



acacia park  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

**Wedding Policy**

Acacia Park Lutheran Church –  
Norridge, IL

*A congregation of the Evangelical  
Lutheran Church in America*

## **Welcome**

Congratulations! If you are reading these words, then that probably means that you have entered into the process of preparing for marriage! We welcome you and thank you for considering Acacia Park Lutheran Church as the host of your joyous occasion.

At Acacia Park, we believe that relationships are a blessing and were created by God for the benefit of the larger community. Marriage is a gift and a living sign of God's grace, love, and faithfulness. Marriage provides the space for a couple to publicly make promises to one another in the midst of a worshiping community. These promises are surrounded by the support of God's gathered people, God's word, and prayers of blessing.

We welcome all couples who are in publicly accountable, life-long, monogamous relationships to consider Acacia Park Lutheran Church for their wedding celebrations. While we are a distinctly Christian church in the Lutheran tradition, we welcome interfaith weddings. We require that at least one member of the couple be a baptized Christian.

We realize some choose a church home concurrently with making wedding plans, and we would be delighted to speak with you about getting involved. If you don't already have a faith community of which you are a part of, we welcome and invite you to explore Acacia Park. You may find that worshiping at Acacia Park prior to the wedding will allow you to feel more comfortable in the space and with the Pastor.

### **Contact information**

Acacia Park Lutheran Church  
4307 N. Oriole  
Norridge, IL 60706  
708-453-3662  
[acaciaparkchurch@gmail.com](mailto:acaciaparkchurch@gmail.com)

## GETTING STARTED...

### **Setting the Date and Location**

Please consult with the Pastor as soon as possible to determine available dates. To ensure the church and Pastor are available, please schedule your wedding ceremony at Acacia Park at least 90 days in advance of when you hope to have the ceremony. Even with 90 days notice, Acacia Park cannot guarantee the ability to accommodate all requests.

In the event that a date is being requested by both a member and non-member (and no deposit has been paid), the date will be given to the member.

Because of the church celebrations surrounding Holy Week (the week before and including Easter) and the week before Christmas through New Year's, Acacia Park cannot accommodate weddings at those times. For scheduling weddings on National holidays, please consult with the Pastor.

The Pastor of Acacia Park Lutheran Church is happy to officiate your wedding ceremony. Acacia Park recognizes that some couples will have a faith leader or clergy person who is special to the couple. Please discuss using such guest officiants with the Pastor.

### **Premarital Counseling**

All couples preparing for marriage are strongly encouraged to participate in pre-marital counseling and it is required for the Pastor of Acacia Park Lutheran Church to preside over the wedding. The Pastor is available to conduct your premarital counseling. The traditional practice is to meet a minimum of three times for this counseling. The Pastor also can provide a list of recommended counselors, if you so choose to seek counseling elsewhere. If counseling is conducted elsewhere, the Pastor will request confirmation of completion.

### **Marriage License**

If the couple wishes for a marriage license to be signed, it must be given to the Pastor **at least one day prior to the wedding** in order for it to be inscribed. When picking up the license (or if it has been mailed to you), immediately check to make certain that all of the information on the license is correct. Only the license bureau personnel can make changes or corrections.

### **Suggested Timeline**

4 or more months before your wedding:

- Contact the Pastor to begin planning the wedding ceremony

3 months before your wedding:

- Contact Organist to plan music for the wedding ceremony.
- If you would like the church office to assist with your wedding bulletins please contact them to arrange a time to view styles.

1 month before your wedding:

- If church office is printing the wedding bulletins, be sure they have all the bulletin details needed to accomplish this task.
- If you are considering any provisions to the standard ceremony the presiding Pastor must have all items approved by this time.

1 week before your wedding:

- Proof the wedding bulletin set up by the church office if you chose.
- Ensure the presiding Pastor has had a chance to look over your wedding bulletin.

### **Church Facility & Logistics**

The sanctuary seats 180-200 comfortably. The aisle is approximately 50 feet long and 5 feet wide. Please be aware that the church sanctuary and building is not air conditioned. The wedding party may use the Sunday School rooms and Riedesel Hall (below the sanctuary) to dress and/or gather prior to the ceremony.

