



WEDDING *Policy*

Policy and Procedures



*"Therefore what God
has joined together,
let no one separate."*

MARK 10:9

UPDATED: 7/10/2026



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PRINCIPLES

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR ENGAGEMENT AND PLANS TO BE MARRIED! A church wedding is a joyful religious service of Christian worship in which the service of Holy Matrimony is conducted in an atmosphere of reverence for God. This ceremony is the beginning of the covenant relationship of Christian marriage.

We believe that Christian marriage is a sacred covenant relationship, between one biological male and one biological female, designed and ordained by God from the creation of the world, and its significance is emphasized repeatedly in Scripture (e.g. Genesis 1:26-28, 2:18, 21-24). In Mark 10:6-9 Jesus said, *"...at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female. 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 flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."* (See also Matthew 19:4-6) In this passage our Lord Jesus clearly affirms God's design for the religious covenant of marriage as being a holy covenant between a man and a woman in relationship with God. In illustrating the deep relationship of Christ with His bride, the Church, God also chose the analogy of the marriage relationship (Ephesians 5). Therefore, Immanuel will only perform or host weddings, marriage ceremonies, or any ceremonies of union that fit our understanding of the sacred covenant of marriage.

We believe that the vows you take during the wedding ceremony are promises not only to one another, but also to God who joins with you in this holy covenant. Considering the biblical significance and responsibilities intended by God for marriage, it is essential that the church take seriously its participation in a marriage, as well as its responsibility in helping couples in preparation.

As a first step, you must read the following principles of our premarital process as you consider planning a wedding ceremony at Immanuel. We believe these principles are consistent with God's Word, and they reflect the high standard to which God will hold one man and one woman as they commit themselves to marriage.

Principles that we are committed to in the premarital process:

1. As a Christian church, we are committed to help Christian couples engage in a worshipful wedding and a Christ-centered marriage. Therefore, weddings at our church are reserved for Christian couples only. Other conditions may also need to be met to be faithful to biblical expectations related to the covenant of marriage.
2. Immanuel will consider couples who wish to take advantage of our premarital program on a case-by-case basis. All couples seeking to be married under the auspices of Immanuel, by approved pastors of Immanuel, must first complete and be approved through the premarital process. This process is intended to provide the first step in an ongoing context for the nurture of Christian marriages at Immanuel.
3. Weddings will be scheduled for Immanuel members and their families.
4. All couples who desire to be married at Immanuel must complete at least 3-5 hours of premarital counseling conducted by a member of the Immanuel Pastoral staff (guest pastors may also be approved by the Senior Pastor to perform the required counseling - see "guest pastor" section of this policy). This counseling will include completion of an online assessment tool – approximate cost of \$30 to be paid by the couple directly to a third-party source.

We will do all that we can to help you create a wedding ceremony that is centered in faithfulness to God, and one that celebrates the special love God has for you and that you have for each other. Most importantly, we hope to help provide a good beginning for a lifelong commitment to the covenant of Christian marriage.

If you are interested in planning a wedding ceremony at Immanuel) carefully review this Handbook of Wedding Policies which has been adopted by the Church to assist couples in preparing for this holy and happy event. May God bless you and guide you in these important and joyful days.

SCHEDULING AND RESERVING THE CHURCH

Weddings Start Here at Immanuel

Before making any wedding plans at Immanuel, the **first step** is to contact the Wedding Coordinator.

Gayle Stanek - Cell: 859-750-7261 gaylestanek@gmail.com

All facility tours must be scheduled in advance with the Wedding Coordinator. Unannounced visits cannot be accommodated due to staff schedules and other ministry responsibilities.

Circumstances That May Delay or Prevent a Wedding Request

The following are reasons a wedding request may be denied or delayed. If a situation listed below applies, or if there is concern about proceeding with wedding planning, the matter should be discussed with Wedding Coordinator as soon as possible. See the 'member' criteria outlined below.

