

Interim Ministry Resources

Chapter 3 Worship

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Occasional Services for the Assembly

Blessed by the Presence of God: Liturgies for Occasional Services by F. Russell Mitman (Author)

Blessed by the Presence of God: Liturgies for Occasional Services is a continuation of the Russell Mitman's *Immersed in the Splendor of God: Resources for Worship Renewal*. *Blessed by the Presence of God: Liturgies for Occasional Services* features alternative liturgies rich in multi-sensory expressions for worship experiences traditionally called occasional services: baptism; marriage; anointing and healing; dying and burial rites; Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday; penitence and forgiveness; the Way of the Cross; morning and evening prayer; and more.

<http://www.amazon.com/Blessed-Presence-God-Liturgies-Occasional/dp/0829817530>

https://lightjourney.org/detail.asp?z=Pastors_Page&x=psuccp

<https://www.amazon.com/F.-Russell-Mitman/e/B001JSBYZC>

http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/291105.F_Russell_Mitman

Images for F. Russell Mitman (Author)

Images for Liturgies for Occasional Services by F. Russell Mitman (Author)

Blessings & consecrations: A book of occasional services (Supplemental worship resources) United Methodist Church, United Methodist Church (U.S.)

<http://www.amazon.com/Blessings-consecrations-occasional-Supplemental-resources/dp/0687036267>

Images for Blessings & consecrations: A book of occasional services

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/book-of-worship-resources-now-available-online-at-no-cost>

<http://www.umc.org/topics/worship-resources>

Book of Occasional Services | Cokesbury

The Book of Occasional Services provides worship services for many important and widely used services that are not included in the Book of Common Worship such as ordination, dedication, and anniversaries.

<http://bookoforder.info/Book-of-Occasional-Services.pdf>

<https://www.cokesbury.com/product/9780664500986/book-of-occasional-services/>

http://www.pghpresbytery.org/forms/pdfs/com/book_of_occasional_services.pdf

Images for Book of Occasional Services | Cokesbury

Evangelical Lutheran Worship Occasional Services for the Assembly

Evangelical Lutheran Worship Occasional Services for the Assembly is the second volume of occasional services, readings, and prayers to be published. Commended for use by the ELCA Church Council in March 2009, this volume contains services relating to congregational life and the church's ministries. The volume is in a larger format suitable for use in worship, with a durable hard cover in the deep red color and convenient ribbons. This book will be invaluable to pastors and other worship leaders as they conduct services uniting the larger church with the local congregation.

<http://store.augsburgfortress.org/store/product/8432/Evangelical-Lutheran-Worship-Occasional-Services-for-the-Assembly>

<http://www.amazon.com/Evangelical-Lutheran-Occasional-Services-Assembly/dp/0806696354>

Images for Evangelical Lutheran Worship Occasional Services for the Assembly

Lutheran Book of Worship: Occasional Services | Augsburg Fortress

Orders and rituals to dedicate property and to set persons in positions of leadership, resources for ministry to the sick, dying, and grieving, and materials for use by the congregation for special circumstances and settings.

<http://store.augsburgfortress.org/store/product/2434/Lutheran-Book-of-Worship-Occasional-Services>

<http://www.amazon.com/Occasional-Services-Companion-Lutheran-Worship/dp/0800633903>

Images for Lutheran Book of Worship: Occasional Services

[PDF]the book of occasional services - The Reformed Episcopal Church

The Standing Liturgical Commission (SLC) of the Reformed Episcopal Church is pleased to present this Book of Occasional Services to the church. The SLC recognizes that there are many events and occasions commonly observed in the life of the church, for which the standard Book of Common Prayer does not provide a form for liturgical expression.

<http://rechurch.org/documents/Book-of-Occasional-Services.pdf>

Images for book of occasional services - The Reformed Episcopal Church

The Book of Occasional Services 2003 Edition: Church Publishing

This new edition includes the liturgies for Discernment for a New Church Mission; A Liturgy for Commissioning a Church Planter, Missioner or Mission Team; A Liturgy for the Opening of a New Congregation; Setting Apart Secular Space for Sacred Use; a new Litany for the Mission of the Church; and a variety of Church Planting collects, blessings and other prayers, and hymn suggestions.

This new material, authorized by the 2003 General Convention, is published in English and Spanish.

<https://www.amazon.com/Book-Occasional-Services-2003/dp/0898694094>

<https://www.churchpublishing.org/products/index.cfm?fuseaction=add&productID=143>

<https://www.riteseries.org/brain/bos/>

Images for The Book of Occasional Services 2003 Edition: Church Publishing

Marriage

Christian Marriage

Marriage is a service of worship in which the invited guests make for a gathered worship assembly. Marriage is meant to be a glad occasion overflowing with joy, and those who celebrate rejoice in the gifts of God – life, health, strength, sexuality, the family – all that the Creator declared from the beginning to be very good. Marriage is essentially a covenant of fidelity between a man and a woman grounded in the steadfast love of God. Even as God has given God's own person in Jesus Christ, so husband and wife give themselves to each other in response to God's love for them. In marriage, two people are joined, and it is in God's steadfast love that the covenant of fidelity as well as the emotions of love are rooted. In the flux of experience, one thing holds true – the vows of fidelity grounded in the love of God which abides forever. God has come to us in the person of Jesus Christ in order that we might have life in all its fullness. Only when the marriage is rooted in the person of Jesus Christ can it reach its intended fulfillment.

A Church Wedding

A wedding is, first, a service of worship of God who calls a man and woman together in marriage. It is important that your marriage begins in the church. This setting has real meaning because the church is the place where God's people come together and corporately ask God's blessing on this union and thank God for that blessing. Recognizing that God ordains marriage will give a clearer vision of what the wedding service should be.

Marriage Service

The order of service for a Christian marriage within the Lutheran church is provided in the *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. This marriage service is a service of worship, a sacred rite. As in any service of worship, the music is to be chosen with care and discrimination. Since the assembled people of God join with the bride and groom and ask for God's blessing as a new home is established, the music should accentuate the reverence of the service. The selections should be of high musical quality. The texts should correspond to the themes which are inherent. The marriage service reflects the relationship of the bride and groom to the Lord Jesus Christ. As such, it is not meant to become a display or production to impress the gathered people or to conform to social conventions.

Who may be married?

The primary obligation is to provide the service of marriage to active worshipping members of the congregation and their children. Requests to officiate at the weddings of those who are not active members will be acted upon at the discretion of the pastor.

[Above adapted from]

[Lutheran Book of Worship: Manual on the Liturgy by Carlos R. Messerli \(Author\); Philip H. Pfatteicher \(Author\)](http://store.augsburgfortress.org/store/product/5356/Lutheran-Book-of-Worship-Manual-on-the-Liturgy)
<http://store.augsburgfortress.org/store/product/5356/Lutheran-Book-of-Worship-Manual-on-the-Liturgy>

Pre-marriage Counseling

This congregation desires that couples receive marriage preparation that emphasizes lifelong commitment rather than simply wedding day planning. This congregation wants to foster loving, caring, mutual, and lasting marital unions under God. Strong marriages provide the foundation for healthy families, strong congregations, and vital communities. Time with the pastor will focus on the marriage relationship within the context of the Christian faith as well as wedding planning.

Couples are expected to complete a pre-marriage counseling for couples offered by Lutheran Social Services.

Pre-marriage Counseling - Lutheran Social Services

You may be ready for the wedding, but are you prepared for marriage?

Pre-marriage counseling helps you prepare for a life-long, enriching marriage with the person you love. It gives you the opportunity to get to know your future spouse better, identify potential challenges in your marriage, and problem-solve roadblocks to happiness.

Pre-marriage topics include:

Expectations and roles in marriage, communication styles, negotiation and conflict management, finances and budgeting, love and intimacy, spirituality and faith in marriage

<https://www.lsswis.org/LSS/Programs-Services/Mental-Health/Counseling/Premarriage-Counseling>
[Images for Pre-marriage Counseling - Lutheran Social Services](#)

Themes

The Merciful Word – It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner. (Genesis 2:18)

The Committed Marriage – For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. (Ephesians 5:31)

Free and Equal in Christ – As many of you were baptized into Christ have clothed yourself with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:27-28)

Marriage as Discipleship – We love because he first loved us. (1 John 4:19)

Blessed Be the Tie that Binds – Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who builds his house on a rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on a rock. (Matthew 7:24-25)

Known and Being Known – I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well. (Psalm 139:14)

Biblical Readings

First Reading

Genesis 1:26-31	Creation of man in the image of God
Genesis 2:18-21	Creation of woman. The two become one flesh
Ruth 1:15-18	Entreat me not to leave you
Ecclesiastes 4:9-11	Two are better than one
Solomon 8:6-7	Many waters cannot quench love
Isaiah 40:27-31	They who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength
Isaiah 63:7-9	A prayer remembering former blessings
Jeremiah 31:31-34	The Lord will make a new covenant

Psalm

Psalm 33	Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord
Psalm 85:10-13	Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet
Psalm 100	Make a joyful noise to the Lord
Psalm 117	A universal call to praise
Psalm 128	The blessedness of a God fearing home
Psalm 134	A liturgy of blessing
Psalm 136:1-3	For his steadfast love endures forever
Psalm 150	A universal hymn of praise

Second Reading

Romans 7:1-7	An analogy of marriage
Romans 8:31-39	Our confidence in God
Romans 12:1-2, 9-18	The fruit of salvation in daily life
Romans 15:5-6	Live in harmony with one another
1 Corinthians 11:31-13:13	Love is the greatest gift
Galatians 3:26-29	One in Christ Jesus
Ephesians 3:14-19	Grounds for marriage and family
Ephesians 5:21-33	The Christian household
Philippians 2:1-4	Being of the same mind
Philippians 4:4-7	Keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus
Colossians 3:12-17	Characteristics of God's chosen ones
1 John 3:18-24	Love one another
1 John 4:7-12	Love is of God

Gospel

Matthew 5:1-12a	The beatitudes
Matthew 5:13-16	Let your light so shine before others
Matthew 7:21, 24-27	Contrast of the wise and foolish
Matthew 19:4-6	Jesus' teaching on marriage
Matthew 22:35-40	The great commandment
Mark 10:6-9	No longer two but one
John 2:1-10	Wedding at Cana
John 15:9-12	Love one another
John 17:20-26	Jesus' prayer for the church

Promise of Support by Parents of the Couple

Will the parents of *(name)* and *(name)* please stand.

In the past, you have known and loved your son and daughter as individual persons. Now they have become joined together in marriage. Will you give them your blessing as they now have committed themselves to one another? And, while respecting the priority of this new relationship, will you nonetheless assure them of your continuing love, good wishes and prayers, and will you do all that you can to encourage them and affirm them as they have joined their lives together? If so, please respond, "We will."

Promise of Parental Faithfulness in a Blended Family

(name) I promise to receive you into my life, my prayers and my care. I will love you and strive to be an example of grace for you. I will support decisions made by your *mother/father* on your behalf and always encourage your growth and well-being. Your *mother/father* and I love you.

(A cross on a chain may be placed around the child's neck.)

Remembering the Departed

We remember all who have lived in faith, all who have peacefully died, and especially those most dear to us who rest in you... Give us in time our portion with those who have trusted in you and have striven to do your holy will.

Music

The Christian wedding is a service of worship. Music is to be chosen that will point to God and show evidence of a Christian commitment. There is room for a variety of musical styles and personal taste, but all music should lend itself to the criteria of appropriateness for worship. Music should reflect a distinctively Christian content. Keep in mind the following statement of the Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship: "Music selected for weddings should embody high standards of quality and, in general, reflect the praise of God, God's steadfast love in Christ as the foundation of and model for marriage, and the asking of God's presence and blessing." Approximately 20 minutes of gathering music precedes the wedding service, which can include organ, vocal, instrumental, or a combination. The music and words should honor the God in whose name we gather. Popular, secular music is usually not appropriate for worship. It is suggested that such music be played at the reception. Initial screening of the music can be done asking the following questions:

Does the text clearly reflect a Christian view of love and marriage?

Does the text speak the name of Christ or God?

Does the text convey the praise of God that is essential to service or worship?

Congregation Hymns from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

308 O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright
312 Jesus, Come! For We Invite You
488 Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness
502 The King of Love My Shepherd Is
585 Hear Us Now, Our God and Father
586 This Is a Day, Lord, Gladly Awaited
631 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
648 Beloved, God's Chosen
781 Children of the Heavenly Father
816 Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life
835 All Creatures of Our God and King
836 Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee
840 Now Thank We All Our God
868 Praise My Soul, the King of Heaven
881 Let All Things Now Living

Recommended organ music for processions

Canon in D - Pachelbel
Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring - Bach
March (from Occasional Oratorio) - Handel
Prince of Denmark's March (Trumpet Voluntary) - Clarke/Purcell
Processional in C - Hopson
Processional (from Water Music Suite) - Handel
Trumpet March - Lully-Wolff
Trumpet Tune in C - Lau
Solemn Processional (from Water Music) - Handel
Wedding Processional and Air - Bach-Leupold

Recommended organ music for recessionals

Allegro (from Symphony #4) - Boyce
Allegro Maestoso (Water Music) - Handel
God of Grace arr. - Manz
Hornpipe (from Water Music) - Handel
Psalm 19 - Marcello
Prelude in Classic Style - Young
Now Thank We All Our God - Post
Rigaudon - Campra
Rondeau ("Theme from Masterpiece Theater") - Mouret
Trumpet Tune - Clarke/Purcell
Trumpet Finale - Manfredini-Wolf

Inappropriate for use is *Wagner's Wedding March* from the opera *Lohengrin*, and *Mendelssohn's Wedding March* from *Midsummer Night's Dream*, because they are not in keeping with the intent of a worship service to praise and thank God.

[CNP Articles - CNP Feedback - Bad Wedding Marches](#)

<http://www.canticanova.com/articles/feedback/arteg1.htm>

Vocal Music

If you are wondering about whether or not a vocal selection is appropriate for your wedding, here is a tip: If you can answer “yes” to any of the following questions, the music is probably appropriate:

- Does the music/text reflect praise and/or thanksgiving to God?
- Is the song based on, or does it reflect a scriptural theme?
- Is this song in the form of a prayer?

