

Eastridge Presbyterian Church
Wedding Guidelines



Eastridge Presbyterian Church

1135 Eastridge Drive

Lincoln, NE 68510

402-488-7844

www.eastridge.org

Revised May 2016

Congratulations! You're engaged to be married!

“Marriage is a gift from God. God created us and gave us marriage so that we may help and comfort each other, living faithfully together in plenty and in want, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, throughout all our days. God gave us marriage for the full expression of love. God gave us marriage for the well being of human society, for the ordering of family life. God gave us marriage as a holy mystery in which two are joined together, and become one, just as Christ is one with the Church. We rejoice that marriage is given by God, blessed by Jesus Christ, and sustained by the Holy Spirit.” (from the Book of Common Worship, 1993)

Since you have made this important decision to become one with each other in the sight of God, we, the staff and members of Eastridge Presbyterian Church desire to prepare you, not only for your wedding day, but also for your life together. We will help you as you plan and prepare for premarital counseling, the wedding service, and its surrounding celebrations. Our staff will work together to provide quality worship for your wedding. We hope this booklet will be helpful as you plan for this very special day in your life.

Please read these pages carefully, and if you have questions, do not hesitate to call the wedding coordinator assigned to your wedding. All guidelines will apply unless permission is granted to make a change prior to the wedding by the Session of Eastridge Presbyterian Church and its pastor.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) views the Marriage Service as a time of corporate worship. The only two things necessary for a marriage are wedding vows and two witnesses – all other aspects of your wedding day come together to form a beautiful worship service. The service, taken from the Book of Common Worship (1993), will include elements of Reformed worship that seeks God’s blessing upon your marriage. Therefore, those getting married at Eastridge Presbyterian Church should profess belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Those who are not Christians will be asked to dialogue about the Christian faith during premarital counseling. It is not necessary for you to be a member of Eastridge Presbyterian Church, nor of the Presbyterian denomination.

All weddings conducted at Eastridge must conform to the policies of the Session of the church, which is the governing body in a local Presbyterian congregation. The Session delegates the supervision of these policies to the pastor of Eastridge, who is in charge of any wedding service, with the assistance of the Wedding Coordinator and the Church Organist.

We look forward to helping you with your wedding arrangements. It is our prayer that God will bless this beginning to your life together as you are united by the vows that you take in God’s presence.

I. Getting Started

1. To get started, call the church office. The Office Manager will check the calendar. If the date is available, the wedding is tentatively scheduled. It is important to do this before locations for a rehearsal dinner and wedding reception are booked to make sure the church sanctuary is available for the date chosen.

2. In those cases where the wedding is not held in the church, the Office Manager will make sure a pastor is available for the date chosen for the wedding.

3. Please note that ordinarily, weddings are not scheduled: the weekend following New Years Day, Holy Week including Easter weekend, Memorial Day weekend, the weekend closest to the Fourth of July, Labor Day weekend, Thanksgiving weekend, the weekend before and after Christmas Day.

4. Upon receipt of your wedding form, your information and wedding date will be given to the pastors. A minister of Eastridge Presbyterian Church will officiate at all of the weddings conducted in our church.

5. Within two weeks, the officiating pastor will call you and arrange a meeting.

6. The intent of the first pre-marital meeting is to counsel you as to the nature of the covenant of marriage within the Christian church.

7. If the assistance of another minister is desired, our minister will be pleased to extend the invitation to participate once that request has been considered by the Session of Eastridge Presbyterian Church and permission is granted by the Session.

8. With the Session's approval, the date is confirmed. You will be notified of this confirmation the next day, and your deposit is due. We cannot confirm your reserved date until we receive the completed form and your deposit. Members of the church just need to return the reservation form. No deposit is required of church members.

9. No less than three months before the wedding, the officiating pastor will meet with you for relationship counseling. In some cases, other arrangements are possible. If another pastor is co-officiating and requires specific counseling, or the couple attends a satisfactory retreat weekend, this will meet this requirement.

