

## **MARRIAGE POLICY**

Marriage has been instituted by God as the lifelong union of one man and one woman; as our Lord Jesus says: *“From the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate”* (Mark 10:6-9).

Weddings at St. Augustine Lutheran Church are set within the context of the larger ministry of Word and Sacrament. In keeping with St. Paul's injunction that everything *“is made holy by the Word of God and prayer”* (1 Timothy 4:5), the blessing of the marriage is the essential part of a Christian wedding. The wedding ceremony, as such, is a worship service honouring, not the bride or the groom, but the Triune God and serves as an occasion to support the couple with the power of God's Word and the prayers of the church. Following the wedding, pastor and members continue their ministry to the couple. This understanding of the wedding ceremony or marriage rite is normative for the following.

### **I. Who May Be Married?**

- A. Members of the congregation.
- B. Lutherans who desire to become members of the congregation.
- C. Couples (one party Lutheran) who may ultimately be directed to the ministry of another Lutheran congregation.
- D. Couples outside the Lutheran Church who commit themselves to become members of a Lutheran congregation.

### **II. Officiants At Weddings**

- A. The called pastor (or vacancy pastor) of St. Augustine Lutheran Church will officiate at all weddings.
- B. The pastor of St. Augustine Lutheran Church may invite other clergy to participate in weddings. Visiting clergy shall only be those who are on the clergy roster of Lutheran Church—Canada, or clergy of other Lutheran synods in altar and pulpit fellowship with Lutheran Church—Canada.

### **III. The Wedding Service**

- A. Wedding services shall be conducted in accordance with the order of Holy Matrimony in the *Lutheran Service Book*.
- B. Pre-service music, preludes, solos, hymns, etc. shall be in good taste; that is, consistent with the theology and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. The use of musical instruments shall be governed by the principle just cited.

C. The pastor, in consultation with the couple, shall select the Scripture Readings and hymns for the wedding service.

#### **IV. Preparation For Weddings**

- A. The wedding date cannot be finalized until cleared with the pastor.
- B. Couples planning to be married shall participate in a catechism course.
- C. Normally, a rehearsal shall be conducted by the pastor prior to the wedding ceremony.

#### **V. General Decorum And Conduct**

- A. Participants in weddings shall conduct themselves in a manner that is fitting and proper to the House of God.
- B. In no case is confetti to be thrown anywhere on the church property.
- C. Responsibility for the arrangement and conduct of wedding services rests with the pastor.
- D. Photographers may take pictures at weddings according to the following stipulations: aisle shots during the processional and recessional; time exposures during the service; post-service photos in the chancel.
- E. Florists, decorators, and other personnel who have been engaged by the bridal party shall be governed by the above guidelines.

#### **VI. Suggested Honourariums**

- A. Pastor (at the discretion of the couple)
- B. Organist – \$75.00 to \$100.00
- C. Soloist/Instrumentalist – \$50.00
- D. Church (for printing of wedding bulletin) – \$25.00
- E. Custodian – \$50.00

*(adopted at the Voters Assembly meeting on August 28, 430)*