A Nuptial Blessing - Proulx

Love -Van Dyke

The Greatest of These - Moe

Wedding Hymn (Ptolemy) - Handel

Wedding Prayer - Dunlap

On Eagle's Wings - Joncas

My Heart Ever Faithful - J.S. Bach

The Gift of Love - Arr. Hopson

All the Glory - Gaither

Author of Love - Clark

Where there is Love - Haas

Wedding Song - Stookey

Two Candles - Salsbury

God, a Woman, and a Man - Green

Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us - Bradbury

Household of Faith - Lamb/Rosasco

Parents' Prayer - Davis

Irish Blessing - Stookey

In This Very Room - Harris

The Prayer - Sager & Foster

All arrangements regarding wedding music should be made in consultation with the accompanist and pastor. It is best to wait with any specific music plans until meeting with them.

Declaration of Intention

Three options for the couple and three options [for “the families”, “all of you”, and “families, friends, and all those gathered here”] are available in the *Occasional Services for the Assembly* (pages 359-60). Talk with the pastor about which one(s) may be most suitable.

Vows

1. I take you, (*name*), to be my *wife/husband* from this day forward, to join with you and share all that is to come, and I promise to be faithful to you until death parts us. [*Evangelical Lutheran Worship* page 288]
2. I take you, (*name*), to be my *wife/husband*, and these things I promise to you: I will be faithful to you and honest with you; I will forgive you as we have been forgiven; and I will try with you to better understand ourselves, the world and God; through the best and worst of what is to come until death parts us.
3. I take you, (*name*), to be my *wife/husband*. I promise before God and these witnesses to be your faithful husband/wife, to share with you in plenty and want, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, to forgive and strengthen you, and to join with you so that together we may serve God and others as long as we both shall live.
4. (*name*), I take you to be my *wife/husband* from this time onward, to join with you and to share all that is to come, to give and to receive, to speak and to listen, to inspire and to respond, and in all circumstances of our life together to be loyal to you with my whole life and with all my being until death parts us.
5. I, (*name*), take you, (*name*), as my wife/husband in Christian marriage. I take you for what you are, what you will be, and what we will become together. I will love you and trust you above all others as long as I live and I will seek to become one with you as we live together sharing God's love.
6. In the presence of God and this community, I (*name*) take you, (*name*), to be my *wife/husband*, to have and to hold from this day forward, in joy and in sorrow, in plenty and in want, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, as long as we both shall live. This is my solemn vow. [*Evangelical Lutheran Worship* page 288]

Giving of Rings

Two options are available in the *Occasional Services for the Assembly* (page 362). Talk with the pastor about which one may be most suitable.

Wedding Announcement

The couple is asked to be present in worship the Sunday before the wedding where an announcement will be made: (*name*) and (*name*) desire to announce their intention to be married on (*date*) and request your prayers.

Pastor

It is the policy of this congregation that the pastor shall officiate at all weddings as the presiding minister. Requests for another pastor to participate may be made to the presiding minister, who may then choose to extend an invitation to another pastor to serve as an assisting minister.

Wedding Coordinator

A wedding coordinator is used for all weddings that require a rehearsal. The coordinator holds a pre-wedding conference to determine all logistics and details and takes a leadership role in the rehearsal.

Bulletins

Wedding bulletins may be ordered and printed through the wedding coordinator. The pre-printed covers must be ordered at least two weeks prior to the wedding date. A catalog is available in the church office. Wedding information must be in the office at least two weeks prior to the wedding. A copy will be provided for proofreading before the bulletins are printed.

Accompanist

The wedding coordinator can provide the names of organists, pianists, and musicians. Requests for organists/pianists other than one of this church will need to be presented to the officiating pastor.

Rehearsals

The wedding rehearsal usually takes place the evening prior to the day of the wedding for 30 minutes, depending on the size of the wedding party. The date and time of the rehearsal will be determined with the wedding coordinator who will conduct the rehearsal. Members of the wedding party are expected to be present on time. Latecomers can learn from others what is necessary to know. All arrangements for the wedding are to be made ahead of the rehearsal.

Invitations to rehearsal dinner and wedding reception

If the presence of the pastor or musicians is desired at the rehearsal dinner or wedding reception, a written invitation is requested in order to avoid awkward situations of uncertainty at the rehearsal or wedding.

Assisting Roles

The unity and sharing of life that characterizes Christian life can and should be reflected in the structure of your wedding worship. You are encouraged to seek ways to involve family members and friends in the leadership of your wedding and to seek ways to involve the gathered assembly actively in the worship, rather than relegating them to a "spectator" role. Assisting roles for family and friends may include: acolyte, reading scripture, leading a psalm, singing, playing music, assisting minister, etc. Involving the gathered congregation actively might include the singing of a hymn, reading a psalm, and more.

Readers

Readers are permitted for readings other than the Gospel. The pastor reads the Gospel. Because it is important that everyone be able to hear the readings from God's Word, readers should be able to project vocally and speak distinctly. Readers are to be present at the rehearsal to receive instructions and practice.

Flowers and Decorations

Flowers are to be placed on flower stands and not on the altar or other church furniture. Two vases with liners are available on each side of the altar. Arrangements should be made to have the flowers delivered at least two hours prior to the service. If the flowers are left for the Sunday worship, notify the wedding coordinator so that the gift can be acknowledged in the bulletin.

Use of Alcohol and Tobacco

In keeping with the character of the wedding service as an act of worship, no member of the wedding party who is deemed by the pastor to be under the influence of alcohol and/or any illegal substance at the time of the rehearsal or wedding will be allowed to participate. The couple is requested to advise the wedding party of this policy before the time of the rehearsal and wedding.

Photography and Videography

All photographers and videographers are required to follow established guidelines. Photos must be concluded at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the wedding. Photographers and videographers are to speak with the officiating pastor well in advance of the starting time of the service. As is befitting the dignity and beauty of a worship service, all photographers and videographers are to wear attire that is respectful for the occasion. Flash pictures may be taken during the procession and recession. Otherwise, any pictures taken during the service must be taken from the balcony or the back and with available light and without flash. No flashes are allowed during the service. Video equipment is to be set up on the balcony or the back. All video cameras are to remain stationary. Moving about during the worship is prohibited. The following is to be included at the bottom of the worship bulletin: Please no photos or confetti.

Candles

There are two candelabras available for use. Each holds seven standard oil-filled candles. Also available are several different styles of unity candle holders. The couple provides the candles. The holders accommodate two standard tapers and a unity candle 2 to 3 inches in diameter. The meaning of the lighting of the unity candle is this: The two outside candles have been lighted to represent your lives to this moment. They are two distinct lights. To bring joy and growth to your home, there must be the merging of these two lights. This is what Jesus meant when he said, "On this account a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and the two shall be on flesh." From now on your plans shall be mutual, your joys and sorrows shall be shared. As you each take a candle and together light the center one, the center candle represents the union of your lives into "one flesh." As this one light cannot be divided, neither shall your lives be divided, but united in a Christian home. May the radiance of this light be a testimony of your unity in the Lord Jesus Christ. The two outside candles may be lit before the procession by the ushers or by the mother (parents) of the bride and groom.

Roses

Sometimes, the bride and groom have a rose for each of their new families that is given to the parents and they are greeted following the lighting of the Unity Candle.

Sand Pouring

A newer custom is evolving of pouring colored sand together rather than light the unity candle. Usually at least three colors of sand are used: one for each the bride and the groom, and one for the pastor who represent God's presence in your union. Sometimes, the parents of the couple also each have another color which they pour. It is true that your union involves joining not only your lives with God's presence, but the union of your families as well. The pastor pours a little sand first, then the parents the first time, then the bride and groom. They continue to alternate until all the sand is used. The sand is layered nicely. Paraffin or a wax seal on the top layer after the ceremony will keep the arrangement of your marriage celebration intact.

Paraments

Paraments on the altar, pulpit, and lectern reflect the season of the church year and cannot be changed.

Bubbles Only

Rice, birdseed, rose petals, or other forms of confetti are prohibited inside or outside the church building. Bubbles may be used. The couple is asked to advise family, wedding party, and guests of this policy. Should the throwing of any of these items occur, an additional fee for cleanup may be charged. Due to the sensitivity to the environment and birds and animals, releasing of balloons is prohibited.

Aisle Runner

An aisle runner is prohibited because of the difficulty in securely fastening it and because of liability issues due to possible tripping and falling. Originally the white runner signified the purity of the bride, and no one walked on it except the bride and her father.

Beauty in Simplicity

Over the years, weddings have tended to become more elaborate and expensive. This sometimes places a heavy financial burden on the bride and groom and their families. It is well to remember that there can be beauty in simplicity. God is not so much impressed with the elaborateness of the ceremony as God is with the sincerity of our faith and lives.

Marriage License

WHEN AND WHERE DO WE APPLY?

Wisconsin residents who will be getting married in Wisconsin must apply at the County Clerk's office in the county where one of the applicants has lived for the last 30 days; this license is valid anywhere in Wisconsin. If applicants are getting married in Wisconsin, but NEITHER has lived in Wisconsin for the past 30 days, they must apply in person in the county where the ceremony will be performed. Applicants must apply at least 7 calendar days but not more than 35 days before the ceremony. After application, the license is issued 5 days from that date; then the license must be used within 30 days.

INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS NEEDED

(Any documents not in English must be translated and certified) All applicants must exhibit a CERTIFIED BIRTH CERTIFICATE. A certified birth certificate is obtained from the Register of Deeds office in the county in which the birth occurred. Hospital-issued certificates, faxed copies, photocopies and notifications of birth registration are not certified birth certificates and are, therefore, unacceptable. **Passport can be used for someone not born in the United States. Both applicants must apply in person and present photo identification such as a driver's license, passport, alien card or a school ID. Both applicants must present proof of current address. A current address is where an applicant has actually lived for the past 30 days. A driver's license, ID card, lease agreement, bank statement or a bill may be used if it contains a current address. If either applicant has been previously married, a signed and dated copy of the divorce decree, annulment or death certificate from the most recent marriage must be presented. A divorced person may not remarry until 6 months after the granting of the Judgment of Divorce regardless of where the action took place. Applicants need to provide their Social Security numbers. Applicants will be asked the date of the wedding, where the wedding will take place (city, village or township) name of the church, home or facility and the officiant's name, address and phone number.

MINIMUM AGE TO MARRY

No one under the age of 16 can get married in Wisconsin, regardless of circumstances. An applicant between the ages of 16 and 18 must obtain the consent of his/her parents or legal guardians. If both parents are deceased, the appointed legal guardian must sign.

CAN I GET MARRIED IN THE COURTHOUSE?

The Family Court Commissioner, Nathan Novak, performs marriages in the Courthouse at no charge. An appointment may be made by calling (715) 839-6029.

FEES

The marriage license fee is currently \$95.00. There are no refunds and we cannot accept out-of-state checks. Payments can be made by cash, local check or credit card (credit card payments will be charged a convenience fee).

[Marriage License Information | Eau Claire County](https://www.co.eau-claire.wi.us/departments/departments-a-k/county-clerk/marriage-license)

<https://www.co.eau-claire.wi.us/departments/departments-a-k/county-clerk/marriage-license>

Wedding Fees

Wedding Coordinator	\$
Bulletin Covers	\$
Bulletin Printing	\$
Custodial Service	\$
Total	\$

Marriage
of
(name) and (name)
(month, day, year – time)

Gathering
Gathering Music
Entrance
Greeting
Declaration of Intention
Prayer of the Day

Word
First Reading
Psalm
Second Reading
Gospel
Message
Special Music

Marriage
Vows
Giving of Rings
Acclamation
Marriage Blessing
Lighting of the Unity Candle
Prayers
Lord's Prayer

Sending
Blessing
Introduction
Sending Music
Please no photos or confetti.

Planning Worksheet

Wedding date and time
Rehearsal date and time

Groom (name, address, phone, electronic mail)
Parents (names, address, phone, electronic mail)
Home church

Bride (name, address, phone, electronic mail)
Parents (names, address, phone, electronic mail)
Home church

Theme
Vows

First Reading
Psalm
Second Reading
Gospel

Gathering Music
Processional
Hymns
Special Music
Recessional
Sending Music

Accompanist
Musicians

Lighting of Unity Candle
Remembering the Departed
Promise of Support
Promise of Parental Faithfulness
Other

Best Man
Maid/Matron of Honor
Groomsmen
Bridesmaids
Others

After the Wedding

You are invited to remember that worship does not end with the wedding. God can bless your marriage only as you allow God to remain the center of the marriage. Of all the activities that you will be doing together, put worship at the top of your list. Make family worship part of your life together. Learn to pray together in order that prayer may help to sustain you in times when your relationship is tested. There are many aids to family worship.

Now to him who by the power at work within you is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3:20-21)

First Session

- Prayer
- Conversation
- TEACHINGS and PRACTICE on MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, and REMARRIAGE
- TITLE XXIII. The Family Code. Chapter 245 Marriage.
- Lutheran Social Services Pre-Marriage Workshop
- Marriage. *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*.
- Marriage Handbook. [See above.]

Conversation

Date			
Groom	Age	Address	
Church Membership		Pastor	
Bride	Age	Address	
Church Membership		Pastor	
Wedding Date		Time	
Rehearsal Date		Time	
How long a courtship?		Engagement?	
How did you meet?			

What attracted you to each other?

Write what a "Christian Marriage" means to you.

Why do you desired to be married at this time?

Why do you desire a "Church Wedding"?

Keeping in mind the importance of involvement with the people of God for keeping a healthy marriage, what plans do you have for participating in the life of the church after the wedding?

Resources for First Session

Evangelical Lutheran Worship Occasional Services for the Assembly

Marriage

Page 357

<http://store.augsburgfortress.org/store/product/8432/Evangelical-Lutheran-Worship-Occasional-Services-for-the-Assembly>
[Images for Evangelical Lutheran Worship Occasional Services for the Assembly Marriage](#)

Evangelical Lutheran Worship, Pew Edition - Augsburg Fortress

Marriage

Page 286

<https://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/product/7583/Evangelical-Lutheran-Worship-Pew-Edition>
[Images for Evangelical Lutheran Worship, Pew Edition - Augsburg Fortress Marriage](#)

Teachings_Marriage_DivorceALC82.pdf - ELCA Resource Repository

Adopted Sept. 19, 1982, by the Eleventh General Convention of The American Lutheran Church as a statement of policy and practice for this church (GC82.10.104). It replaces the statement "Teachings and Practice on Marriage and Divorce" adopted by the 1964 General Convention (GC64.26.84). Ballot vote tally: Yes 867; No 44.

http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Teachings_Marriage_DivorceALC82.pdf

[Images for TEACHINGS and PRACTICE on MARRIAGE, DIVORCE, and REMARRIAGE American Lutheran Church](#)

TITLE XXIII. The Family Code. Chapter 245 Marriage.