We Will Not:

1. Marry a Christian (believer) and a non-Christian (nonbeliever) [See 2 Corinthians 6:14ff]. By definition, a "Christian marriage" is comprised of one man and one woman who have individually committed their lives to Jesus Christ. We are not willing to perform, or host, the marriage ceremonies of couples who have not made this commitment.
2. Marry a couple if they do not satisfactorily complete the premarital counseling program requirements, or if counselors in the premarital program recommend against marriage in the course of the counseling process.
3. Marry a couple if they are found to have represented themselves untruthfully regarding their relationship or premarital issues during the process.

We May Not:¹

1. Marry a couple if we believe the maturity level of either partner is not such that he or she can fully accept the responsibilities of marriage at that time.
2. Marry a couple if they have not allowed themselves time to build the pattern of a stable relationship.
3. Marry a couple if they currently practice cohabitation (living together outside of marriage) and are unwilling to abstain from a sexual relationship for a period determined by a pastor; or if they have, in the immediate past, led a lifestyle which does not represent biblical purity.

FACILITY AVAILABILITY: The Immanuel facilities are constantly in use as we seek to fulfill our ministry and mission for Christ. Many dates will be automatically excluded as possible dates because of this use. See the list of typically excluded dates; note that other dates may also be excluded due to preexisting or anticipated ministry uses.

¹ Exceptions to one or more of these three conditions will be made on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the pastor performing the premarital counseling and/or wedding ceremony.

Criteria for all Weddings and definition of “Member”

One or more of the following must be a member of Immanuel for at least six (6) months prior to the wedding:

1. Bride
2. Groom
3. Parents of the bride or groom

At the discretion of the Senior Pastor, the church may make its facilities available to Christians from other congregations, as well as to other Christian couples who agree to abide by all provisions of this Wedding Policy.

Scheduling the Wedding and Reserving the Church

The date and time of the wedding must be scheduled on the church calendar, and facility reservations must be made through the Wedding Coordinator early as possible to avoid conflicts. Wedding reservations may be made up to eighteen (18) months in advance of the date.

A wedding reservation is considered final only when all of the following conditions are met:

1. **Pastoral Approval**
 - a. The Senior Pastor has approved the wedding.
 - b. A qualified clergy member is available and has consented to officiate.
2. **Administrative Approval**
 - a. The Wedding Coordinator has received:
 - b. Confirmation of Senior Pastor approval
 - c. Confirmation from the Operations Team that the date is available
 - d. A completed Wedding Reservation Application
3. **Music Approval**
 - a. The organist is available and has approved the following:
 - b. Music selections
 - c. Musicians
 - d. Soloists
4. **Staff Availability**
 - a. Wedding Coordinator
 - b. Custodian
 - c. Sound Technician
5. **Weekend Scheduling Guidelines**
 - a. Saturday weddings must begin no later than 7:30 p.m.
 - b. Sunday weddings are afternoon/evening

Holiday Scheduling Guidelines

Weddings will not be scheduled for the following holidays or holiday weekends:

- Thanksgiving Weekend
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day
- Holy Week (Palm Sunday through Easter)
- New Year's Eve

Weddings may be scheduled for the following holidays only if required staff are available:

- Memorial Day Weekend
- Independence Day Weekend
- Labor Day Weekend

WEDDING STAFF

Senior Pastor

It is generally expected that one of the Immanuel pastors will officiate at each wedding held in Immanuel. If the bride and groom request a specific Immanuel pastor, the Wedding Coordinator will contact that pastor first for information about his or her availability. Otherwise, the Senior Pastor will direct the choice of pastor. An ordained pastor from another church may assist or officiate only if approved by Immanuel's Senior Pastor. The pastor must be properly ordained in a recognized Christian church and licensed to perform weddings in Kentucky (the Senior Pastor must approve the status of church affiliation for guest pastor and couple).

Guest Pastor

If any couple chooses to have a pastor from another church assist or officiate the wedding ceremony, the following criteria must be met:

- Our Senior Pastor must approve all "guest clergy" including former staff members of Immanuel.
- The man and woman to be married must both be Christians. See Principles Section.
- The pastor must be properly ordained in a recognized Christian church and licensed to perform weddings in Kentucky (the Senior Pastor must approve the status of church affiliation for guest pastor and couple).
- The pastor and couple must agree to participate in three – five hours of premarital counseling.
- The Wedding Coordinator and staff must be available and willing to serve.
- All aspects of the Handbook of Wedding Policies must be adhered to completely.
- The Senior Pastor has the sole authority to approve exceptions to these criteria.

