

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 enter marriage, 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 will include elements of Reformed worship that seeks God's blessing upon your marriage. 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 oversees 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 to confirm if your date is available. 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 closest to 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 the weddings conducted in our church.
5. The officiating pastor will call you and arrange a premarital meeting.

6. The intent of the first pre-marital meeting is to learn a little more about you, share expectations with each other, and discuss the nature of the covenant of marriage.
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, 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. 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. 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. Wedding Coordinator Services

1. Once your date is approved, a wedding coordinator will contact you. They will be available throughout the planning process to answer your questions.
2. Approximately four-six weeks before the ceremony, they will meet with you to finalize your wedding plans.
3. They will coordinate the rehearsal and supervise all aspects of the wedding day in regard to the church and its building. On the wedding day, they will be at church 1 ½ 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.

III. Music Selection

1. Four to six weeks before the wedding the organist will contact you.
2. Once a meeting date has been selected, someone will email you a list of approved music selections.
3. Requested music must be approved by the officiating pastor. Any new requested music will need to be purchased, by the couple, in accordance with copyright laws.
4. When choosing music, it is important to remember your wedding is a worship service and all the selected music should be appropriate for such a service.
5. Use of the sanctuary organ, by a visiting organist, must be following conversation with the church organist.

IV. 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 payment fee 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 are a joy! Please consider the meaningful role you are asking of them. This includes age and understanding, and will help make their participation a joy for all. We recommend a minimum age of 5 years old.
5. Use of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs is NOT permitted on the church premises – no exceptions.
6. 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 sacraments must be approved by the Session. They also require planning and prayerful consideration.
7. If communion is a part of the service, it must be made available to all who are present.

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.

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. **ONLY** unity candles may be wax. All unity candles, holders, flowers and greenery must be provided by the couple.
4. Pew decorations may be used. However, all pew decorations must be temporary. Any permanent changes to our pews (requiring screws, nails, staples, tape or pins, etc.) are not allowed.
5. Flower stands in several heights are available.
6. Dressing rooms are available.
7. A small kitchen is available for serving food to the wedding party prior to the wedding.
8. A reminder...if you plan to use any of these items, you are responsible for providing them.
 - Unity candle/candle holders
 - Guest Book
 - 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 and streaming fees
5. Wedding coordinator fees. Larger weddings may require an assistant wedding coordinator and an additional \$75 fee.
6. 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:	\$ 925
Total fee for members:	\$ 800



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.

Information on the couple:

Name:

Address (including zip):

Phone:

Email:

Member of what church:

Name:

Address (including zip):

Phone:

Email:

Member of what church:

Address after marriage:

Rehearsal Date:

Rehearsal Time:

Wedding Date:

Wedding Time:

Officiating Minister:

Guest Pastor:

Organist:

Additional Musicians:

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

Signatures: _____

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