245.001 Title, Intent and construction of chapters 245 to 248. (1) Title Chapters 245 to 248 may be cited as "The Family Code."

(2) Intent. It is the intent of chs. 245 to 248 to promote the stability and best interests of marriage and the family. Marriage is the institution that is the foundation of the family and of society. Its stability is basic to morality and civilization, and of vital interest to society and the state. The consequences of the marriage contract are more significant to society than those of other contracts, and the public interest must be taken into account always. The seriousness of marriage makes adequate premarital counseling and education for family living highly desirable and courses thereon are urged upon all persons contemplating marriage. The impairment or dissolution of the marriage relation generally results in injury to the public wholly apart from the effect upon the parties immediately concerned.

(3) Construction. Chapters 245 to 248 shall be liberally construed to effect the objectives of sub. (2).

245.002 Definitions. (1) Unless the context clearly indicates otherwise "clergyman" in this chapter means spiritual adviser of any religion, whether he is termed priest, rabbi, minister of the gospel, reverend or any other official designation.

(2) In this chapter "church under his ministry" includes any congregation, parish or place of worship at which any clergyman is located or assigned and also any administrative, missionary, welfare or educational agency, institution or organization affiliated with any religious denomination or society in this state.

(3) In this title "void" means null and void and not voidable.

245.01 A civil contract. Marriage, so far as its validity at law is concerned, is a civil contract, to which the consent of the parties capable in law of contracting is essential, and which creates the legal status of husband and wife.

<http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/1969/statutes/statutes/245.pdf>

[Images for TITLE XXIII. The Family Code. Chapter 245 Marriage.](#)

Second Session

- Prayer
- Conversation based on pre-marriage workshop.
- Liturgy as a Model for the Christian Life
- Be Good to Each Other
- The 5 Love Languages
- Wedding planning [Marriage Handbook]

Liturgy as a Model for the Christian Life

“Liturgy” is taken from the Greek word, which means “the work of the people.” Liturgy, then, is not just something we do on Sundays. The order of worship can also be a model for the Christian life. In this way, our worship life and be integrated with all of daily life.

Invocation – We first entered the church through baptism in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Each Sunday we enter into worship in the name of the Triune God. In fact, all of life is meant to be lived out in the name of the Father who created us and sustains us, the Son who saves and redeems us, and the Holy Spirit who gives us faith.

Confession – We open up and confess, like the prodigal son, that ours is willful separation from God and that we constantly need God’s gracious concern and forgiveness offered to us through Jesus Christ. All of life is meant to be characterized by this openness of communication.

Absolution – We experience the gracious acceptance of God in merciful forgiveness. We experience much the same when we are accepted and forgiven by others. Likewise, we are called upon to be forgiving even as we have been forgiven.

Prayer – Conversation is essential to any relationship. Prayer is our lifeline with God. In individual devotion or corporate worship, we pray for, “Lord, have mercy upon us.”

Praise – This is a natural part of our worship experience. It is necessary to look beyond ourselves to the God who created us, to the Son who calls us into relationship with the Father, and to the Holy Spirit who empowers us to live in God’s name. Likewise, it is necessary to look beyond ourselves to show our appreciation to others and, by doing so, to reinforce them as individuals of worth.

Proclamation – This is the revelation from outside ourselves. God has revealed God’s person through the Word of Jesus Christ. The message of the gospel has been transmitted through the preached word and through the faithful witness of God’s people. In hearing what God has done for us, we are also called to be disciples.

Offering – In response to the good news of what God has done for us, we offer ourselves, our time, talents, and possessions. Our whole life is meant to be lived out as an offering of all that we have back to the God who has given to us everything that we are and have.

Eating – Jesus Christ promises to be present in the eating of bread and drinking of wine even as he has commanded us, “This is my body broken for you; this is my blood shed for you. Broken and shed for the forgiveness of sins. Do this for the remembrance of me.” In eating and drinking we do what comes naturally. This is a necessary expression of our fellowship.

Blessing – This is an evidence of a trust relationship. God’s people are sent out with the promise of power and trust and called to serve God in all of life. This is not a closure of the service. Rather, it is the beginning of service in the world!

[Prof. Don Wisner, of Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN, recommended this connection when I was studying there.]

Resources for Second Session

Be Good to Each Other [Lowell Erdahl, Carol Erdahl]

[This book offers sound, down-to-earth advice on topics like expectations, decision making, conflict, communication, intimacy, and more. Questions for discussion are included.]

The first deals with personal role expectations. Each of us expects certain things of ourselves and of our spouses. Some are more important than others. To help each other know what matters most to you, try arranging the following items in order of importance:

- _____ to help earn the family income
- _____ to take some responsibility for meals and house-keeping
- _____ to seek common recreational and cultural interests
- _____ to be a satisfying sexual partner
- _____ to maintain good relations with relatives and friends
- _____ to care for the children
- _____ to be a personal companion
- _____ to promote correct religious faith and values
- _____ to manage the family finances
- _____ to take a leadership role in community and social activities
- _____ to assume the major responsibility for making family decisions

Make two lists. In the first, list them in order of importance for yourself; in the second, in terms of what you expect of your spouse. Don't attempt to guess what you think your partner's order of importance will be. Let your spouse do that for himself or herself.

Do this ranking independently. Add other areas that are important to you; then compare and talk about the things that are most significant to each of you and why. This is not a test. Try to be as honest as possible. If your number one expectation of your spouse is his or her number ten expectation of self, you had better face the difference and seek mutually satisfying accommodation or compromise.

<http://www.amazon.com/Good-Each-Other-Lowell-Erdahl/dp/0806625414>

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=0806625414>

Page 20

https://www.amazon.com/s?ie=UTF8&page=1&rh=n%3A283155%2Cp_27%3ALowell%20Erdahl

Images for Be Good to Each Other [Lowell Erdahl, Carol Erdahl]

Here We Stand Student Book | Augsburg Fortress

The Top 10 Attributes to Look for in a Spouse

Page 225

<http://store.augsburgfortress.org/store/product/8604/Here-We-Stand-Student-Book>

[Images for Here We Stand Student Book | Augsburg Fortress The Top 10 Attributes to Look for in a Spouse](#)

The 5 Love Languages: The Secret to Love that Lasts [Gary D. Chapman]

Marriage should be based on love, right? But does it seem as though you and your spouse are speaking two different languages? *New York Times* bestselling author Dr. Gary Chapman guides couples in identifying, understanding, and speaking their spouse's primary love language—quality time, words of affirmation, gifts, acts of service, or physical touch.

By learning the five love languages, you and your spouse will discover your unique love languages and learn practical steps in truly loving each other. Chapters are categorized by love language for easy reference, and each one ends with specific, simple steps to express a specific language to your spouse and guide your marriage in the right direction. A newly designed love languages assessment will help you understand and strengthen your relationship. You can build a lasting, loving marriage together.

<http://www.amazon.com/The-Love-Languages-Secret-Lasts/dp/0802473156>

<http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/23878688-the-5-love-languages>

<http://www.parable.com/assets/pcom/files/Excerpt/9780802412713.pdf>

<http://www.powells.com/book/five-love-languages-the-secret-to-love-that-lasts-9780802473158>

<https://www.npr.org/books/titles/172575078/the-5-love-languages-the-secret-to-love-that-lasts>
<http://www.5lovelanguages.com/>
<https://www.livinglutheran.org/2017/02/fully-known-fully-loved/>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Five_Love_Languages
<https://www.facebook.com/5LoveLanguages/>
<http://www.covenantcounsel.com/additional-resources/marriage/5-love-languages-secret-love-lasts/>
http://www.newreleasetoday.com/authordetail.php?aut_id=60
http://www.moodyconferences.com/con_mainpage.aspx?id=7144
<http://www.kevinhalloran.net/what-are-the-five-love-languages-summary/>
https://readinggraphics.com/book-summary-the-5-love-languages/?ref=StoreYa&utm_source=stry&utm_medium=trafb&utm_campaign=storeya10
<http://vesselproject.com/recommended-5-love-languages-gary-d-chapman/>
<https://careynieuwhof.com/episode250/> CNLP 250: GARY CHAPMAN ON HOW THE FIVE LOVE LANGUAGES CAN IMPROVE EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AT WORK, MAKE YOUR MARRIAGE BETTER AND FOSTER A BETTER RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR KIDS
<https://www.facebook.com/5LoveLanguages/>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w2Nscf6D7nQ> 5 Love Languages - The Secret to Love that Lasts - YouTube
Images for 5 Love Languages - The Secret to Love that Lasts - YouTube
<https://twitter.com/drgarychapman?lang=en>
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gary_Chapman_\(author\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gary_Chapman_(author))
<https://www.amazon.com/Gary-Chapman/e/B011AEQ73Q>
http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/622.Gary_Chapman
Images for Gary D. Chapman
Images for The 5 Love Languages: The Secret to Love that Lasts [Gary D. Chapman]

Resources

[PDF] [A Guide to Your Wedding at Faith Lutheran Church](#)

<http://www.faithlutheran.org/weddingguide09.pdf>

Images for Guide to Your Wedding

http://www.flc-s.org/uploads/3/1/8/9/31892407/wedding_guidelines.pdf

<http://oslme.com/lutheran/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Our-Saviors-Wedding-Guide-2016.pdf>

<http://gracelutheranchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Wedding-Guidelines-updated-Sept2017.pdf>

[PDF] [A Social Statement on Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust](#)

IV. Sexuality and social structures that enhance social trust

Lutherans believe that God works through social structures for the good of society. The Lutheran Confessions identify marriage and the family as foundational structures that support human community.

Marriage: shelter and context for trust

<http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/SexualitySS.pdf> Page 15

https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/SexualitySS_Summary.pdf

<https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Human-Sexuality>

http://religiousinstitute.org/denom_statements/human-sexuality-gift-and-trust-trust-and-human-sexuality/

4 Changes Senior Pastors Must Make to Break the 200 Barrier

3. Eliminate Time Wasters

• **Don't do "drive-by" weddings.** Only agree to marry couples where one of them is an active member of the church. Reject every wedding inquiry of people who found you in the phone book. Pastors think weddings are great outreach events, when they're usually not. Also, require all couples to do six sessions of pre-marital counseling with a paid licensed counselor instead of with you.

<http://seniorpastorcentral.com/703/4-changes-senior-pastors-must-make-break-200-barrier/>

In Love and Faithfulness: Planning for Marriage, Couples Book by Philip H. Pfatteicher (Author) - Augsburg Fortress

This illustrated resource uses the marriage rite from *Lutheran Book of Worship* as a structure for planning premarital counseling and the wedding ceremony.

<http://store.augsburgfortress.org/store/product/5207/In-Love-and-Faithfulness-Planning-for-Marriage-Couples-Book>

<https://www.amazon.com/love-faithfulness-Planning-marriage-according/dp/B0006YG4FA>

Images for *In Love and Faithfulness: Planning for Marriage, Couples Book* by Philip H. Pfatteicher (Author) - Augsburg Fortress

Love and Faithfulness: A Marriage Planning Handbook - Augsburg Fortress

Love and Faithfulness provides couples with brief explanations and the entire text of the *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* marriage service, as well as more recent supplemental resources. Twelve reflections encourage couples to plan the marriage service and prepare for married life together. Pastors will find this resource invaluable for working with those preparing for marriage. It encourages couples to have conversations about the marriage service, faith, and daily life within the context of worship and the church. A free, downloadable pastor's guide is available.

<https://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/product/24278/Love-and-Faithfulness-A-Marriage-Planning-Handbook>

Images for *Love and Faithfulness: A Marriage Planning Handbook* - Augsburg Fortress

Marriage: A Worship Handbook by Karen Bockelman (Author) | Augsburg Fortress

One of life's most important passages, the marriage ceremony is a moment of special spiritual meaning. This handbook helps you understand the liturgy of marriage — its meaning, its history, its possibilities — to allow you to experience, understand, or even create a ceremony that satisfies the souls of worshipers and participant alike.

<http://store.augsburgfortress.org/store/product/6487/Marriage>

<http://www.amazon.com/Marriage-Worship-Handbook-Augsburg-Fortress/dp/0806642815>

https://books.google.com/books/about/Marriage.html?id=qj3_tOAUbmC

http://www.thelutheran.org/article/article.cfm?article_id=3053

http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/1342080.Karen_Bockelman

Images for *Marriage: A Worship Handbook* by Karen Bockelman (Author) | Augsburg Fortress

Ministry Resource Guides Index - LifeandLeadership.com

Weddings

Weddings, Resources

Pastoral Care

Pre-Marital Counseling

<http://www.lifeandleadership.com/ministry-resource-guide-index/>

<http://www.lifeandleadership.com/ministry-resources/ministry-resource-guides-quick-list.html>

Images for Ministry Resource Guides Index - LifeandLeadership.com Weddings

Nine Key Issues for Pastors Regarding Weddings – Rainer on Leadership #240 – ThomRainer.com

Discussions on pastors and weddings as well as what to watch for, what to have prepared, and what to avoid.