There is very limited parking in front of the church. There is parking available across the street to the south at Giles grade school. Most of the time there is plenty of neighborhood street parking. The south wing of the church building (including the sanctuary and Reidesel Hall below it) is handicap accessible. There is a lift located in the back of the sanctuary in the southwest corner. Your ushers should be notified of your guests' needs and be prepared to assist.

On the day of your wedding, a representative of Acacia Park will be present at the church from an hour before the wedding until all your guests and wedding party have left the church. The representative will let you and any vendors into the church and will be present to ensure the event runs smoothly. Please notify Acacia Park of any vendors that may drop things off in the hour before the wedding.

### **Decorations**

Many couples like to add their own personal touch to the sanctuary for the wedding ceremony. Again, because the church is first and foremost a worship space, we ask that all decorations are tasteful and that you not use any nails, tacks, scotch tape, or magic tape on any woodwork, walls, or pews. Helium balloons cannot be used in the Sanctuary. Decorations may be placed in the sanctuary the evening before the wedding.

Sanctuary seasonal decorations and paraments (altar cloths) cannot be moved or changed for the wedding. The color of paraments used for the wedding service are the color for the season of the church year during which the wedding is conducted. The color is not changed for a wedding service. The furnishings in the sanctuary may not be moved or altered for the wedding service. The railings, altar, and clergy seats are not to be decorated; however, pew bows may be used. Aisle runners are not permitted due to safety concerns.

Flowers are welcomed. While it is wise to have someone familiar with your wedding decorations to be on hand to oversee the florist, it is not imperative. Flowers should be delivered in the hour before the wedding. No flower petals may be thrown in the aisle. If you wish to make the wedding flower arrangements available for the Sunday morning worship services, let the church office know at least two weeks before your wedding so proper credit can be given to you in honor of your celebration.

Please remove all flowers and other decorations within an hour after the ceremony. Any tape, marks, damage, or other materials left in the church will result in Acacia Park retaining your deposit. While candles may be used, we ask that no candles be set on the floor.

Acacia Park Lutheran Church is a smoke-free facility. Out of respect for the church, with the exception of wine designated for communion, we ask that you not bring any alcohol or illegal drugs into the building nor consume any alcohol or illegal drugs while on the premises. Failure to observe this policy will result in loss of damage deposit and persons not allowed to participate in the wedding.

## **Rehearsal**

The rehearsal will be held at Acacia Park on a day the week before the wedding. Typically for a Saturday wedding, the rehearsal takes place from 5:00pm-6:00pm Friday, the day before the wedding. The rehearsal will include walking through the ceremony and answering any questions the couple or the couple's family may have. Anyone who will have a role in the ceremony needs to attend: bride and groom, attendants, flower girls, ring bearers, ushers, parents, grandparents, readers, and musicians.

## **Ceremony**

The ceremony is a time for the couple to publicly commit themselves to one another. Although marriage liturgies vary to some degree, most follow a basic format. Acacia Park uses the liturgy and format from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and couples are welcome to use this inclusive liturgy as well. There are many ways to customize the ceremony to reflect the personality of the couple, accommodate other faiths, and involve the couple's families. Such modifications are welcome with consultation from the Pastor. The couple is free to choose scripture readings, vows, and hymns for the service. The Pastor will be happy to assist in these selections.

At Acacia Park, we celebrate an open Communion. This means that Communion is available for anyone who wants to experience the real and living presence of God in the sacrament of Holy Communion. If desired, Communion is available for any couple who wishes to be married at Acacia Park.

Ceremonies that include Holy Communion are approximately one hour. Without Holy Communion, they are typically 30-40 minutes. Family and friends are encouraged to participate.

Music is a wonderful compliment to any celebration. Acacia Park welcomes live musical performances during wedding ceremonies. Usually, the church organist/pianist plays for all services in the church. If another organist, pianist, or musician is desired, whether in place of or in addition to the one employed by Acacia Park, please speak with the Pastor. Acacia Park reserves the right to decline musical groups for any reason. It is the responsibility of the couple to contact the organist/musicians and arrange for wedding music about three months before the wedding. It is required for any musicians to be present at the rehearsal.