10. Our pastors are certified Prepare - Enrich pre-marital counselors. If taken seriously, this counseling can be a time to prepare for the covenant of marriage, and enrich your life together. Couples will be asked to take an on-line survey, and will then meet with their officiating pastor 3-5 times to discuss the results.

11. No more than one month before the wedding, a final session with the pastor may be scheduled to discuss the worship service. Wedding and ring vows, scripture passages and other aspects of the service will be finalized at this time.

II. General Information

1. Without a marriage license, weddings cannot happen. There is no exception. The couple is responsible for providing the marriage license and marriage certificate.
2. A marriage license, marriage certificate and final fee payment must be delivered to the church office one week before the ceremony. This will give the minister time to fill it out prior to the wedding. The information needed to fill out the certificate includes the names and mailing addresses of the Best Man and the Maid or Matron of Honor. These two individuals will be asked to meet with the pastor the day of the wedding to sign these documents.
3. Most wedding services last about 25-35 minutes. The service is preceded by approximately 30 minutes of music, and up to 30 minutes of music may follow the service.
4. Children participating in the wedding should be old enough to perform their roles without undue distraction. We recommend a minimum age of 5 years old.
5. Use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs is NOT permitted on the church premises.
6. Church members may arrive any time after the church opens at 7:00 am. Non-members may arrive three hours prior to the service.
7. Dropping real flower petals is not permitted. Other petals are discouraged.
8. Aisle runners are not permitted.
9. If the couple desires to celebrate the Sacrament of Communion or a Renewal of Baptism, every effort will be made to include it as a part of the service. Please note that in the Presbyterian Church (USA), both of these sacraments must be approved by the Session. They also require planning and prayerful consideration.
10. If Communion is a part of the service, it must be made available to all who are present. All believers in Jesus Christ will be invited to partake.

III. Wedding Coordinator Services

1. Once your date is approved, one of the coordinators will contact you. She will be available throughout the planning process to answer your questions.
2. Approximately four-six weeks before the ceremony, she will meet with you to finalize your wedding plans.
3. She will coordinate the rehearsal and supervise all aspects of the wedding day. On the wedding day, she will be at church three hours before the ceremony, and up to one hour after the ceremony's completion.
4. Weddings with a large guest list and/or number of attendants, and/or having special requests (i.e., communion) may require an additional fee of \$75 for an assistant coordinator.

IV. Music Selection

1. As soon as a date for the wedding has been approved, you are responsible for contacting our church organist/pianist, Patty Niemann, to set a meeting date for the purpose of selecting music.
2. This meeting should take place no later than four months before the wedding date. Patty can be contacted at pniemann54@gmail.com
3. Once a meeting date has been selected, Patty will email you a list of approved music selections.
4. Requested music, not found on this approved list, must be pre-approved by the senior pastor and the pastor conducting your wedding. Any new requested music will need to be purchased, by the couple, in accordance with copyright laws. An additional fee may be requested depending on the time necessary to prepare any new selection(s).
5. When choosing music, it is important to remember your wedding is a worship service and all music selected should be appropriate for such a service.
6. Patty's fee includes the music selection meeting, 30 minutes of pre-service music, one selection during the service, and 30 minutes of post-service music.
7. Patty will help coordinate the involvement of any musicians who are invited to participate in the service. Use of the sanctuary organ, by a visiting organist, can only take place after a consultation meeting with Patty.
8. If Patty is not available to play for your wedding, she will find a competent substitute to play in her absence.