Wedding Coordinator

The Immanuel Church Wedding Coordinator serves as the church's official representative for all weddings held at Immanuel. The Wedding Coordinator acts as liaison between the wedding couple and church staff to ensure that all aspects of the ceremony are properly managed. Throughout the planning process, the Wedding Coordinator will communicate with the couple and will be present at both the rehearsal and the wedding to ensure the service is conducted with dignity appropriate to a religious setting. (Note: the Wedding Coordinator does not arrange apparel, flowers, or other needs unrelated to the use of the church and worship service.)

Organist/Pianist

The Immanuel Church organist oversees the selection and performance of music for all weddings held at Immanuel. All music, musicians, and soloists must be approved by the organist, regardless of the organist's personal involvement in the wedding.

- Music selections must be discussed with the organist at least eight (8) weeks prior to the wedding.
- Any prerecorded music must be reviewed by both the organist and sound technician no later than two (2) weeks prior to the wedding for appropriateness, quality, and clarity.
- Acceptable styles include sacred, classical, contemporary Christian, or traditional selections.
- A list of recommended music selections will be provided by the Wedding Coordinator as a reference.

The Minister of Music maintains oversight of all wedding music but does not participate in rehearsals or planning.

Sound and Light Technician

The sound and light technician provides audio and lighting support in coordination with the wedding couple and the Wedding Coordinator. Responsibilities include:

- Ensuring all microphones, music stands, and related equipment are properly set up before the wedding
- Operating sound and lighting equipment during the rehearsal (as requested) and the wedding ceremony
- Coordinating with the organist to schedule and conduct a sound check with all musicians

Custodian

The custodian will be present at the rehearsal and wedding. Any specific needs for custodial assistance must be communicated in writing to the Wedding Coordinator.

Use of Facilities During a Wedding

Included in the wedding ceremony:

- Use of worship center during wedding rehearsal and ceremony
- Dressing room for the bride/bridesmaids
- Dressing room for the groom/groomsmen
- Brass unity candle stand (candles not included)
- Two brass candelabras including taper candles (Immanuel sanctuary and chapel only)
- Ten glass hurricane gloves (Immanuel sanctuary only)
- Four wooden flower stands (Immanuel sanctuary and chapel only)
- Seasonal floral arrangements currently placed in the sanctuary

Fees for Wedding Staff

• Immanuel Pastor	Suggested honorarium of \$200 (see notation below)
• Guest Pastors	Honorarium paid directly to pastor
• Premarital Assessment (Immanuel Pastors)	\$30 (approximate – price set by 3 rd party online service)
• Organist/Pianist	\$225 (includes rehearsal and wedding)
• Wedding Coordinator (sanctuary and Wesley Hall)	\$300
• Wedding Coordinator (chapel)	\$150
• Sound and Light Technician	\$100 (see notation below)
• Custodian	\$150
• Livestream Operator	\$75 (plus additional \$25 to have the stream edited and exported onto a USB drive)

**We never want finances to be a barrier to a Christian wedding. Honorariums may be adjusted as needed in consultation with the Wedding Coordinator and Pastor.*

***There are no sound and light fees for a wedding held in Immanuel's chapel.*

Deposit

A \$300 deposit is required to reserve a wedding date at Immanuel, which will be applied toward the total wedding fee package. Once the deposit is received, the Wedding Coordinator will provide written confirmation and place the date on the church calendar. The total wedding fee will be determined after all details are finalized, and the remaining balance is due no later than two (2) weeks prior to the wedding.

Cancellation

In the unfortunate event of cancellation, deposit refund consideration will be given at the discretion of the Wedding Coordinator.

CEREMONY INFORMATION

Premarital Counseling

Premarital counseling is required for all couples to be married at Immanuel. The officiating pastor will provide the counseling. An additional short meeting with the officiating pastor may also be required, for the pastor and couple to finalize plans for the order of worship of the wedding service. Contact the church office as soon as you know whom your officiating pastor will be to schedule these meetings. The Wedding Coordinator does not schedule premarital counseling.

