drugs are allowed on church property. Anyone appearing to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol during the rehearsal, wedding, or reception will be required to leave the premises. The Officiating Pastor, in consultation with the Wedding Coordinator, will reserve the right to cancel your wedding if members of the wedding party are under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance.

### **Entering and Exiting the Building**

The wedding party must arrive at the church, at the agreed upon time for dressing and pictures, and leave following the wedding at the agreed upon time. Please check all dressing areas for personal items and ensure the items are secured before, during and after the wedding service. Gloria Dei will not be responsible for personal items.

The host families are responsible for the conduct and safety of their

guests. The church will not be held legally responsible for misconduct of wedding guests. The Wedding Coordinator will contact the host family if a guest's behavior is unacceptable and the host family must then ask the offending guest(s) to leave the premises.

## PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY

The Wedding Coordinator will arrange the photography set-up time for your wedding and communicate guidelines and instructions to the photographer and/or videographer. Pre-service photos in the Chapel or Worship Center must be completed at least 30 minutes prior to the ceremony time. Photographs taken after the ceremony should be completed within 30 minutes of the close of the ceremony. Photographers may take pictures before and after the service in any part of the building (except offices) including the Commons, entrance hallway, garden, and Chapel.

You, your family, and your photographer will be expected to follow these rules:

- Flash photographs may not be taken during the ceremony, except during the entrance and exit of the bridal party.
- Still photos may be taken from the rear of the Chapel or Worship Center during the ceremony.
- When a video camera is used, the position of the camera must be approved by the Wedding Coordinator before the service and the videographer is to remain in that location.
- Standing on furniture or placing equipment on the furnishings in order to take photos is prohibited.

## MARRIAGE LICENSE

Obtain your marriage license at least two weeks prior to your wedding and deliver it to the Wedding Coordinator or the officiating pastor. The Church Staff will send it to the county clerk after your wedding.

All requirements of the State of Texas must be met. The state requirements are as follows:

- The license can be purchased no earlier than 30 days before the wedding or no later than 72 hours before the wedding.
- Both the bride and groom must appear in person.
- The fee must be paid in cash.
- Both the bride and groom must show their Social Security cards.
- One of the following must accompany the Social Security card:  
Valid driver's license (any state), birth certificate or Texas identification
- A 72-hour waiting period exists. You will receive the license the same day you apply for it; however, it cannot be used for three days. The license is valid for 30 days only. The minimum age requirement is 18 years of age.

## REHEARSAL

Your wedding is a Christian worship service. The rehearsal is a preparation for this service and is usually held the day before the ceremony. The Wedding Coordinator will direct the rehearsal.

All wedding participants and members of the bride's and groom's immediate families will attend the rehearsal. One hour will be allotted for the wedding rehearsal to allow for the scheduling of church facilities and personnel. Please insist that all members of the wedding party be prompt, in order to have adequate rehearsal time.

Your Wedding Coordinator can suggest proper etiquette for seating of family members, but seating arrangements for the ceremony must be decided prior to the rehearsal with your Wedding Coordinator. Please note special seating requests on your "Wedding Service Details Form."

## USHERS

Ushers have an important ministry role at the wedding. They are responsible for the overall guest movement before, during and after the service. We recommended 2 ushers for every 100 guests. The Wedding Coordinator will instruct ushers regarding the location of the restrooms, water fountains, and handicapped seating, etc. Ushers will seat guests as they arrive and may distribute bulletins (if applicable).

At the time the service is scheduled to begin, the Wedding Coordinator will direct the ushers to seat the immediate family members according to the following order beginning with the family members in Pew 3 and moving toward the altar:

Altar

Pew 1—Empty—Chairs

Pew 1—Empty—Chairs

Pew 2—Bride's Parents  
and Grandparents

Pew 2—Groom's Parents  
and Grandparents

Pew 3—Relatives of Bride

Pew 3—Relatives of Groom

Please Note: If step-parents are involved in the wedding, tact and diplomacy will rule over the exact rules of etiquette. Traditionally, the natural parent is favored in the order of family seating.

## Lighting of Candles

If you wish to use the wedding Unity Candle, the Officiating Pastor will explain the symbolism when developing your service. The ushers may light the small candles at the beginning of the service, or special arrangements for the parents to light the altar candles or the Unity Candle ensemble may be made through your Wedding Coordinator.

## **Dismissal of Guests**

Immediately after the wedding party has recessed, the ushers will move to the front of the center aisle to escort the parents and grandparents out in this order:

Parents of the Bride  
Parents of the Groom  
Maternal Grandparents of the Bride  
Maternal Grandparents of the Groom  
Paternal Grandparents of the Bride  
Paternal Grandparents of the Groom

Once the above members of the party have been escorted out, two of the ushers will return to the center aisle and “nod” to the guests in alternating rows to dismiss them.

## **Final Usher Duty**

After the post-service photographs are taken, the ushers are asked to extinguish all candles and collect the wedding bulletins from the pews.

## WEDDING TIMELINE

### **6+ Months Before the Wedding Day**

- Submit a completed wedding application and deposit to the church office so that your wedding date can be reserved
- Schedule an appointment with the officiating pastor for your wedding consultation
- Gloria Dei will assign a wedding coordinator who will contact you and schedule an appointment
- Contact the Gloria Dei Assistant Director of Traditional Worship or the Director of Contemporary Worship to discuss wedding music

### **3+ Months Before the Wedding Day**

- Complete the online pre-marital survey that will be e-mailed to both the bride and the groom

### **3 To 6 weeks Before the Wedding Day**

- Make an appointment and meet with the Officiating Pastor to discuss your wedding service. Review Suggested Order of Service Form
- If applicable, provide sheet music to musicians
- Apply for a marriage license (no later than 4 weeks before wedding)

### **2 Weeks Before the Wedding Day**

- Finalize plans with everyone; the Wedding Coordinator, caterer, florist, attendants, and rental agencies
- Meet with the Wedding Coordinator to review guidelines
- Give the marriage license and fees to the Wedding Coordinator
- Meet with the Gloria Dei Director of Creative Arts for all technical support requests, including projection and streaming for the wedding and/or reception

### **The Wedding Day**

- Breathe! Give yourself plenty of time to get ready.
- Don't forget the rings
- Perform a sound check 45 minutes prior to the ceremony start time
- Pre-service photos to be finished at least 30 min before ceremony start time
- Have fun!