V. Photography/Video

1. If pictures are taken in the sanctuary before the wedding, plan to vacate the sanctuary at least 45 minutes before the start of the wedding.
2. Photographers (professional and friends/family) are asked not to take pictures with a flash during the wedding ceremony.
3. Photographers and videographers are requested to remain behind the last rows of seated guests during the ceremony. The balcony is available for their use during the ceremony.
4. Photographers and videographers are not allowed in the chancel area during the service. Our pastors are happy to recreate any moments of the ceremony after the service is over.
5. A stationary video camera may be placed inconspicuously in the chancel to record the entire wedding. It must be placed and turned on before the guests are seated, and removed only after the guests have exited. NO videographers, photographers or supplemental lighting is permitted in the chancel area.
6. Eastridge Presbyterian Church does not provide audio CD or DVD recording of the wedding ceremony.

VI. The Church Facilities

1. 73' aisle from doorway to bottom step of chancel
2. The sanctuary has 40 pews; 20 pews on each side of the aisle. With six people comfortably seated in a pew, 320 guests can be accommodated. If crowded, with 7-8 people in a pew, 360 guests can be accommodated. These estimates include the balcony seating.
3. If you choose to use aisle candleholders or candelabras, you will need to rent them from an outside vender. No wax candles may be used in the rented candleholders.
4. **ONLY** unity candles may be wax. All unity candles, holders, flowers and greenery must be provided by the couple.
5. Pew decorations may be used. However, all pew decorations must be temporary. Any permanent changes to our pews (requiring screws, nails, staples or pins, etc.) are not allowed.
6. Flower stands in several heights are available.
7. Dressing rooms are available.
8. A small kitchen is available for serving food to the wedding party prior to the wedding. You should provide all the paper goods and utensils.
9. A reminder...if you plan to use any of these items, you are responsible for providing them.

Unity candle/candle holders	Guest Book
Tablecloth for guest book	Paper goods, utensils, serving pieces
Bulletins/Programs	

VII. Wedding Fees

Fees include:

1. Use of the Sanctuary and designated dressing areas/classrooms
2. An honorarium for the officiating Eastridge minister
3. Organist fees
4. AV technician fees
5. Wedding coordinator fees. Larger weddings may require an assistant wedding coordinator and an additional \$75 fee.
6. Custodian fees include preparing and cleaning
7. Prepare - Enrich premarital counseling on-line survey

All participants not associated with Eastridge Presbyterian Church will be paid by the couple.

Facility reservation is not official until the deposit is received.

The final check for all wedding fees should be submitted with marriage license and marriage certificate one week before the wedding.

**Please make your check payable to: Eastridge Presbyterian Church
1135 Eastridge Drive
Lincoln, NE 68510.**

Total fee for non-members, including \$125 deposit: **\$ 925**
Total fee for members: **\$ 800**

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Wedding Reservation Form

Welcome! We're glad you've decided to celebrate your wedding with us. Please complete this form and return it to the church office. Your date will be confirmed as soon as we receive the completed form and a non-refundable deposit of \$125. (The deposit will be applied to the overall wedding fees.) Make check payable to Eastridge Presbyterian Church. (Please note: wedding deposit.)

It is expected that Eastridge clergy, organist, and wedding coordinator participate in all weddings held at Eastridge, unless prior arrangements are made with Eastridge clergy, organist, wedding coordinator and permission is granted by Session.

Bride's name: _____ Member of what church: _____

Bride's complete address: _____ Phone number: _____

Email: _____

Groom's name: _____ Member of what church: _____

Groom's complete address: _____ Phone number: _____

Email: _____

Address after marriage: _____

Rehearsal Date: _____ **Rehearsal Time:** _____

Wedding Date: _____ **Wedding Time:** _____

Officiating Minister: _____ Guest Pastor: _____

Organist: _____ Liturgist: _____

Vocalist: _____

Additional Musicians: _____

Rehearsal Dinner Location: _____ Dinner Time: _____

Wedding Reception Location: _____ Reception Time: _____

I have read and accept the "Wedding Guidelines for Eastridge Presbyterian Church" and will cooperate accordingly:

Signature of Bride: _____ **Signature of Groom:** _____

Please list any special requests for your wedding and/or reception as to personnel, church, facilities, procedures, etc.