Planning the Ceremony

The officiating pastor holds full authority over the wedding ceremony and will determine the order of worship in consultation with the couple. The official liturgy of Immanuel, included at the end of this document, serves as the standard for all weddings held at Immanuel. For weddings officiated by a guest pastor, the proposed ceremony outline must be submitted to the Wedding Coordinator at least two (2) weeks in advance for review and approval by the Senior Pastor.

Marriage License

To obtain a marriage license in Kentucky, both applicants must appear together at any county clerk's office in the state. They need to present proof of identity and age, and there's a fee of \$50. There is no waiting period or blood test required, and the license is valid for thirty (30) days from the date of issuance. The marriage license must be brought to the rehearsal and given to the Wedding Coordinator. For more information, visit

<https://franklincountyclerk.ky.gov/marriage-license/>

Wedding Programs

Wedding programs, if desired, must be provided by the wedding party and approved by the Wedding Coordinator. The wedding programs must be brought to the rehearsal and given to the Wedding Coordinator.

Photography and Videography

Photographs and videos are an important way to remember a wedding day. However, neither should be recorded in a manner which is disruptive, intrusive or disrespectful to the ceremony.

Church weddings are worship services; therefore, photographers, friends and relatives should be instructed that no flash pictures may be taken during the ceremony (from the time the pastor begins speaking until the recessional music begins). During the ceremony, the photographer is strictly prohibited from taking pictures in the chancel area of the sanctuary and he/she is not allowed to stand in the center aisle or anywhere that is likely to distract the pastor or other persons who are viewing or participating in the wedding ceremony. Time exposures / silent shutter photographs from the balcony or narthex, without flash, are permitted during the ceremony.

Photography sessions with the wedding party must be completed 45 minutes prior to the wedding ceremony and 30 minutes after the wedding ceremony.

Video cameras must be stationary and use natural light. The video camera operator should consult with the Wedding Coordinator about the best place to work. A remote-controlled video camera may be located on a tripod in the balcony or in the rear of the sanctuary but must not obstruct the view of the congregation.

The Wedding Coordinator will speak with the photographer prior to the ceremony to review these guidelines and to ensure they are enforced. However, it is the responsibility of the couple to make sure that the photographer /

videographer observes all these conditions prior to the wedding. Failure to do so may result in the ceremony being suspended until the photographer or videographer has ceased or until he or she has left the facility.

Communion

If you desire to have the sacrament of Holy Communion at your wedding, know that in the Methodist Church, open Communion is always observed. This means that when Communion is to be celebrated, it must be offered to the entire congregation present. An ordained elder of the Methodist Church (or equivalent in other denominations) must preside over the communion ceremony. Upon request, the sacrament of Holy Communion may be offered as a part of the rehearsal or for the bride and groom, or bridal party and any others present.

Receiving Line

If the couple chooses to hold their receiving line at the church, the Wedding Coordinator will make the appropriate recommendations based on the location of the wedding ceremony.

Rehearsal

The wedding rehearsal will generally take place the evening before the wedding and will be led by the presiding Pastor with the assistance of the Wedding Coordinator. All participants of the wedding party should be present. This includes the parents, ushers, attendants, ring bearer(s), flower girl(s), accompanists, etc. At the rehearsal, the ceremony is explained so that all persons involved will know their parts. The positioning of the wedding party members, lighting and sound levels for the ceremony, and the processional and recessional will be decided and practiced. When possible, the sound and light technician will obtain a sound check from soloists just prior to the rehearsal.

Receptions

Immanuel does not host wedding receptions. Spaces are reserved for church ministries and programs and is not available for private use related to weddings. Couples who wish to host a reception are encouraged to secure an off-site venue that aligns with the timing of their ceremony.

DECORATIONS

Candles

A brass unity candle stand is available at all worship facilities. One three-inch pillar candle and two taper candles are to be provided by the wedding couple.

Two seven-branch candelabras are available for the Immanuel sanctuary and chapel. The church also provides two altar candles.