<http://thomrainer.com/2016/07/nine-issues-pastors-regarding-weddings/>

Images for *Nine Key Issues for Pastors Regarding Weddings* – ThomRainer.com

<http://thomrainer.com/2014/04/letter-gave-couples-wanted-perform-wedding-ceremony/>

<http://thomrainer.com/2016/05/fifteen-crazy-things-happened-weddings/>
<https://thomrainer.com/2017/12/eight-reflections-40-years-marriage/>
Images for thom rainer (author)

Officiant Instruction for Completion of Marriage License

GENERAL AND DETAILED INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE BRIDE, GROOM, AND OFFICIANT FOR COMPLETING THE MARRIAGE LICENSE AND THE ORIGINAL CERTIFICATE OF MARRIAGE

<http://www.outagamie.org/modules/showdocument.aspx?documentid=23609>
Images for Officiant Instruction for Completion of Marriage License

Our Sunday Morning Wedding | Adam J. Copeland

For us – and I'm just going to write all these comments from a very personal point of view and I'm not saying everyone should do what we did or think as I think – anyways, for us, having our wedding during Sunday morning worship just made sense. Neither of us likes drawing attention to ourselves, so the idea of a traditional wedding put us off. We both hold worship in high regard, and we didn't want our wedding to be confused as a gathering around the bride and groom, rather than a gathering around the Word to worship the Triune God. We both had strong relationships with the congregation, and the pastor and session proved fully supportive. A Sunday morning wedding is not for everybody, but it may be for some. Here's what ours looked like.

<http://www.adamjcopeland.com/2008/09/03/september-2-2006-my-sunday-morning-wedding/>
Images for Our Sunday Morning Wedding | Adam J. Copeland

Overview - PREPARE/ENRICH - Embrace the Journey

The #1 PREMARITAL AND MARRIAGE ASSESSMENT FOR OVER 35 YEARS.

https://www.prepare-enrich.com/webapp/pecv/home/template/DisplaySecureContent.vm?id=pecv*home*homepage.html
<https://www.facebook.com/prepare.enrich/>
Images for PREPARE/ENRICH - Embrace the Journey

Preaching the Wedding Sermon [Dr. Susan Hedahl]

This complete resource for preparing wedding sermons includes sections on proclamation, history, and choosing texts, as well as sample sermons.

<http://www.amazon.com/Preaching-Wedding-Sermon-Susan-Hedah/dp/0827229607>
<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/preaching-the-wedding-sermon-susan-k-hedah/1003790104>
<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=0827230974>
http://books.google.com/books/about/Preaching_the_Wedding_Sermon.html?id=A8lg-ldZEvgC
<https://www.workingpreacher.org/craft.aspx?post=1841>
<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/author/rev-dr-susan-k-hedah/>
https://www.workingpreacher.org/profile/default.aspx?uid=2-hedah_susan1
<https://www.amazon.com/Susan-K.-Hedah/e/B001K8PIJY>
Images for Preaching the Wedding Sermon [Dr. Susan Hedahl]

Premarital Guidance (Creative Pastoral Care and Counseling) by Charles W. Taylor - Augsburg Fortress

Here's *the* authoritative source for counseling couples who plan to wed. Taylor discusses the four aspects of premarital care; skills for couple care; counseling session components and topics; common couple tasks; the teaching of Scripture; and wedding preparation. He also helps you establish church policies for counseling and the wedding service itself.

Deeply rooted in the traditions of the church, Charles Taylor brings both the resources of faith and the skills of contemporary psychology to bear in the crucial arena of premarital guidance. Taylor also provides helpful guidelines for churches in establishing congregational policies for both premarital counseling and the design of the wedding service itself. An ideal resource for clergy, premarital counselors, and congregational wedding committees, *Premarital Guidance* provides the theological and practical knowledge and skills necessary for guiding those seeking marriage in the church.

<https://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/product/2056/Premarital-Guidance>
<https://www.christianbook.com/premarital-guidance-charles-taylor/9780800627126/pd/27121>
<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=1451405073>
<https://www.amazon.com/Premarital-Guidance-Creative-Pastoral-Counseling/dp/0800627121>
<https://www.abebooks.com/9780800627126/Premarital-Guidance-Creative-Pastoral-Care-0800627121/plp>
https://books.google.com/books/about/Premarital_Guidance.html?id=02Qw_HsGNC8C
<http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/premarital-guidance-charles-w-taylor/1100609167>
<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/2879528-premarital-guidance>
<http://arc.episcopalchurch.org/episcopal-life/For3'01.html>
<http://fortresspress.com/author/charles-w-taylor>
<https://www.amazon.com/Charles-W.-Taylor/e/B001KHNO2M>
https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/1177149.Charles_W_Taylor

Images for Charles W. Taylor, author premarital guidance

Images for Premarital Guidance (Creative Pastoral Care and Counseling) by Charles W. Taylor - Augsburg Fortress

<https://www.logos.com/product/4739/fortress-press-creative-pastoral-care-and-counseling-series>
<http://store.afcanada.com/store/productfamily/87/Creative-Pastoral-Care-and-Counseling-series>

Images for Creative Pastoral Care and Counseling

Preparing for Marriage: A Guide for Christian Couples by Donald J. Luther (Editor) - Augsburg Fortress

An effective resource for pastors and counselors to use in premarital counseling. This practical workbook helps engaged couples explore their expectations, potentially troublesome issues, and the meaning and challenges of marriage. Only one book per couple is needed.

<https://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/product/5498/Preparing-for-Marriage>
<https://www.amazon.com/Preparing-Marriage-Guide-Christian-Couples/dp/0806625694>
<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/16183440-preparing-for-marriage>
<http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/preparing-for-marriage-donald-j-luther/1100072427>
https://books.google.com/books/about/Preparing_for_Marriage.html?id=efG39xLcP84C
<http://store.afcanada.com/store/contributor/989/Donald-J-Luther>

Images for Preparing for Marriage: A Guide for Christian Couples by Donald J. Luther (Editor) - Augsburg Fortress

SAMPLE LETTER OF SPONSORSHIP FOR A NON-WISCONSIN RESIDENT MARRIAGE OFFICIANT

By state statute 765.17, a letter of sponsorship is required for a non-Wisconsin resident clergy who is performing a marriage ceremony in the state. That sponsorship letter should:

<http://www.co.manitowoc.wi.us/Upload/5/SampleLetterOfSponsorship.pdf>

The Lutheran Handbook on Marriage by Kristofer Skrade (Editor)

Great for engaged couples, newlyweds, and married couples going on their fiftieth year together, *The Lutheran Handbook on Marriage* brings wit and wisdom to the sometimes frustrating, but gracious gift of marriage.

<http://www.amazon.com/Lutheran-Handbook-Marriage-Kristofer-Skrade/dp/0806652942>
https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/317166.The_Lutheran_Handbook_on_Marriage
<http://store.augsburgfortress.org/store/product/7388/The-Lutheran-Handbook-on-Marriage>
<http://store.augsburgfortress.org/store/contributor/4988/Kristofer-Skrade>
https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/182371.Kristofer_Skrade

Images for The Lutheran Handbook on Marriage by Kristofer Skrade (Editor)

The Pastor's Wedding Planner [Stan Toler]

It's an honor and privilege to be asked to marry a couple, but there's more to performing a wedding than leading the vows and giving the sermon. The minister is also responsible for preparing the couple for marriage and guiding them in creating a ceremony that brings honor to Christ and affirms their commitment to each other. *The Pastor's Wedding Planner* is a beneficial, adaptable resource that will help pastors make every couple's wedding day something special. Perfect for the multi-tasking minister, it outlines every part of the wedding process and includes ideas for a variety of traditional and contemporary ceremony styles. From pre-marital counseling topics and wedding forms to message ideas and outlines for unique ceremonies, this all-inclusive manual makes the minister's job of pronouncing two people 'husband and wife' easier and even more meaningful. Resources include: Pre-marital counseling topics and questions; Suggestions for more than 20 different ceremony styles; Sermon ideas and message outlines on several different themes; Scripture readings, benedictions, and song suggestions; Wedding checklists, building policies, shower ideas, and more

<http://www.amazon.com/Pastors-Wedding-Planner-Stan-Toler/dp/0834124254>
<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/13800431-the-pastor-s-wedding-planner>
<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/pastors-wedding-planner-stan-toler/1013919522>
<http://www.stantoler.com/>
<https://www.facebook.com/DrStanToler/>
<http://www.nazarene.org/organization/board-general-superintendents/gs-emeriti/dr-stan-toler>
<https://www.thefoundrypublishing.com/authors/stan-toler.html>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stan_Toler
<https://www.amazon.com/Stan-Toler/e/B001HCX8L8>
http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/29613.Stan_Toler

Images for Pastor's Wedding Planner [Stan Toler]

The Social Dimension of Marriage – Let's Talk

If the church has any role to play in addressing the genuine crisis of marriage in our society, it should offer counter-cultural resources. Pastoral counseling needs to alert couples that marriage cannot deliver many of their expectations unless their expectations change. Wedding rites need to highlight the social dimension of marriage (as many have striven to do) in the choice of readings, hymns and songs, the scope of the intercessory prayers, and the celebration of Holy Communion where appropriate. Marriage does not concern only the bride and groom. It affects the wider family and, at least in the economic consequences of marital breakups, the wider society. Brides and grooms, husbands and wives, have social as well as personal responsibilities.

<http://mcsletstalk.org/hispanic-latino-theology-ministry/the-social-dimension-of-marriage/>

Images for The Social Dimension of Marriage – Let's Talk

Synod Resource Center - Worship, Music and Art

<http://synodresourcecenter.org/wma/worship/Weddings>
<http://synodresourcecenter.org/wma/worship/occasional/weddings/>

Images for Synod Resource Center - Worship, Music and Art Weddings

[PDF]View Trinity's Wedding Planner - Trinity Lutheran Church - Eau Claire, WI

Our Wedding Planner includes detailed information on scheduling and planning your wedding.

[Trinity Lutheran Church | Serving in Christ's Love](#)

<http://www.trinity-ec.org/> Worship/Baptisms, Weddings, and Funerals/Weddings

<http://www.trinity-ec.org/lifestages.phtml>

[View Trinity's Wedding Planner](#) [View Sample Bulletin](#)

<http://www.trinity-ec.org/forms/Weddingbooklet.pdf>

Images for church wedding planner

http://storage.cloversites.com/centrallutheranchurch/documents/central_wedding_planning_guide_0912.pdf

<https://www.bethel-madison.org/weddings>

https://www.zionlc.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/planning_your_wedding.pdf

<http://www.flcj.org/wp-content/uploads/FLC-Wedding-Planner-2017.pdf>

http://woodlakechurch.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/woodlake_wedding_planning_guide_2014.pdf

<http://www.osllincoln.org/wedding-guidelines.html>

<http://oslcsstillwater.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Wedding-Booklet-Current.pdf>

<https://www.kingofglorybillings.com/Weddings>

<http://www.trinitylutheranfc.org/weddings.html>

Weddings: Participate as if the health & happiness of the couple depended on it - The Lutheran Magazine

First, let's get an idea of what is actually happening in a Christian wedding. The "Worship why" this month is: "Why put weddings in the context of the church's liturgy?" Or, put another way, "Why should weddings be worship?"

Here's my answer: Because marriage has the capability of expressing the paschal mystery of Christ: his life, death and resurrection. In fact, the "Marriage Blessing" from [Evangelical Lutheran Worship](#) makes it clear: "Most gracious God, we give you thanks for your tender love in sending Jesus Christ to come among us, to be born of a human mother, and to endure the cross for our sake, that we may have abundance of life" (page 289). The paschal mystery is, in essence, the celebration of God's love, a love that can be experienced in many ways. As people "fall in love" it involves their whole being—body, mind and spirit—in a relationship.

http://www.thelutheran.org/article/article.cfm?article_id=7113

Images for Weddings: Participate as if the health & happiness of the couple depended on it - The Lutheran Magazine

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/contact-us/>

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/issues/>

(Weddings that are more than) One Perfect Day: Helping Couples Create Something Inspiring

Perhaps we who officiate at weddings need to remember that, even if a couple has come to us as an afterthought, and even if the wedding ceremony seems less important to them than finding the right wedding rings, we still hold the great privilege of pointing to holy things especially in the throes of busy wedding planning. We still have opportunities for sitting with a couple and lifting up the powerful meaning and beauty of the vows they will exchange. The trick is to avoid acting as if the ceremony is inconsequential to us, even if this is what the bride and groom appear to believe.

<https://alban.org/archive/weddings-that-are-more-than-one-perfect-day-helping-couples-create-something-inspiring/>

<https://alban.org/category/care-ministries/>

Wedding Rehearsal

[Invite people to the front of the sanctuary. Start rehearsal on time. Latecomers can catch up when they arrive.]

Good evening and welcome to (name) Lutheran Church.

This evening we prepare for the wedding of (name) and (name).

You as a bridal party will be taking part in this occasional worship service of the church.

This couple desires to declare their lifelong faithfulness to each other before God and the gathered assembly.

I want to welcome you to (name) Lutheran Church. I am Pastor Lowell Bolstad. I have been meeting with the couple in pre-marriage conversations and look forward to officiating at the wedding.

I would like to begin with prayer. (Adaptation of the prayer of the day from the service of Marriage.)

In order to prepare for this worship service, I would like to ask some questions:

Who are the people in the bridal party? I invite you to stand and introduce yourself, share your connection to the bridal couple, and the part you will be playing in this worship service.

What is a Christian marriage? It is important to be clear about this. It is a service of worship. God calls us together in this occasional worship service. It is meant to be a glad occasion rejoicing in the gifts of God – friendship, life, health, intimacy, friends, congregation, and community. God has given God's person in Jesus Christ. We seek to keep alive the vision of what is happening.

What is the form of the worship? A marriage is a drama in which a wedding group comes out of the gathered assembly and presents themselves at the altar. The altar is where important events take place. There is a greeting. Then the declaration of intention. Followed by the prayer of the day. Then there are readings and a message. Musical selections are included in the service. The vows, giving of rings, and acclamation come in response to the proclamation of the word. Then the marriage blessing, prayers, Lord's Prayer, Blessing, and Introduction of the couple. Then the wedding group departs, and the assembly greets them individually.

Who makes up the marriage service? Invited guests comprise the gathered assembly. Ushers carry out the ministry of welcome and set the tone. Musicians provide the gift of music. Parents and family out of which a man and woman come together to join with each other. Wedding group to stand up and hopefully to stand with the couple in the future. Then, as the pastor, I will officiate at the service.

