

St. Mark Lutheran Church
Wedding Policies and Fees

May 2017

ST. MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH

WEDDING GUIDELINES

The **SERVICE OF MARRIAGE** is an important event in the life of St. Mark Lutheran Church. We rejoice that you have chosen to have the witness of the Church be part of this moment in your lives. May God bless you and keep you in prayerfully planning a service of praise and thanksgiving for the gift he has given you in one another.

MARRIAGE EQUALITY

Statement of Welcome

We embrace marriage equality and are an inclusive congregation. We joyfully invite all couples to celebrate their relationship with one another in Holy Marriage.

At St Mark, we affirm the right all couples have to marry regardless of their sexual orientation.

We believe that marriage is a sacred covenant between two persons who desire to live in loving, committed relationship with God's blessing!

If you are interested in learning more about how we can help you fulfill your wish to have your civil union blessed or to be married by a clergy person in our church or at a place of your choosing, please contact us stmark@tampabay.rr.com or please call us at (727) 733-0474. **The Rev. Katy Fast** or someone from our stall will contact you.

May God richly bless you!

These guidelines seek to help those planning a wedding at St. Mark make it a joyful event in their own lives as well as in the life of the Christian family.

I. PRELIMINARY ARRANGEMENTS

- A. Contact the Church office to reserve the date and time as early as possible, preferably six months in advance. A \$200 deposit is required which will be applied to your fees.
- B. After setting the date and time, make arrangements to meet with the pastor to discuss the ceremony and for pre-marital counseling.
- C. Secure a marriage license prior to your wedding.

Males and females must be 18 years of age or older. However, males and females 16 or 17 years of age may obtain a marriage license with written consent of their parents or guardians, whose consent must be notarized in the Clerk's office.

At the time of the application, applicants must have two forms of identification. One must be a photo ID. The other must clearly show the signature of the applicant.

Applicants who have been married previously must show a copy of the Final Dissolution or Death Certificate.

The fee for the marriage application is payable in cash, check, or credit card with a reduction for those who have completed premarital counseling. The license is good for 60 days from the issue date.

The marriage license is to be given to the pastor at the rehearsal. Following the ceremony, licenses are sent to the County Clerk's for processing. You should receive your license in about three weeks. If your license does not arrive, please contact the County Clerk.

II. LITURGICAL

- A. The wedding service is first and foremost a worship service of the Church. Although there is room in the service for individuality, it must be seen essentially as an event in the life of the community of God's people. Caring for this aspect of the liturgy is the responsibility of the pastor.
- B. The pastor will be responsible for the presiding minister's role in all weddings. Other pastors may be invited to assist. Such invitations will be made through the pastor. The pastor will also assign any visiting clergy their appropriate role.
- C. The wedding service is adaptable to assist the couple in personalizing their marriage. The pastor will assist the couple in making modifications. The pastor must approve of all changes to the service for them to take place.
 - 1. Lessons, readings and vows are included in the options.
 - 2. Many couples like to use the "unity candle" as part of the service. If so, it must be purchased by the couple.
- D. The colors appropriate to the season of the Church Year will remain in the chancel.

III. SPECIFICS

- A. Full payment of all amounts due for the wedding ceremony must be made at least 2 weeks before the wedding. If such payment has not been made by that date, the church may cancel the wedding while retaining the deposit.
- B. The sanctuary is open for you two hours before and one hour after your scheduled time. Other schedules may be requested.
- C. If the wedding does not start by 20 minutes after the designated wedding time, the deposit will be retained and the pastor will have the option to cancel or postpone the wedding.
- D. Use of rice is prohibited and bird seed is discouraged, as it can stick to the bottom of a person's shoes and cause slipping on our hard floors. Some couples choose to use bubbles, which need to remain outside.
- E. Flash photography during the service is prohibited. Rules for photography and video are attached to this document.

IV. MUSIC

- A. Music selected for the wedding should be appropriate for a service of praise and thanksgiving in the Church. The church organist will assist the couple in selecting suitable works.
- B. Vocal or instrumental music may be used in the service. However, great care should be used in its selection. A rehearsal should be arranged with the church organist.
- C. The use of pre-recorded music is discouraged.
- D. Organists other than those arranged through St. Mark Lutheran Church must be approved by the church organist.

WEDDING SERVICES AND FEES

A \$200 deposit is required at the time a wedding is scheduled. The deposit will be refunded (or applied to fees) if both the rehearsal and wedding proceed on time and if there is no damage to the church property.

MEMBERS OF ST. MARK

- (1) \$250 to St. Mark Lutheran Church
includes consultation with the church pastor, wedding rehearsal, wedding ceremony, setup, cleanup, utilities, changing rooms, candles, etc.
- (2) \$125 to Cheryl Burton, church organist
includes consultation and wedding ceremony
additional fees may apply for rehearsals with soloists and other musicians

Pastor Katy is available to conduct pre-marriage counseling sessions which include the pre-marriage inventory. Once the couple has made an appointment to meet with Pastor Katy, she will provide the necessary instructions for completing the inventory.