Ten fourteen-inch-tall glass hurricane globes and bases are available for the windows in the Immanuel sanctuary. Candles to fit in these globes must be provided by the wedding couple and measure three inches in diameter and no taller than ten inches.

Dripless candles are strongly recommended. All candles should be brought to the rehearsal and given to the Wedding Coordinator. She will be responsible for the placement of all candles and stands.

Flowers

Four wooden flower stands are available for floral arrangements in the Immanuel sanctuary and chapel. All floral arrangements must be removed at the conclusion of the wedding.

Flowers may be decorated in all areas of the sanctuary except on the organ, piano or in the outside aisles. Any floral decoration placed on or around candles must be fire safe.

Arrangements for the florist's delivery and/or pick up of flowers and equipment need to be made with the Wedding Coordinator. All flowers and decorations must be removed immediately after the ceremony.

Aisle Runner (Cloth Only)

The Immanuel sanctuary aisle is 100 feet long, however, to ensure the safety of the wedding party, the use of aisle runners is strongly discouraged, as many problems have been associated with them.

Decoration Guidelines

All flowers, candles, candlesticks, aisle runners, kneelers, etc. are to be arranged so that the furniture, carpeting and woodwork are not marred in any way. Under no conditions shall any flowers or other decorations be attached to pews, walls, or furnishings with tape, pins, tack, glue or nails. Nothing sharp, sticky or metal may be used to attach decorations to the pews, or to hold a decoration. Violation of this policy may result in request for payment of damages. You may use ribbons, tulle, very large rubber bands (available through your florist), or plastic pew clips to attach flowers or decorations. Flower girls are prohibited from scattering live flower petals (only silk).

Sanctuary Adornments

It is expected that a worshipful atmosphere will be maintained for the ceremony. Therefore, no church symbols or furniture may be removed or rearranged in the worship spaces without prior approval of the Wedding Coordinator or Senior Pastor. Any church decorations related to the season of Easter and Christmas shall remain in place. No flowers, candles, or other decorations are to be placed on the piano, organ, or in the outside aisles.

Building Guidelines Weddings

- No food or drink is allowed in the sanctuary or chapel.
- The throwing of rice, confetti, birdseed, sunflowers seeds, flower petals, leaves or palm branches is not permitted. It creates hazardous walking conditions on the sidewalks and in the hallways. Bubbles are permitted outside the facilities.
- Spraying with glitter hairspray anywhere in the church building is not permitted.
- Heating or air conditioning will be turned on at a reasonable time prior to the wedding or rehearsal. Contact the Wedding Coordinator if you have any concern about the environmental controls.
- Do not leave valuables, purses, money, or personal belongings unattended in the church. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom or those they designate to arrange to care for the property of the wedding party before, during and after the wedding. Since the church cannot be responsible for personal belongings, we require that you remove everything from the church immediately following the wedding.

BUILDING USE REGULATIONS

Immanuel Sanctuary

The sanctuary seats up to three hundred (300) guests comfortably, with a maximum of three hundred fifty (350). There are eighteen pews on each side of the main aisle; four of these are shortened for wheelchair access and six and a half pews on the balcony. The pipe organ and grand piano are in the chancel. Musicians may also be seated in the chancel.

Immanuel Chapel

The chapel seats up to thirty (30) guests comfortably, with a maximum of forty (40). There are fifteen pews; one of these is shortened for wheelchair access. There is a grand piano located in the front of the chapel. Musicians are to be seated in the pews with the congregation.

Immanuel Wesley Hall

Wesley Hall accommodates up to 300 guests. The space includes 300 chairs, which can be arranged in a variety of seating configurations. In addition, 25 banquet tables are available and can be arranged to seat up to 200 guests.