Please carefully select the music for your wedding. All music should be fitting for use in the church. Many "pop" numbers were not written or intended for use in the church. Consider using this type of music at your reception. Acacia Park reserves the right to decline any such music to be played in the church. The Pastor will be happy to assist in musical suggestions, including hymns to be sung by the assembly and other music especially written for the wedding ceremony.

Releasing guests pew by pew can be very time consuming. We do not recommend releasing more than 100 guests. The use of rice, confetti, birdseed, tissue flowers, or other objects to be thrown inside or outside the church building is not permissible.

### **Photography/Videography**

Photography can provide the opportunity to capture moments that the couple will savor and remember for a lifetime. Formal pictures of the wedding party may be taken before or after the service. Because the wedding liturgy is a worship service of the church, no flash photographs may be taken during the service. One photographer may take flash photographs as the wedding party enters and leaves the sanctuary, but must not stand in the center aisle. Video cameras that are stationary are allowed. Videographers and photographers must remain stationary during the service - no movement is permitted near the altar. The hope is that there will be as few distractions from the service by moving personnel as possible.

Again, under no circumstances shall any of the furniture be moved for photographs. The altar is used exclusively for sacramental purposes. Nothing should be placed on the table at any point. The wedding photographer and/or videographer should introduce herself/himself to the Pastor prior to the ceremony. Please alert your photographer/videographer of the above policies.

### **Wedding Bulletins**

If a wedding bulletin is to be part of your wedding, the Pastor and church office can assist you with the copy. Your bulletin outline and wedding party list must be given to the church office one month prior to the wedding in order to allow ample time for review and printing. The church office has a limited supply of wedding bulletin designs from which to choose; however, you can purchase designs of your choice.

### **Scripture Passages Especially Appropriate for Marriage**

Psalm 33, 100, 117, 127, 128, 136, and 150	Revelation 19:1, 5-9a
Genesis 1:26-31	I John 3:18-24
Genesis 2:18-24	I John 4:7-16
Ruth 1:15-18	Colossians 3:12-17
Song of Solomon 2:10-13	Matthew 5:1-12a
Song of Solomon 8:7	Matthew 13-15
Isaiah 63:7-9	Matthew 19:3-6
Jeremiah 31:31-32a, 33-34a	Matthew 22:35-40
Romans 12:1-2, 9-13	Mark 10:6-9
I Corinthians 12:31 - 13:13	John 2:1-11
Ephesians 3:14-19	John 15:9-12, 9-17
Ephesians 5:21-33	

### **Hymns Especially Appropriate for Marriage**

(Numbers are taken from the Evangelical Lutheran Worship)

Hear Us Now, Our God and Father # 585  
Let All Things Now Living # 881  
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling # 631  
Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee # 836  
Now Thank We All Our God # 839 or #840  
Jesus Come! For We Invite You # 312  
Beloved, God=s Chosen # 648  
Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life # 816  
O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright #308  
Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness #488  
This Is A Day, Lord, Gladly Awaited #586

## Pricing

All fees must be paid using separate checks to the church and each individual. The balance of all fees is due at the rehearsal. The couple will arrange with all other musicians to pay them for their services.

Fee	Member	Non-Member
Deposit*	\$50	\$100
Church Building Usage Fee (inc. deposit)	N/A	\$300
Organist/Pianist (if requested and available)	\$150	\$150
Pastor/Presiding Minister**	N/A	\$325
Pastor/Presiding Minister (without counseling)	N/A	\$150
Pre-Marital Counseling Only	N/A	\$175

*\*The deposit is due when your date has been approved by Acacia Park Lutheran Church. Your wedding date is considered confirmed once the church has received your deposit. Acacia Park reserves the right to keep the deposit for violation of any of the above policies and any other like cause for which Acacia Park deems money damages are reasonable. Otherwise, members will have their deposit returned and non-members will have the deposit applied to their fee for the use of the church*

*\*\*Includes wedding planning, pre-marital counseling, rehearsal, wedding service*

Members of Acacia Park Lutheran Church are entitled to the use of the church facilities and the congregational ministry time of the Pastor without charge. Many couples choose to give the Pastor at Acacia Park an honorarium or gift.