* Florida Statutes require that every couple read the Family Law Handbook as part of acquiring a marriage license. See the attached "statement". The fee is higher for those couples who do not choose to go through a premarital preparation course. Anyone who chooses to attend a course should present the certificate to the county clerk where the marriage license is to be obtained. Each county has a list of people who are certified by the county to present a premarital preparation course.

An additional honorarium may be provided for the pastor at the member's discretion.

NON-MEMBERS

- (1) \$350 to the pastor.
Includes: consultation with the church pastor, wedding rehearsal and wedding ceremony.
- (2) \$200 to Cheryl Burton, church organist
includes consultation and wedding ceremony
additional fees may apply for rehearsals with soloists and other musicians
- (3) \$250 to St. Mark Lutheran Church
Includes: wedding rehearsal, wedding ceremony, setup, cleanup, utilities, changing rooms, candles, etc.

Pastor Katy is available to conduct pre-marriage counseling sessions which include the pre-marriage inventory. Once the couple has made an appointment to meet with Pastor Katy, she will provide the necessary instructions for completing the inventory and inform the couple of any additional fee(s).

* Florida Statutes require that every couple read the Family Law Handbook as part of acquiring a marriage license. See the attached "statement". The fee is higher for those couples who do not choose to go through a premarital preparation course. Anyone who chooses to attend a course should present the certificate to the county clerk where the marriage license is to be obtained. Each county has a list of people who are certified by the county to present a premarital preparation course.

WEDDINGS AT OTHER LOCATIONS

The pastor is available to perform weddings at locations other than the church. Premarital counseling is still required and the ceremony, while more flexible than a church wedding, must nevertheless be a service of worship and praise. Pastoral fees for members and non-members will vary, based on distance, time required and other factors.

- Music, if desired, for an off-premises wedding shall be arranged by a member of the wedding party under separate contract.

ST. MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH

RULES FOR PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO

RULES FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

We request that the start of the wedding not be delayed by picture taking. If a spouse wants pictures taken upon arrival, that spouse should plan to arrive 15 minutes before the wedding is scheduled to begin.

Flash pictures during the wedding ceremony are not permitted.

Flash pictures may be taken during the processional if a member of the wedding is processing. Once everyone is in place at the altar and the ceremony begins, flash pictures will not be permitted until after the closing benediction. Flash photography may be taken of the introduction of the couple and the kiss following, as well as the recessional. The photographer should be careful not to interfere with members of the wedding party.

Pictures may be taken during the ceremony from the rear of the church with the existing light. Important shots may be re-staged after the service.

RULES FOR VIDEO

Videographers must work with existing light. No external light sources will be permitted.

Video is shot from the right side or the back of the sanctuary. Church staff will work with you in setting up your equipment in order to get the best possible video. The videographer must use a tripod or remain in one area during the service.

ST. MARK LUTHERAN CHURCH

RULES GOVERNING THE USE OF FACILITIES

GENERAL

1. All events must be scheduled through the Church office. No facilities use will be allowed if there has been no advance scheduling.
2. No use of the facilities by a member, non-member or outside group shall conflict with the regular functions of St. Mark.
3. St. Mark assumes no responsibility or liability for any group activity utilizing any of the facilities.
4. Any person (including members of the wedding party) who is intoxicated, disruptive and/or disorderly, will be asked to leave the premises.
5. The persons executing the agreement shall be responsible for the care and use of the facility during the time contracted.

CARE AND USE OF FACILITIES

1. The entire church campus is smoke free. At no time is smoking permitted in any area of St. Mark Lutheran Church or anywhere on the campus which includes Discovery Academy of Science and the surrounding area.
2. Alcoholic beverages are not to be consumed on church property without written permission from the church. The wedding couple or their representative is responsible for hiring a vendor to mix and pour ALL drinks and such vendor is required to carry ample "liquor liability coverage". St. Mark will need to be added as an "additional insured" to the vendor's coverage and the certificate of liability insurance must be provided at the time final payment is made which is at least two weeks before the scheduled wedding date.
3. Decoration - nothing is to be affixed in any manner to the walls, ceiling, lighting fixtures, or any other physical components of the Church facility.
4. A member of the wedding party or other responsible person should be assigned to check the sanctuary, Narthex and dressing areas for any personal effects following the ceremony. St. Mark is not responsible for items left behind unless specific arrangements have been made.

FEES FOR THE USE OF THE FACILITIES

St. Mark Lutheran Church is a not-for-profit organization. Fees collected are to help defray the cost of overhead expenses.