The instruments on the Wesley Hall stage are not available for use during weddings. However, the grand piano located to the right of the stage may be used. Couples are welcome to provide their own musicians and instruments if they choose. Any stage setup must be planned in coordination with the Modern Worship Minister and the Production Team. Please note that production support for weddings in Wesley Hall is available on a case-by-case basis and will be determined based on the specific needs of the event.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- **Alcoholic Beverage:** Alcoholic beverages are not permitted to be consumed on church premises under any circumstances. At the discretion of the Presiding Pastor and/or Wedding Coordinator the rehearsal or wedding will be cancelled or postponed if alcohol or illegal drugs are being used on church property by any member of the wedding party. If any member of the wedding party is under the influence of alcohol and or drugs, they will NOT be permitted to participate, and the ceremony will be suspended until they have left the facilities. Do not allow any member of the wedding party to potentially ruin this special day by forcing us to stop the ceremony or other proceedings.
- **Gambling:** Gambling is not permitted on Immanuel property.
- **Smoking and the Use of Tobacco Products:** Smoking and using tobacco products are prohibited inside buildings or on church grounds.
- **Parking Lots:** The parking lots around Immanuel property are provided as a convenience for all facility users. Space availability is on a first-come basis and cannot be guaranteed. Parking spaces or areas will not be roped off, marked, or otherwise restricted except by permission from the church Senior Pastor/Associate Pastor, Executive Minister or Maintenance Manager.
- **Overnight Parking:** Those who require long-term parking will notify the central scheduling office of their need for overnight parking. Park in the lower lot farthest from the building.
- **Handicap Parking:** Accessible parking spaces closest to the building must be respected throughout the week. On Sunday's all Accessible parking spaces are designated Handicap.

- Breakage and Damage to Church Property: To prevent deliberate destruction, damage, and/or breakage, all individuals and/or groups using the facilities are required to take reasonable care and discretion. When an outside person or group causes damage, breakage, or loss that, in the opinion of the Church Administrator, exceeds normal wear and tear associated with responsible use, the outside person or group will be responsible for cleaning, repairing, or replacing the affected parts of the building, its furnishings, and/or equipment. Users will report damage to the Church Administrator. The user will organize repairs, replacements, and/or cleaning.
- Weapons: We request anyone in our buildings to follow Federal, State, and Local ordinances.
- ALL policies and guidelines of the Wedding Policy are subject to change (at any time) at the discretion of the Senior Pastor /Church Administrator.

STANDARD METHODIST LITURGY (Order of Worship for Wedding Ceremony)

In all services conducted by Immanuel Clergy members the standard Methodist liturgy will be used – see below “Service of Christian Marriage.” In all weddings the traditional vows must be used (see ‘Declaration of Intention’ and “Exchange of Vows.”) Couples are welcome to use other vows, personally written or from another source, but only in addition to the traditional vows, and at the discretion of the presiding pastor. Some additional flexibility regarding the liturgy and vows used will be considered for visiting pastors. Visiting pastors, who are not planning to use the standard UM liturgy and / or vows, should submit a copy of the proposed liturgy and vows to the Senior Pastor for approval prior to the wedding.

SERVICE OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

GATHERING (Many call this the Prelude)

While the people gather, instrumental or vocal music may be offered. Special family members are seated at this time.

Pastor:

Who presents this woman in marriage? *(Father or another designated person(s) present the bride)*

GREETING

Pastor to people:

Friends, we are gathered together in the sight of God to witness and bless the joining together of *Name and Name* in Christian marriage. The covenant of marriage was established by God, who created us male and female for each other. With his presence and power Jesus chose to perform His first miracle at a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and in his sacrificial love Jesus gave us the example for the love of husband and wife. *Name and Name* come to give themselves to one another in this holy covenant.

DECLARATION OF INTENTION

Pastor to the persons who are to marry:

I ask you now, in the presence of God and these people, to declare your intention to enter into union with each other through the grace of Jesus Christ, who calls you into union with Himself through your baptism and profession of faith.

Pastor to the woman:

Name, will you have *Name* to be your husband, to live together in holy marriage? Will you love him, comfort him, honor and keep him, in sickness and in health, and forsaking all others, be faithful to him as long as you both shall live?

Woman: I will.

Pastor to the man:

Name, will you have *Name* to be your wife, to live together in holy marriage? Will you love her, comfort her, honor and keep her in sickness and in health, and forsaking all others, be faithful to her as long as you both shall live?

Man: I will.