How do we go about the marriage service? This is probably the question you have been waiting for. The ushers light the candles 20 minutes before the service, greet and welcome the people and usher them to their seats. Traditionally the groom's side is on the right and the bride's side on the left facing the altar unless the decision is made to seat them together to avoid an imbalance. Ushers may need to be assertive in ushering people in so that everyone gets in on time. At ten minutes prior to the service, the wedding group appears in the gathering area. At five minutes prior, grandparents and parents are ushered in. Then the groom ushers in his parents on the hour. The processional continues by pairs. The recessional happens in the inverse order. We will now practice the processional and go through the service.

Weddings and Pastoral Collegiality

Many times, I have expedited requests for another pastor to participate in a wedding by agreeing for that pastor to be an assisting minister and giving the message while, as the called pastor, I remained as the presiding pastor.

But of all worship services, weddings are fraught with the most issues. Sometimes, couples think of an interim pastor as a temporary fill-in and do not take the pastor seriously. In one congregation, I heard of two couples who were thinking of asking another pastor to officiate at the wedding at the church. The administrative assistant was able to head off one family who was thinking of having a pastor from a neighboring small city officiate. The other wedding got more complicated. I had called the couple when I first came and left a message saying that I was available for pre-marital conversations. The couple never got back to me. I talked with the neighboring pastor in a small village in question, after hearing about the couple wanting him to officiate at the wedding. I called him at that time and explained church protocol and respect for the office of pastoral ministry. This couple never called me, but I heard from the father of the bride that the couple talked with the neighboring pastor in the small village. I waited for the neighboring pastor to call, but when it did not happen, I called him to explain church protocol again. He stated that the couple had led him to believe that they had received permission when I had yet to talk with them. He then called the couple and told them that he would have to put the pre-marital conversations on hold. The bride called me, and I explained church protocol. She wanted the neighboring pastor to officiate without my involvement and hoped that I would make an exception. She said she would have to think it over. She never got back to me. The neighboring pastor met me at a synod event and asked if he could continue pre-marital conversations. I again explained church protocol. Later that month, the neighboring pastor called me and curtly informed me that he had agreed to officiate at the wedding for this couple at a large church in a neighboring big city. It was evident that he was not interested in conversation but only in informing me.

For a neighboring pastor to agree to officiate at a wedding for a member of another congregation is highly problematic. This kind of pastoral action undermines pastoral collegiality and good church protocol. From a systems perspective, whenever there is a third party willing to enable people, it prevents people from having to work things out. A triangle precludes a dyad.

The father of the bride told me that the neighboring pastor had recently officiated at a wedding at the Baptist church in town and could not understand why that was not possible here. The neighboring pastor is not shy about telling other pastors in the conference about all the weddings he has, and I then understood how he had so many weddings. Evidently, he sees no problem with officiating at an occasional service for a member of another church. I knew at the time it would be difficult for the father who was the vice-president of the Congregation Council. I was told that the daughter was used to getting her way.

I called the senior pastor at the church where the wedding was to take place and explained the problems like that in being accommodating makes for the home pastor, and he apologized for not contacting me to find out the other side of the story, but then at the end, told me I should change my policy to allow for others to officiate, which demonstrates to me that he does not understand the importance of pastoral collegiality and problems it creates when people are told they can just go out and get whatever pastor they want. Actually, there were several men who could not say “no” to this assertive woman intent on circumventing the protocol in order to get her way. The former congregation president saw no problem with the neighboring pastor officiating at the wedding. The current congregation president saw no problem with a neighboring pastor officiating at the wedding and was willing to allow it until I explained the importance of church protocol. The current congregation vice-president (who was the father of the bride) waffled back and forth – at one time agreeing that we did not need to create an issue because things were getting back together, but then saying he could not see why it was not possible to let the neighboring pastor officiate. Both the neighboring pastor who agreed to officiate and the big city pastor who allowed the couple to rent the church should know church protocol. I could recount incident after incident since 1990 in interim ministry like this related to the occasional services of weddings and funerals.

As an interim pastor, I see my role to help restore trust and respect in the office of pastoral ministry by adhering to church protocol. If I were to simply accommodate these kinds of requests, it would just make it that much more difficult for the successor pastor. I filed a formal complaint with the bishop in regard to the neighboring pastor who did not respect the integrity of the ministry in another congregation and carried out pre-marital conversations and officiated at a wedding of a member not of his congregation especially when on two occasions church protocol was explained to him.

Resources

Constitution for Synods of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America [S14.14]

Ordained ministers shall respect the integrity of the ministry in congregations which they do not serve and shall not exercise ministerial functions therein unless invited to do so by the pastor, or if there is no duly called pastor, then by the interim pastor in consultation with the Congregation Council.

<http://www.elca.org/Who-We-Are/Our-Three-Expressions/Churchwide-Organization/Office-of-the-Secretary/Synod-Administration/Constitution-for-Synods.aspx>

Letter of Agreement for Interim Pastoral Ministry

The Interim Pastor will:

- B. Preside at worship and administer the sacraments according to the practice of the ELCA.

The Congregation will:

- D. Expect the interim pastor to preside at baptisms, celebrations of Holy Communion, and other rites of the church.

Letter of Agreement for Interim Pastoral Ministry – Northwest Synod of Wisconsin (ELCA)

http://www.nwswi.org/webfiles/fnitools/documents/call_process_rev11.17.09smaller.pdf

Page 43

Call Process Booklet - Yumpu

<https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/53432941/call-process-booklet>

[Images for The Interim Pastor will Preside at worship and administer the sacraments according to the practice of the ELCA.](#)
[Images for The Congregation will Expect the interim pastor to preside at baptisms, celebrations of Holy Communion, and other rites of the church.](#)

Wedding Handbook

Participation of other Clergy

The called pastor is the presiding pastor at this occasional service of the church. The invited clergy would assist. Talk with the called pastor before extending an invitation to an assisting clergy.

<http://www.firstdaynr.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=yWkAovp1IP4%3d&tabid=71>

Page 9

[Images for Wedding Handbook Participation of other Clergy](#)

Wedding Policy

A minister appointed to or connected with Moody Methodist Church will officiate at all weddings. The senior pastor will make wedding assignments.

A guest minister of the couple's choice may "assist" in the service with the approval of and invitation by the officiating pastor.

Guest ministers will not be allowed to participate in the ceremony without the PRIOR approval of the officiating minister.

<http://www.moody.org/wedding-policy>

[Images for Wedding Policy assisting minister](#)

Wedding Policy

Glen Leven Presbyterian Church conducts wedding services for Glen Leven Church members and, at the discretion of the pastor, active participants in our congregation who are non-members of our church.

Weddings at Glen Leven are officiated by our pastor. Pastors who are not serving Glen Leven may assist in the service when invited to do so by our pastor.

The wedding service is an act of worship and is designed to reflect the joy and beauty of covenant love, and as a time of praise and adoration of God. You will work with the officiating pastor to design the service drawing from resources of the Presbyterian and other Judeo-Christian traditions.

<http://www.glenleven.org/wedding-policy>

End of Marriage

Resources

A service of blessing for the divorced | The Lutheran

Today, there is no debate that divorce is an alarmingly frequent occurrence in our society. It is causing personal struggles for those divorced; it affects a frightening number of children, such that predictions are that half of the children growing up in America in the near future will be living in one-parent homes; it fosters confusion and hurt in family systems that are like trees overly pruned and overly grafted onto. The very cry of the culture and the people within it may very well be the "sighs" of the Spirit searching our hearts and minds for a significant ministry to divorced persons.

http://www.thelutheran.org/article/article.cfm?article_id=730

[Images for A service of blessing for the divorced | The Lutheran](#)

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/contact-us/>

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/issues/>

Recognition of the end of a marriage: A ceremony of healing and hope - The Lutheran Magazine

Ideally when a marriage fails, both partners should come together in the context of the faith community, seeking forgiveness of and extending forgiveness to one another. This, of course, is not always possible or desirable. Sometimes the animosity between the former partners is too great, and the wounds are too raw, to permit civil discourse. When such is the case, the partners of the broken union are encouraged to seek the faith community separately, and to accept God's healing grace mediated through prayer, touch, and forgiveness. This ritual of healing and hope, conducted by a compassionate person, is suitable for use with only one participant, or with several.

http://www.thelutheran.org/article/article.cfm?article_id=729

[Images for Recognition of the end of a marriage: A ceremony of healing and hope - The Lutheran Magazine](#)

Same Gender Unions



Northwest Synod of Wisconsin

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

June 12, 2014

Pastors of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin; Greetings in the name of Jesus our Savior,

This brief letter is intended to address possible questions regarding last week's ruling regarding same gender unions in Wisconsin.

First, the legal process has not been settled and likely won't be in the near future. But, some of you may be asked, or may have already been asked, to preside at same gender marriages.

Second, in 2009, our ELCA voted in assembly that congregations that choose to do so may recognize publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships. This has reminded us all that our authority to marry is because of our congregation's call. While many clergy are simply licensed to marry, ELCA clergy may marry couples because we are called by congregations. We are responsible to our congregations.

Those of you who may be asked to preside over a same gender marriage service need to start conversation with your congregation, and specifically your congregation's council, about the possibility, sooner rather than later. But, it is important to know, the decision to preside over same gender marriages is a congregational decision, and not solely a pastoral decision.

For discussion, I highly recommend two excellent pieces from last year's decisions in Minnesota from bishops in our neighboring synods:

[Remarks on Same-Gender Marriage | Saint Paul Area Synod](http://www.spas-elca.org/mutual-conversation/remarks-same-gender-marriage)

<http://www.spas-elca.org/mutual-conversation/remarks-same-gender-marriage>

[A Pastoral Letter to Rostered Leaders from Bishop Aitken](http://nemnsynod.org.php53-5.dfw1-2.websitetestlink.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/A-Pastoral-Letter-to-our-Rostered-Leaders-May-2013-ltrhead.pdf)

<http://nemnsynod.org.php53-5.dfw1-2.websitetestlink.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/A-Pastoral-Letter-to-our-Rostered-Leaders-May-2013-ltrhead.pdf>

Please call or email with any questions.

Grace,

Bishop Rick Hoyme



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

“Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things” (1 Corinthians 13:7).

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Grace and peace to you in the name of the crucified and risen Christ.

Last week the U.S. Supreme Court rendered its decision announcing the right of same-gender couples to have equal access to marriage. For many members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, this decision is a welcome sign of hope and a time for celebration. Other members of this church do not agree with the court's decision and remain deeply concerned because of their understanding of Scripture.

This decision affects each of us, some profoundly, and we are not of one mind. Let us continue to accompany one another with prayer, love and mutual respect as we reflect on this new reality and remember Paul's words in 1 Corinthians about the enduring power of God's love.

The ELCA social statement “Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust” (2009) neither endorses nor forbids same gender marriages and recognizes that we have differing understandings and convictions on this matter. In its decision, the court stated that “the First Amendment ensures that religious organizations and persons are given proper protection as they seek to teach the principles that are so fulfilling and so central to their lives and faiths.”

According to this church's social statement on human sexuality, all decisions about recognizing, supporting and holding publicly accountable same-gender relationships are entrusted to congregations. Recognizing that the church is not of one mind on this subject, our 2009 actions provide that congregations and clergy should discern together whether to recognize such relationships and to what degree.

Pastors are to engage in conversation, discernment and partnership with the congregations who have called them prior to solemnizing or presiding over a same-gender marriage. On the other hand, no pastor is obligated to solemnize the marriage of any couple, same-gender or different-gender, whom the pastor cannot in good conscience marry.

As Lutheran Christians, we continue to be a church that engages in conversation and discernment in all aspects of our faith and life. Creating space for respectful conversation and dialogue continues to be an important part of our life together. A helpful resource for engaging in difficult conversations is “Talking Together as Christians about Tough Social Issues.” In addition, the ELCA Ministry to and with Same Gender Couples and their Families Working Group remains in the process of completing its work. A report of the group's findings and possible recommendations will be presented to the ELCA Church Council at its November meeting.

We seek to see our differences as a gift to be celebrated as we live out that which unites us: the mercy and grace of Jesus Christ who leads us into mission and ministry in the world. In the midst of this change, we are first and foremost church – a church that proclaims the good news of Jesus Christ. May God bless, guide and strengthen you each day as you go in peace and serve the Lord.

Your Sister in Christ,

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton

Presiding Bishop Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

This week in the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin-ELCA Week of June 28, 2015 info@nswwi.org

<http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs191/1101126434512/archive/1121488133819.html>

<http://www.elca.org/News-and-Events/7759> ELCA presiding bishop offers letter on Supreme Court marriage ruling

Resources

[PDF]Pastoral Letter... Bishop S. John Roth RE: Same-gender Marriages in Illinois

<http://csis.radicalthinking.net/Portals/CSIS/Pastoral%20Letter%20Same-gender%20Marriages.pdf>

Images for Pastoral Letter... Bishop S. John Roth RE: Same-gender Marriages in Illinois

Pastoral Letter: Same-Gender Marriage and the Church – MinistryLink the online home of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod ELCA

<https://ministrylink.org/pastoral-letter-same-gender-marriage-and-the-church/>

Images for Pastoral Letter: Same-Gender Marriage and the Church ELCA

Same-Sex Marriage - Montana Synod ELCA

<https://www.montanasynod.org/same-sex-marriage.html>

https://www.montanasynod.org/uploads/options_for_congregations

Images for Same-Sex Marriage - Montana Synod ELCA

Funeral

1) Preaching at funerals during the interim

Such preaching presents a special challenge because the interim pastor does not have the opportunity to know the person over an extended period of time. For that reason, I call on the nursing home residents, homebound, and others in special circumstances ASAP after arriving in order to get to know them especially in case there is a precipitous decline in health. Among other things, three dynamics guide my preaching at funerals.

1) Lectionary

As much as possible, I try to use the texts from a recent or upcoming Sunday in the church year. I start out the sermon by stating, "In the life of the church this is the season of *(name)*." From there I go on to speak of the texts. Then, I continue the sermon by stating, "In the life of this congregation, we gather to remember the life of one who has finished the course of faith and now rests from the labors of life." From there I intertwine the texts, the deceased, and the assembly. I conclude with a gospel word for the gathered assembly.