BLESSING OF FAMILIES AND FRIENDS

Pastor to people:

The marriage of *Name and Name* unites their families and creates a new one. We rejoice in their union and pray God's blessing upon them. Will all of you bless this marriage and, by God's grace, do everything in your power to uphold and care for these two persons in their marriage? If so, please say together, "We will."

People: We will.

Pastor: Who presents this woman in marriage? (Father or another designated person(s) present the bride)

PRAYER - God of all peoples, you are the true light illumining everyone. You show us the way, the truth and the life. You sustain us with your Holy Spirit. We rejoice in your life in the midst of our lives. We praise you for your presence with us, and especially in this act of solemn covenant, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

- Scripture Readings by Pastor, for example - 1 Corinthians 13 (selected verses), 1 John 4 (selected verses)
- Optional: If you have a friend or family member with a reading it may be offered here
- Optional: Other Readings, Testimonies, or Sermon may be offered here
- Optional: Special music / solos are appropriate at this time

PRAYER

Eternal God, Creator and Preserver of all life, author of salvation, Giver of all grace: Bless and sanctify with your Holy Spirit *Name and Name*, who come now to join in marriage. Grant that they may give their vows to each other in the strength of your steadfast love. Enable them to grow in love and peace with you and with one another all their days, that they may reach out in concern and service to the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

EXCHANGE OF VOWS

The wife and husband face each other and join hands. (Bride and groom are prompted, line by line, by the pastor):

Man to woman:

In the name of God,
I *Name*, take you, *Name*, to be my wife,
to have and to hold
from this day forward,
for better, for worse,
for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and health,

to love and to cherish,
as long as we both shall live (or 'until we are parted by death').
This is my solemn vow.

Woman to man:

In the name of God,
I *Name*, take you, *Name*, to be my husband,
to have and to hold
from this day forward,
for better, for worse,
for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and health,
to love and to cherish,
as long as we both shall live (or 'until we are parted by death').
This is my solemn vow.

BLESSING AND EXCHANGE OF RINGS

The pastor, taking the rings, says:

The wedding ring is the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, signifying to us the uniting of *Name* and *Name* in holy marriage.

Let us pray. *Bless, O Lord, the giving of these rings that they who wear them may live in your peace and continue in your favor all the days of their life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

*While placing the ring on the third finger of the recipient's left hand, the giver says
(Bride and groom are prompted, line by line, by the pastor):*

Name, I give you this ring
as a sign of my vow,
and with all that I am,
and all that I have,
I honor you;
in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

UNITY CANDLE

DECLARATION OF MARRIAGE

The wife and husband join hands.

Pastor to husband and wife:

You have declared your consent and vows before God and this congregation. May God confirm your covenant and fill you both with grace.

Pastor to people:

Now that *Name and Name* have given themselves to each by solemn vows, with the joining of hands, and the giving and receiving of rings, I announce to you that they are husband and wife, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Those, whom God has joined together, let no one separate. **Amen.**

UNITY CANDLE – *If a unity candle is used, the two side candles representing the husband and wife are lighted first, and the center candle representing the marriage is lighted at this or some later point in the service. The side candles are not extinguished because both husband and wife retain their personal identities and connection to families.*

- **SPECIAL MUSIC** / Solos are recommended at this point in the service

BLESSING OF THE MARRIAGE - *The presiding pastor will lead a prayer asking God to bless this union. This prayer will typically conclude with the congregation saying the Lord's Prayer together. It is also appropriate to have a soloist sing the "Lord's Prayer" as a conclusion to the blessing of the marriage.*

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

Pastor to wife and husband:

God the Eternal keep you in love with each; so that the peace of Christ may abide in your home. Go to serve God and your neighbor in all that you do. Bear witness to the love of God in this world, so that those to whom love is a stranger will find in you generous friends. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion and power of the Holy Spirit be with you now and always. **Amen.**

Pastor says to couple: Now I invite you to celebrate your marriage with a kiss.

PRESENTATION

Pastor to people: I am now pleased to present to you, for the first time as husband and wife,

First name – First name – (Married Last Name)

RECESSIONAL MUSIC

POSTLUDE