For worship planning, as much as possible, I seek to use the hymns of the season. For instance, in one congregation, a woman died on December 16, and I used the Christmas text of Luke 2:1-20 of the birth of Jesus, and we sang *Away in a Manger* ("fit us for heaven to live with you there") and *Silent Night, Holy Night* ("sleep in heavenly peace.") I covered for the neighboring installed pastor after Christmas, and an older woman died on December 27. I preached on the text for the First Sunday of Christmas from Luke 2:25-40 on Simeon and Anna.

I officiated at a funeral on the Friday before the Sunday I was scheduled to start and preached on Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5 and John 14:23-29 for the Sixth Sunday of Easter Year C. Revelation speaks of the river of life, and I was able to make the connection to the river that ran along the town and near which the deceased lived. John speaks of the Holy Spirit as the Advocate, and I was able to make the connection that the man and his daughters advocated for people in their practice of law. In addition, John speaks of "If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I go to the Father; for the Father is greater than I." John 14:28b. The wife chose "On Our Way Rejoicing" for the sending song.

The Life of Christ and the Death of a Loved One: Crafting the Funeral Homily by Barbara G. Schmitz (Author)

Pastors will receive solid theological and practical assistance with the important task of creating and presenting the funeral homily. Because time is usually limited for meditation creation, they will find invaluable help time and again from this volume.

The first part of the book addresses the actual art of crafting a funeral homily with a step by step description or the process. The second part consists of actual sermons written using the process. Besides illustrating the methods, Schmitz, provides starting points for **constructing sermons based on the liturgical year**. Also included are canticle and music suggestions which highlight each homily's theme and give insights into planning the entire funeral service.

<https://www.amazon.de/Life-Christ-Death-Loved-One/dp/0788003658>

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/2613344-the-life-of-christ-and-the-death-of-a-loved-one>

<http://store.ccsspub.com/prod-0788003631.htm>

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=0788003631>

https://books.google.com/books/about/The_Life_of_Christ_and_the_Death_of_a_Lo.html?id=ih2vFB3WJl4C

<https://www.amazon.de/Barbara-G.-Schmitz/e/B001KHA6RY>

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=1441215158> Chapter 3 Funeral Sermons [70]

<http://scholars.wlu.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1635&context=consensus> Page 152

<https://books.google.com/books?isbn=1556735987>

21 – Welcome to the Banquet

[Images for The Life of Christ and the Death of a Loved One: Crafting the Funeral Homily by Barbara G. Schmitz \(Author\)](#)

2) Apology

Now, as culture moves from Christendom to post-Christendom, my preaching at funerals has moved toward an exercise in apologetics to witness to the faith. Many of the people who attend funerals do not attend regular services of worship. I never did buy into that phase where funerals and memorial services were referred to as celebrations of life. After all, what does a preacher call a service of worship after a tragic death?

Apologetics - Wikipedia

Apologetics (from Greek ἀπολογία, "speaking in defense") is the discipline of defending a position (often religious) through the systematic use of information. **Early Christian writers** (c. 120–220) who defended their faith against critics and recommended their faith to outsiders were called **apologists**.^[1]

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apologetics>

[Images for Apologetics](#)

3) Doxology

My approach to personalizing the funeral sermon is to give *thanks* to God rather than to *praise* the deceased. In addition to being more theologically sound, this approach recognizes that as an interim pastor I witness more to what others have shared with me rather than commending the individual from personal experience. When members of the family want to say a few words, I term that *remembrances* and place it after the hymn of the day in the second half of the funeral service. Liturgically, remembrances are a response to the hearing and preaching of the word. When I first started in the pastoral ministry, there were few times when people got up to speak, but now that practice is more commonplace, which makes it even less needful to

come up with laudatory remarks about the deceased. Don't count me among those preachers who spend the better part of the message paying tribute to the deceased and then at the end trying to tie it in with some biblical passage.

The Funeral (Winter 2014) - Word and World – Luther Seminary

- https://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/issues.aspx?article_id=3751 Editorials. "Douglas ist tot!" Frederick J. Gaiser
- https://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/issues.aspx?article_id=3754 All Saints, All Souls. Thomas Lynch
- https://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/issues.aspx?article_id=3757 Expressing Grief and Proclaiming Hope: Toward a Proper Hymn of the Day for Funerals. Brian Wentzel
- https://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/issues.aspx?article_id=3755 From the Other Side: Funeral Directors Talk about the Changing Face of Funerals. Mark A. Granquist
- https://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/issues.aspx?article_id=3760 Making a Good Death. Gracia Grindal
- https://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/issues.aspx?article_id=3759 Politically Charged Funerals in Argentina. Andres Roberto Albertsen
- https://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/issues.aspx?article_id=3753 Practicing Resurrection: Grief and the Christian Funeral. Martha Ellen Stortz
- https://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/issues.aspx?article_id=3758 Preaching at the "Tough" Funerals. Michael Rogness
- https://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/issues.aspx?article_id=3752 The Possibility of a Good Funeral. Thomas G. Long
- https://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/issues.aspx?article_id=3756 The Power of Biblical Metaphor in the Face of Death. Justin Lind-Ayres
- https://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/issues.aspx?article_id=3762 The Funeral Sermon: Proclaiming the Gospel. John E. Quam
- https://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/issues.aspx?article_id=3761 The Funeral Sermon: Remembering the Deceased. Gary Dreier
- https://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/issues.aspx?article_id=3763 Funerals before the Funeral Service. Richard W. Nysse

Word & World - Luther Seminary

<https://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/> THE FUNERAL Vol. 34, No 1, Winter, 2015

http://wordandworld.luthersem.edu/issues.aspx?issue_id=133

Images for The Funeral (Winter 2014) - Word and World – Luther Seminary

Before I even started at one bridge pastor assignment, the neighboring pastor at the new setting called to say that he was going to be out of the country on a travel seminar and asked if I would cover for him. He stated, "We have a young congregation. Very few funerals. I don't anticipate you will get a call anyway." Sure enough, their church secretary phoned me just before their pastor departed to say a man had died and asked if I was willing to officiate that Saturday. His wife had been more involved in church than her husband, and she had died earlier. I agreed to officiate. Normally, I try to use texts from the lectionary, if at all possible, but it was too hard to make the texts to work. So, I used some standard texts – Psalm 23, Romans 8:37-39, John 14:1-6.

I sought to accomplish both apology (witness to the faith) and doxology (giving thanks). A son spoke earlier in that order of service I inherited from the other church. I started out by saying that all of life is a journey with a beginning and ending point. In between, Jesus claims to be "the way, the truth, and the life." Knowing one's destination in the life beyond this life gives purpose to this life. The Good Shepherd Psalm expresses confidence in God's protection, and Paul articulates the ground and assurance of hope. From there, I stated that thanks can be given to God for this man's long life, his wife and family, and his military service to his country. I concluded that for us who continue the journey of life Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life."

Resources

[How to Preach a Funeral for Someone You Do Not Know - LifeWay](#)

Almost no one leaves in the middle of a funeral, so I always preach Jesus at some point.

<http://www.lifeway.com/pastors/2017/01/19/preach-funeral-someone-not-know/>

Images for How to Preach a Funeral for Someone You Do Not Know

[Preaching the Gospel at Funerals: 9Marks](#)

The most helpful advice I ever received about [preaching at a funeral for someone I didn't know](#) is: "Don't preach them into heaven. Don't preach them into hell. Just preach the gospel for the people who are there." This principle captures our task regardless of the kind of funeral we do. Ironically, though we focus on remembering and celebrating the life of the deceased, the [funeral service is ultimately for those who attend.](#)

<https://www.9marks.org/article/preaching-the-gospel-at-funerals/>

Images for Preaching the Gospel at Funerals

Preaching is one part of presiding at a funeral. Planning is needed for the various other parts of presiding at a funeral.

Resources

[A Christian Funeral: Witness to the Resurrection | Augsburg Fortress](#)

A theologically informed, pastorally astute, and ecumenically relevant guide to Christian funeral rites. Quivik helps the reader explore the deeper meaning of the Christian funeral so that the resources of private businesses in the burial event can be put to their proper use.

The Worship Matters Studies Series examines key worship issues through studies by pastors, musicians, and lay people from throughout the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Features include:

- Informal and insightful writing for all readers
- Study questions at the end of every chapter
- Examines vital issues in weekly worship
- Helps leaders and congregants understand and experience worship more richly

<http://store.augsburgfortress.org/store/productgroup/750/A-Christian-Funeral-Witness-to-the-Resurrection>

https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1519348.A_Christian_Funeral

https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/760380.Melinda_A_Quivik

Images for Melinda A. Quivik, author

[Images for A Christian Funeral: Witness to the Resurrection | Augsburg Fortress](#)

In Sure and Certain Hope: A Funeral Sourcebook by Melinda A. Quivik (General Editor/Contributor)

In Sure and Certain Hope: A Funeral Sourcebook is a comprehensive guide for planning, presiding, and preaching at funerals. An in-depth look at the funeral rite and sermon demonstrates how the funeral connects to baptism, proclaims the resurrection of Christ and promise of new life, and points to the communion of all the saints. Tools for discussing and planning a funeral with the family include a planning worksheet, suggestions for scripture texts and hymns, and essays on cremation, the use of a columbarium, natural or green burial, and military ceremonies. Additional resources address the unique dimensions of presiding and preaching at a funeral for a child, a funeral in the public eye, and a funeral following a suicide. The sourcebook also looks at the church's role in ministry with the dying and bereaved, and in facilitating conversations about end-of-life matters, death, and grief.

The enclosed CD-ROM includes reproducible materials from the sourcebook, including rites and liturgies, an adult forum series outline, and tools to help individuals plan their own funerals, all editable and customizable to your needs.

<https://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/product/23224/In-Sure-and-Certain-Hope-A-Funeral-Sourcebook>

<https://www.augsburgfortress.org/media/downloads/9781506431451%20Sample.pdf>

Images for *In Sure and Certain Hope: A Funeral Sourcebook* by Melinda A. Quivik

Remembering God's Promises: A Funeral Planning Handbook by Melinda A. Quivik

Remembering God's Promises offers notes and commentary on the funeral service in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, lists of suggested scripture readings and hymns, and information on other planning options. When the family and friends meet with the pastor, the funeral planning worksheet provides space to write down information and keep track of decisions that need to be made. In addition, a free, downloadable pastor's guide includes an outline for four adult forum sessions on end-of-life decisions, hospice care, and funeral and burial planning. Pastors can also use the handbook to encourage individuals to plan their own funerals in advance.

<https://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/product/24290/Remembering-God-Promises-A-Funeral-Planning-Handbook>

Images for *Remembering God's Promises: A Funeral Planning Handbook* by Melinda A. Quivik

Accompany Them with Singing--The Christian Funeral [Thomas G. Long]

Thomas G. Long, one of America's most trusted and thoughtful **pulpit** voices, provides a theological and cultural critique of today's Christian funeral.

Long begins by describing how the Christian funeral developed historically, theologically, and liturgically, and then discusses recent cultural trends in funeral practices, including the rise in both cremations and memorial services. He describes the basic pattern for a funeral service, details options in funeral planning, identifies characteristics of a "good funeral," and provides thoughtful guidance for preaching at a funeral.

But Long also notes a disturbing trend toward funeral services that seem theologically right and pastorally caring, but actually depart from the primary aims of the Christian funeral constructed around the metaphor of the deceased as a saint traveling on a baptismal journey toward God, accompanied by the community of faith on "the last mile of the way." He argues that the cultural conditions for maintaining this view are under stress and a new, less-theological and less-satisfying metaphor that focuses on the mourner has begun to erode the Christian view. He contrasts the ancient grand community drama with today's trend toward body-less memorial services that focus primarily on the living and grief management. This is a loss for the church, he argues, and he calls for the church to reclaim the classic metaphor. *Accompany Them with Singing* is a practical and theologically sound resource for Protestant and Roman Catholic clergy and for funeral professionals.

<http://www.christianbook.com/accompany-them-with-singing-christian-funeral/thomas-long/9780664233198/pd/233191>

<http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/6928274-accompany-them-with-singing>

https://books.google.com/books/about/Accompany_Them_with_Singing.html?id=c9MmKV_0LiUC

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hGNnI5ozLvU> An interview with Thomas G. Long, author of *Accompany Them with Singing* -

The Christian Funeral - YouTube

<http://www.thethoughtfulchristian.com/Products/0664233198/accompany-them-with-singingthe-christian-funeral.aspx>

http://www.workingpreacher.org/chartingculture.aspx?article_id=335

<https://www.workingpreacher.org/craft.aspx?post=1782>

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2009/november/38.69.html>

https://books.google.com/books/about/The_Good_Funeral.html?id=Cd_TAqAAQBAJ

<http://candler.emory.edu/faculty/profiles/long-thomas.html>

<https://www.amazon.com/Thomas-G.-Long/e/B001ILKH9E>

http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/36873.Thomas_G_Long

Images for Accompany Them with Singing--The Christian Funeral [Thomas G. Long]

Eight Key Issues for Pastors Regarding Funerals – Rainer on Leadership #242 – ThomRainer.com

Discussions on pastors and funerals as well as what to watch for, what to have prepared, and what to avoid.
<http://thomrainer.com/2016/07/nine-key-issues-pastors-regarding-funerals-rainer-leadership-242/>
Images for Eight Key Issues for Pastors Regarding Funerals – ThomRainer.com
<http://thomrainer.com/2016/06/fifteen-crazy-things-happened-funerals/>
<http://thomrainer.com/2017/07/top-ten-surprises-new-pastors/> #4
Images for thom rainer (author)

Funeral Guidelines - Synod Resource Center

Contributed by Saint Andrews Lutheran Church, Wausau, Wisconsin
http://synodresourcecenter.org/wma/worship/occasional/funerals/0002/funeral_guidelines.html
Images for Funeral Guidelines - Synod Resource Center

[PDF]FUNERAL PLANNING WORKSHEET - Hope Lutheran Church

<https://www.hope-aurora.org/docs/FPW/FPWWorksheet.pdf>
Images for FUNERAL PLANNING WORKSHEET - Lutheran Church
<https://www.firstlutheranalexandria.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Funeral-Planning-Guide-and-Worksheet-..pdf>
<https://docplayer.net/17234527-Funeral-planning-guide-and-worksheet-our-savior-s-lutheran-church-910-9-th-st-menomonie-wi-54751-715-235-0693-office-oslme-com-www-oslme.html>
<http://www.gelc.info/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Funeral-Planning-Guide-2016.pdf>
<http://www.trinity-ec.org/forms/FuneralGuide.pdf>
http://storage.cloversites.com/princeofpeacechurch2/documents/Funeral.Memorial%20Planning%20Guide%20and%20Worksheet2013_4.pdf
<http://woodlakechurch.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Funeral-Planning-Guide-2015.pdf>
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/55bbd312e4b033c7f79edc9d/t/58406433e4fcb55d6d2e6358/1480614966003/Funeral+Planning+Guide.pdf>
https://www.salemlutheran-ks.org/assets/img/editorimages/Funeral_Planning_Guide_single_pg.pdf
Images for Funeral Planning Guide
<http://8cdnp2hqc1n351jd540simp1.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/funeralplanning.pdf>
<http://abidingsavior.org/OutreachPro/resources/funeral-planning/>
<https://stjohns-salisbury.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/funeral-guide-2015.pdf>
<http://www.stmarkhawaii.org/Funeral%20Pre-planning.pdf>
<http://spiritlutheran.org/worship/funerals/funeral-planning/>
http://www.immanuelprinceton.org/Misc_Images/immanuelprinceton.org_misc_image46125.pdf
<http://www.flclincoln.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/funeral-planning-doc.pdf>
http://synodresourcecenter.org/wma/worship/occasional/funerals/0002/funeral_guidelines.html

Funeral Resources & Information | iMortuary.com

[7 Insider Tips You Need to Know Before Funeral Planning](#)
[Funeral Guide](#) - Step by step guide outlining exactly what you should do after the passing of a loved one.
[Funeral Pre-planning Information](#) - Guide to pre-planning a funeral.
[Funeral & Cremation Glossary](#) - Learn the terminology associated with cremations and funerals.
[Green Funerals](#) - Information about the fast-growing, environmentally friendly burial.
[Pre-Planning](#) - Get local information about pre-planning a funeral
<http://www.imortuary.com/resources/>
Images for Funeral Resources & Information | iMortuary.com

Funerals as Counter Cultural~Edwin Searcy

Learning how to be a Christian community in the face of death is crucial to re-discovering our identity as a gospel people in the face of the powers and principalities that seem so overwhelming in life. This is not an innocent or trivial matter. Reconfiguring the mind of the church is a subversive move to prepare the baptized community for other Good Fridays and Holy Saturdays and Easter Sundays. I do not know what awful endings are yet to come upon us, but I suspect that we and our children and grandchildren will yet stand at the foot of the cross, sure that all is lost. Then I pray that we will have learned the cruciform figure that begins at the end and carries us through a long season of absence because of the deep hope that keeps us anticipating Easter, and Christ's promised return.
<http://funeralhomeconsulting.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Funerals-as-Counter-CulturalEdwin-Searcy.pdf>
Images for Funerals as Counter Cultural~Edwin Searcy

The Intentional Interim and Funerals

Interim Ministry Association Serving the ELCA. The Newsletter. Fall 2007. Pages 5
<http://www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Ministry/Interim-Ministry-Association/Newsletter.aspx>
info@nalip.net
Images for Intentional Interim and Funerals

When Someone Dies . . . A pastor answers some common questions about funeral practices

Weddings and funerals are the two major rituals in contemporary culture in which virtually everyone participates. Both involve families, and both are often held in church.

Unlike weddings, however, funerals are seldom anticipated or planned for. They often come on us suddenly, giving us little time to prepare. Overwhelmed by grief, we are inclined to simply follow custom and tradition in planning the funeral service. Because the funeral is such an important service for Christians, it may be time for us as individuals and congregations to take a closer and more thoughtful look at our funeral practices. On the following pages, Leonard Vander Zee, pastor of the South Bend, Indiana, Christian Reformed Church, answers some questions Christians often raise about funeral practices and traditions. Vander Zee is a member of the CRC Worship Committee and is the primary author I compiler of *In Life and in Death*, a pastoral guide for Christian funerals (CRC Publications, 1992, see inside back cover).

<http://www.reformedworship.org/article/june-1992/when-someone-dies-pastor-answers-some-common-questions-about-funeral-practices-and>

Images for pastor answers some common questions about funeral practices

2) Preaching at funerals for the unchurched

A pastor related to me a conversation with his internship supervisor who asked, "What are you most nervous about going into the pastoral ministry." He replied, "Funerals for the unchurched. I'm not a universalist, and I believe a person should demonstrate some marks of the Christian faith." I related to him my lectionary – apology – doxology approach. Afterwards, I thought more about the matter. If nothing else, I figure as far as doxology goes, say what I can and don't say what I can't.

Resources

Funerals for Those You Barely Know | CT Pastors - Christianity Today

But when the focus is not on the person but on the Lord, the bind is not there. I simply try to use an item from the deceased's life to introduce a truth from God, not build a case for the person's glory.

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/1987/spring/8712092.html>

Images for Funerals for Those You Barely Know | CT Pastors - Christianity Today

Ministry Matters™ | 5 Principles for Preaching at Funerals

Principle #3

Never lose this opportunity to preach the Good News to those gathered.

<http://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/262/5-principles-for-preaching-at-funerals>

Images for Ministry Matters™ | 5 Principles for Preaching at Funerals Principle #3 Never lose this opportunity to preach the Good News to those gathered.

Sermons about Funerals Non-Christian - SermonCentral.com

Preaching a funeral is always difficult. But, our funeral sermon resources make it simpler.

<https://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/sermons-about-funerals-non-christian/?keyword=Funerals+Non-Christian&ref=SermonDetails>

Images for Sermons about Funerals Non-Christian - SermonCentral.com

Why You Should Do Funerals for Unbelievers and How (Not) To Do Them

I have done over 200 funerals in my almost-fourteen years of pastoring, so I think I know a little about doing them. The majority of these have been for people I did not know and of those, most were people who professed no faith in Jesus Christ. In many of these cases, someone in the church I pastor asked me to do the funeral even though I did not know the deceased person. They usually ask me to do the funeral because they want Christ preached to their friends and family members. This is an excellent opportunity to minister to the people in your congregation while also being able to proclaim Christ.

<https://michaelrjones.wordpress.com/2012/01/02/why-you-should-do-funerals-for-unbelievers-and-how-not-to-do-them/>

Images for Why You Should Do Funerals for Unbelievers and How (Not) To Do Them

Another way to look at requests to officiate at funerals for the unchurched is to consider such request to be opportunities to do funeral evangelism.

Resources

"Funeral Evangelism" » Alban Institute

Because I served a parish of predominately older people, I had a lot of funerals. After the first six or seven of these, family members—outside of the church—who had attended one of the funerals began to ask me to lead funerals for their loved ones. By my second year I was averaging twenty-seven funerals a year. Most of these were for "unaffiliated" folks. I decided I would serve these families as if they were members of my church. In the six years of my ministry there, worship attendance grew from 40 to 120 people. We averaged twenty to thirty new professions of faith each year. Because we filled every space we could find in the church for small groups and Sunday school classes, our parsonage next door became the church annex. By our sixth year the church was filled with young families and lots of children.

Alban at Duke Divinity School » "Funeral Evangelism" - Alban Institute

<https://alban.org/archive/funeral-evangelism/>

Images for "Funeral Evangelism" » Alban Institute

Sermons about Evangelistic Funeral - SermonCentral.com

Preaching a funeral is always difficult. But, our funeral sermon resources make it simpler. Whether you're giving the eulogy or sharing a scripture, we have funeral ideas to help you celebrate and honor the life that was lost.

<https://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/sermons-about-evangelistic-funeral>

[Images for Sermons about Evangelistic Funeral - SermonCentral.com](https://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/sermons-about-evangelistic-funeral)

<http://jesussaidfollowme.org/blog/2007/10/01/an-evangelistic-funeral-sermon/>

<https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1969/07/speaking-of-funerals>

<https://www.9marks.org/article/preaching-the-gospel-at-funerals/>

[Images for preaching-the-gospel-at-funerals](https://www.9marks.org/article/preaching-the-gospel-at-funerals/)

<https://zondervanacademic.com/blog/conducting-gospel-centered-funerals-brian-croft-phil-newton/>

3) Memorable memorial service

I visited a man, age 90, in declining health on New Year's Eve. His wife, daughter, and granddaughter were present. I shared scripture and prayer appropriate for Impending Death or Irreversible Illness and sang Away in a Manger, Silent Night, and I am So Glad Each Christmas Eve. The man held my hand and looked directly in my eyes. Two days later I shared a Commendation of the Dying and sang Children of the Heavenly Father and Abide with Me. His wife requested a memorial service on a Sunday at 1pm meant to witness to God's love in Jesus Christ and to reflect the faith and hope her husband possessed. She requested that the assembly sing Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee; Great Is This Faithfulness; and Lord, Jesus, You Shall Be My Song and that the family sing Something Beautiful by the Gaither Vocal Band.

4) Whether funeral bulletins

I came into one setting where the recently retired church secretary wrote tributes for people and designed tribute bulletins. The level of expectations had been raised for this kind of publication. A new church secretary and I tried to carry on the tradition only in a more restrained manner, but it proved to be highly stressful. One time, a family member found a misspelling of a name and insisted on the bulletin be reprinted right before the service. Other times, families wanted to design the bulletins themselves to give due tribute to their loved ones. The internet provides all sorts of sites with titles such as [Make and Create Your Own Funeral Program](#). Now, I tell families that the order of service will be printed by the church office. Occasional families have gone ahead and put together a tribute bulletin separate from the order of service.

I have also served in two mid-sized congregations where I simply led the funeral service out of the worship book without benefit of printed bulletins, and I think this is the way to go if at all possible. The funeral directors usually supply a keepsake printed publication anyway. What a relief not to have to contend with printed bulletins for funerals!

5) Are tribute bulletins going to be the norm of the future?

10+ years later after serving at the site of tribute funeral bulletins mentioned above and at a setting less than a half hour away, I met with four daughters of a man who had died a week before and whose memorial service was planned for 12 days hence. The one daughter came with a 15-page rough draft of a bulletin and a laptop computer. I had just officiated at 4 smaller funerals in 14 days. I was a month into the new assignment. I told them that I could not set a precedent for preparing tribute bulletins. They were more than willing to print it themselves. And to their credit they wanted to follow the order of service and include Holy Communion. I typed the order to service including their numerous musical selections to be separate from their tribute booklet. They composed and printed the tribute booklet at their expense. Come to find out, the daughters put their own version of the service in the tribute bulletin different than the one I prepared. In the future, I think I can expect more of the same. Memorial services instead of funeral services. Longer intervals between DOD and the service. More time for planning tributes. As it turned out, the wife of the deceased died a month later, and I had to go through the same process, although the planning for the mother was more restrained.

6) Increased expectations by families for funerals

I was asked to officiate at a memorial service for a non-member at the local funeral home on the Sunday of the Baptism of Our Lord at 4pm. The family had written the following, a copy of which the funeral director gave to me. I told him that I would use the memorial service from the worship book and regard the song titles as gathering music, song of the day, and sending music.

Visitation Music: Playlist is name "Gpa 2 hrs"

At end of visitation select the Playlist "Gpa Service 1/12/14"

Volume 27

1st song is "Softly & Tenderly" by Alan Jackson (tap the song title on the screen to play)

(When song is done hit the Pause button on the speaker –pause button is marked with a yellow tag)

Reading/Remembrance

2nd song is "Amazing Grace" buy Mickey Gilley (hit the pause button to restart the music)

(Don't need to touch anything when Amazing Grace is done. Just let the music continue playing and the 3rd song will automatically start.)

3rd song is "The Old Rugged Cross" by Daniel O'Donell (When song is done hit the pause button)

Reading/Prayer

After Prayer is over hit the pause button to restart the music which will begin with "When We All Get to Heaven" by Alan Jackson. Don't need to touch anything else – just let the music play as people exit.

In another congregation, whereas my experience had normally been that a funeral director put together a slide presentation of the deceased, for this memorial service the granddaughter insisted on putting it together. She called me and asked to have it as part of the service itself, but I replied that it could be before and after the service but not during the service. Her husband insisted on running the

computer for the projection over against a new church secretary, and the granddaughter almost pushed the church secretary out of her seat in the church office when desiring to print off her eulogy from a laptop. In addition, a man dressed in bib overalls came into the church with a miniature log cabin made by the deceased that the man insisted be a part of the display. I told him he needed to talk to the funeral director. Another man came up to me right before the service and insisted he be allowed to give a talk about the deceased. I did not agree to his demand. Another woman cryptically asked after the service why the staff had not made a DVD recording of the service. I talked with the staff at the next staff meeting about the need to all be on the same page and to make a firm stand amidst excessive demands.

Conversations with various funeral directors have confirmed my experience that member and non-member families alike are bringing increased expectations to funerals and memorial services. Some people have insisted on more elaborate programs to give recognition to the deceased. One family wanted seven people to give remembrances. Others wanted to set up elaborate displays to go along with the cremains. A funeral director related to me that the deceased insisted ahead of time that he buried in a casket with the cremains of his late wife on his lap. The list could go on and on.

Various considerations guide my thinking. One is that I approach funerals and memorial services from a perspective of doxology rather than eulogy - in other words giving thanks to God rather than praising the deceased. It is possible to be personal in a thankful way without being personal in a laudatory way. Another is that I do not want to raise expectations for extra considerations that will be difficult for the new installed pastor.

It used to be that, when I grew weary of the heightened expectations of weddings, I would say, "I'll gladly do a funeral any day." Now with the increased expectations for funerals, I don't make that statement quite so readily. Sometimes, in my more unguarded moments, I'll say to myself, "Funerals will be the death of me yet!"

I was riding with a funeral director out to the cemetery when she remarked about changing conditions she's observed over the years, "I remember when there was a sense of order to funerals. Now everything is helter-skelter. I can't wait to retire."

Resources

Changing Faces of the Funeral Industry: Personalizing the Future

It's been long documented over the years that funerals are inching further away from their roots of traditional services with the burgeoning trend of personalized funerals – from cremated remains being shot into space or submerged in the ocean amongst coral reefs, to mummification and cryogenic freezing, **the trend of personalization is on the rise**, but it's also more than just a trend. Through baby boomers who revolutionized the culture of their times, they've further set their cultural re-orientation towards their evolving expectations of what funeral rites should be.

<https://mysendoff.com/2012/05/changing-faces-of-the-funeral-industry-personalizing-the-future/>

Images for Changing Faces of the Funeral Industry: Personalizing the Future

Creating Excellence in Customer Service: A Mandate for Funeral Homes

In addition to being a more savvy shopper, today's funeral home customer has also been influenced by our mourning-avoiding, efficiency-based culture. To paraphrase these social influences, "I don't want to hurt, and the funeral makes me acknowledge pain. Besides, faster is better (this mentality is reflected in the increased rates of direct cremation.) Many, though certainly not all, primary survivor's lack an understanding of the value of ritual and minimize their need to mourn the death.

Finally, funeral service is less product-driven today than it has historically been. In the past, the customer was more interested in the casket, for example. Today's funeral director must consciously work to create a package of values to offer families along with the product. To survive into the future, funeral service must focus on being customer-driven, not product-driven. After all, the same casket can usually be provided by different funeral homes. The difference between one funeral home and another has increasingly become the package of values and quality of service that comes with the product.

http://griefwords.com/index.cgi?action=page&page=articles%2Fcreating_excellence.html&site_id=30

Images for Creating Excellence in Customer Service: A Mandate for Funeral Homes

Funeral Blog. The official blog for the funeral & cemetery professions

7 Critical Elements of a Funeral Home Website

Today, more than ever before, you need to be maximizing the online presence of your funeral home. The truth is, **your families have very high expectations**, and if your funeral home website doesn't deliver, you better believe they'll find one of your competitors whose website does.

In order for your funeral home website to be a valuable business asset, you better make sure it includes these 7 critical elements:

<http://blog.funeralone.com/grow-your-business/attract-families/funeral-home-website-critical-elements/>

Images for families have high expectations for funerals

7) Responding to requests for secular music downloaded from the internet for funeral and memorial services

I normally interview the former pastor to learn about the practices of the congregation(s) and parish, but for this assignment the installed pastor died and the interim pastor from out of state resigned abruptly for medical reasons. Two months into the assignment, I became aware of the fact that the former installed pastor accommodated requests to play secular music downloaded from the internet at funerals and memorial services. In fact, I was told of one time that the pastor stood at the lectern microphone with a smart phone to download and play Holes in the Floor of Heaven. It took three times to download, and the assembly laughed nervously while waiting.

Holes in the Floor of Heaven

Steve Wariner

One day shy of eight years old,

When grandma passed away.

I was a broken hearted little boy,
Blowing out that birthday cake.
How I cried when the sky let go,
With a cold lonesome rain.
My mom smiled, said: "Don't be sad child."
"Grandma's watching you today."

The former pastor accommodated a request for another secular song entitled Angels Among Us.

Angels Among Us

Alabama

Oh, I believe there are, angels among us
Sent down to us, from somewhere up above
They come to you and me, in our darkest hours
To show us how to live, to teach us how to give
To guide us with the light of love

I had already worked with the Transition Task Force to complete the Ministry Site Profile but thought clarification was needed to see if this precedent had indeed become an expectation. I presented the following talking points to the Parish Council.

Should a New Installed Pastor Be Expected to Accommodate Requests for Secular Music
Downloaded from the Internet to be used as Special Music at Funerals and Memorial Services?

Theological

[DOC]Model Constitution for Congregations 2019 - ELCA Resource Repository

Chapter 12.

CONGREGATION COUNCIL

C12.04. The Congregation Council shall have general oversight of the life and activities of this congregation, and in particular its worship life, to the end that everything be done in accordance with the Word of God and the faith and practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

<https://www.elca.org/constitution> 2019 Model Constitution for Congregations

<https://download.elca.org> > ELCA Resource Repository > Model Constitution

<http://www.elca.org/Resources/Office-of-the-Secretary>

[PDF]What are the marks of a Christian funeral? - ELCA Resource Repository

Music

Assembly singing is often one of the most common and beloved ways for a community to participate in a funeral. In the words of Thomas Long, "Accompany them with singing! It is good for the voices of the community singing praise to be heard above the noisy clamor of death" (Accompany Them With Singing, p. 172). Music—especially singing by the whole assembly—binds the community together and brings comfort in the midst of grief. Musical choices at the time of death, however, are not always easy. How to accompany them with singing involves factors that may be in tension. For example, a family may want to honor the favorite music of the deceased loved one. Yet what if one of these favorite hymns or song is unfamiliar to the assembly? Or what if the favorite song is a secular one without any reference to the Christian faith? The authors of *The Christian Life* respond to this tension: "rather than simply honoring a favorite song of the deceased or the family, music proclaims the promise of God and creates comfort and hope in a way that includes the entire assembly." (*The Christian Life*, p. 158). Singing at a funeral is for the comfort of those who are yet living, announcing in no uncertain terms the abiding presence of God in Christ Jesus. It is becoming increasingly common for those gathered at a funeral to be unfamiliar with many of the hymns of the church just as it is less common to sing together in community. Soloists may be the primary musical voice, singing on behalf of the assembly. Again, it is best that the spirit of what is sung includes the themes of resurrection, hope and comfort. The soloist is not there to entertain but to proclaim the gospel in song.

[http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/What are the marks of a Christian funeral.pdf](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/What%20are%20the%20marks%20of%20a%20Christian%20funeral.pdf)

[Images for music for a christian funeral](#)

Musical

Normally, special music is offered as live music to make for participation rather than performance. Music downloaded from the internet tends to make for an individual rather than a corporate experience. Families have put together slideshows to play before the service, which may include other kinds of music. Often, when special music is not available, the assembly sings the hymns.

Technological

How long will it be before people are not satisfied with holding a smartphone up to a microphone and will insist on a musical video on projection? Who will provide the technology? Is the church simply willing to turn over the production of such to the insistent members?

Political

Should political considerations be allowed to trump other considerations where a pastor is expected to accommodate expectations? A pastor, particularly in small congregations where people are related and connected, can come under significant pressure to accommodate.

Should a Parish Council go along to get along even if it means a much longer wait for a candidate who is willing to depart from the normative practices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America?

If the Parish Council decides that the precedent set during the previous installed pastorate is to be continued in order to satisfy expectations that have been established, this interim pastor believes it would be important to inform potential candidates by petitioning the bishop to amend the Ministry Site Profile so that candidates can make a decision accordingly as to whether to pursue an interest in a parish, part of which has decided to depart from a normative practice of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

As for the theological talking point I read from the *Manual on the Liturgy* by Philip H. Pfatteicher and Carlos R. Messerli, page 356

Music selected for use at a funeral should embody high standards of quality, and in general reflect the spirit of Christian confidence, trust, and hope in the resurrection. The hymns should reflect such themes as the invocation of the Holy Spirit, comfort, the communion of saints, hope in the resurrection.

As for the technological talking point, I posed a possible situation whereby a family said that their loved one never had much to do with church let alone church music but liked Led Zeppelin and wanted the musical video Stairway to Heaven to be played and was willing to provide the laptop, projector, and screen.

Stairway to Heaven

Led Zeppelin

There's a lady who's sure

All that glitters is gold

And she's buying a stairway to heaven

When she gets there she knows

If the stores are all closed

With a word she can get what she came for

Oh oh oh oh and she's buying a stairway to heaven

The president of one of the congregations who chaired the parish council also led the praise team and sang at funerals and memorial services. She said, "I have no problem with showing such a musical video. We do not want a pastor who is rigid and strict like pastors from those more conservative Lutheran bodies. I believe we should honor requests unless it is Dead Skunk in the Middle of the Road." No one challenged her. I suggested that they petition the bishop to amend the MSP to appraise the candidates, but they declined.

8) May the American flag be draped over the casket?

I just started at one assignment when I was asked to officiate at a memorial service and a funeral service: the former at a neighboring congregation in covering for a pastor on a mission trip outside the country and the latter at one of the two congregations I was asked to serve. At the memorial service, there was no procession, and the family was seated. The 12 members of the military honor guard marched up the center aisle and two by two saluted the folded American flag next to the urn. At the funeral service for a military veteran who lived his adult life on the other side of the state, the church secretary took a call from their funeral director. When I work with a local funeral director, they know the local customs and are able to run interference, but this one asked on behalf of the family if the casket could be draped by the American flag. I asked the church secretary what the local custom was. She said the congregation used a pall. I said I preferred the pall but reluctantly agreed to the American flag. As it turned out, the funeral directors put the pall on the casket for the service of worship and then put the flag on for the committal. Afterwards, I researched the matter to be better prepared the next time the question came up. I asked the church secretary to reply to questions of that nature in the future by saying that the pall is to be used. In addition, at the committal the elite honor guard together with the local honor guard outnumbered the family. One member wanted to be sure to record the event, so as I was walking into the cemetery, I saw her pull up the back of her short black dress and put her smartphone in the back of her black panties so that she could have both hands free to operate a video camera.

Resources

A Symbol of Faith: Using a pall in Christian funerals | Reformed Worship

The pall helps the congregation focus on the worship of God and the hope of the resurrection by de-emphasizing the relative expense of coffins and showing the equality of all people in Christ. It has a democratizing value, for it prevents both the display of a costly coffin and the discomfiture of a simple one.

<https://www.reformedworship.org/article/june-1992/symbol-faith-using-pall-christian-funerals>

[Images for A Symbol of Faith: Using a pall in Christian funerals | Reformed Worship](#)

All About the Flag on the Casket | The DrillMaster

For a Roman Catholic service, a white cloth, called a pall, is placed on the casket when it enters the church.

<http://thedrillmaster.org/>

Images for All About the Flag on the Casket | The DrillMaster

Must a pall replace the flag at a funeral Mass? | Catholic Answers

Full Question

Must a pall replace the flag at a funeral Mass?

Answer

A pall does need to replace a flag while the casket is in the church. However, flags can be placed on the casket before or after it is in the church. The Order of Christian Funerals states:

<https://www.catholic.com/qa/must-a-pall-replace-the-flag-at-a-funeral-mass>

Images for Must a pall replace the flag at a funeral Mass? | Catholic Answers

http://www.catholicherald.com/Faith/Flag_over_casket/

9) Whether a “Celebration of Life”

Some of the settings I enter have employed a practice of calling the funeral or memorial service a “celebration of life.” This approach works with a long life well lived but becomes more problematic with a sudden or tragic death at too young an age. I use the terms “funeral” and “memorial service” and set the tone according to the circumstances.

Resources

Don't Force the Celebration at Funerals | Christianity Today

Even knowing the truth of the resurrection, it's still okay to cry.

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2016/march/dont-force-celebration-at-funerals.html>

Images for Don't Force the Celebration at Funerals | Christianity Today

Funerals Are Not Always Celebrations by Paul Beasley-Murray

A day of grief

Recently I went to the funeral of a great friend who died far too young, with still so much to offer. I was devastated by his death, and by its suddenness - only two weeks from diagnosis of cancer to death. I arrived for the church service very much a mourner, but alas, I was given no room to mourn. The funeral was billed as a “Service of Celebration and Thanksgiving”. From start to finish celebration and thanksgiving were the order of the day. Apart from the guest preacher, nobody mentioned the word “pain” or “sorrow”. Instead, we were called to rejoice in the triumph of the risen Christ and in the hope of resurrection which is ours.

Articles – Church Matters - Paul Beasley-Murray

<https://www.paulbeasleymurray.com/articles/> Funerals Are Not Always Celebrations

https://www.paulbeasleymurray.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Funerals_Are_Not_Always_Celebrations_July_2009.pdf

Images for Funerals Are Not Always Celebrations

Funerals vs. Celebrations of Life - Ellis Funeral Home

It's interesting; funerals and celebrations-of-life have much in common, yet they often appear very different.

<http://www.ellisfuneralhomes.com/funerals-vs-celebrations-of-life.html>

http://www.mcvfuneralhomes.com/About_Funerals_and_Celebration_of_Life_1228211.html

Images for Funerals and Celebrations of Life

Blessing of a Dwelling

Entrance

⁸The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.

oremus Bible Browser: [Psalm 121:8](#)

<http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=Psalm+121%3A8&vnum=yes&version=nrsv>

Living Room/Family Room

³⁴I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

oremus Bible Browser: [John 13:34-35](#)

<http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=John+13%3A34-35&version=nrsv>

Study

⁹Give instruction to the wise, and they will become wiser still; teach the righteous and they will gain in learning.

oremus Bible Browser: [Proverbs 9:9](#)

<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=91872304>

Kitchen

^{19a}In response to his people, the LORD said:

I am sending you
grain, wine, and oil,
and you will be satisfied;

^{23a}O children of Zion, be glad
and rejoice in the LORD your God;

Joel 2:19a, 23a NRSV

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Joel+2&version=NRSV>

Dining room

¹⁶You open your hand,
satisfying the desire of every living thing.

oremus Bible Browser : [Psalm 145:16](#)

<http://bible.oremus.org/?passage=Psalm+145>

Bedroom

I will both lie down and sleep in peace; for you alone, O LORD, make me lie down in safety.

oremus Bible Browser: [Psalm 4:8](#)

<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=177678553>

Guest room

Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

oremus Bible Browser: [Romans 15:7](#)

<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=230631447>

Resources

Blessing a home, casting out demons | The Lutheran

Casting out the violation of a shooting and repairing the spirit of a home

Our friends reasoned that if you can fix physical damage with wood and plaster, perhaps you can fix spiritual damage with ritual and faith.

Those repairs would take place, they decided, in a service of blessing for their house that would purge the evil. They knew that it would be too big a job for them alone, so they invited neighbors, friends and members of their church to help.

We gathered, more than 40 of us, in the back yard of their home one night in early October. Black and white, old and young, friends and strangers-we gathered to help repair the spirit of a home.

http://www.thelutheran.org/article/article.cfm?article_id=733

Images for Blessing a home, casting out demons | The Lutheran

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/contact-us/>

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/issues/>

Blessing for a Home

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From *Evangelical Lutheran Worship Pastoral Care: Readings, Prayers, and Occasional Services*

<http://www.sundaysandseasons.com/>

<http://store.augsburgfortress.org/store/product/7474/Evangelical-Lutheran-Worship-Pastoral-Care>

Images for Blessing for a Home