

# Weddings at Zion Lutheran



Zion Lutheran Church  
1732 S Main St  
Aberdeen, SD 57401  
(605) 225-6755  
[www.zionlutheranaberndeen.org](http://www.zionlutheranaberndeen.org)  
[zion@nvc.net](mailto:zion@nvc.net)

*“There is no more lovely, friendly, and charming relationship,  
communion, or company than a good marriage.”  
– Martin Luther*

## CONGRATULATIONS!

We're happy that you have chosen to be married at Zion Lutheran Church. It's a joy for us to help in your planning and to share this experience with you. God's people come to God's house for worship, prayer, and the meaningful experiences in their lives. Marriage is one of those experiences.

We believe that marriage is rooted in the steadfast love of God and that God's faithfulness and self-giving love is the model for the relationship between husband and wife. Marriage is a mutual promise of fidelity where husband and wife promise life-long faithfulness to each other. In the church God's people come together and corporately ask God's blessing on your marriage and give thanks for that blessing.

We have designed this booklet to help you in planning the details of your wedding at Zion. It provides the information you need to make your wedding a wonderful milestone of life and faith. Please read through this booklet before you meet with the pastor to begin your wedding and marriage preparation.

We look forward to praying with you and for you as you prepare for this exciting day!

# Wedding & Marriage Preparation Checklist

## ☐ Schedule Wedding Date and Time

Contact Zion Lutheran Church to set the wedding date and rehearsal date. Please try to do this **at least three months** before the anticipated time of the ceremony and before you make other arrangements. Weddings are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. Only one wedding will be held on any given day, and at times, the pastor's schedule may not allow for a wedding.

**Weddings will be scheduled at the church only after consulting the staff at Zion, completing and returning the Wedding Information Form, receiving confirmation from the staff that the date and time are available, and submitting the \$100 deposit to the office.**

Weddings at Zion are available to current members and children of current members. Non-members who are seeking a church home and want to become active members at Zion may have their weddings at Zion at the pastor's discretion.

Current members of Zion have first priority when reserving a wedding date. Non-members will only be allowed to reserve a date up to 9 months in advance. A \$100 non-refundable deposit will secure the date and will be applied to the total costs. The deposit is due when you schedule your wedding.

Please note that weddings will normally not be scheduled on the following days:

New Year's Eve and New Year's Day  
Holy Week (Palm Sunday through Easter)  
Memorial Day  
Synod Assembly Weekend (usually the first weekend in June)  
Independence Day (July 4th)  
Thanksgiving Day  
Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

Off-site weddings are entirely at the pastor's choice and availability.

## □ Initial Planning Meeting with Pastor

The pastor will have an initial meeting shortly after your wedding is scheduled. Please keep in mind that the minimum time required to complete all wedding arrangements and pre-marriage counseling is three months. Ultimately, the pastor has the final say on all wedding plans.

Only a called and ordained pastor of this congregation will preside at weddings at Zion. Guest pastors, ministers, or priests can be invited to be part of the service, but not in place of a Zion pastor. If you want to have a clergy person from outside of Zion participate in the service (for example, a guest pastor could preach the homily), first consult with the pastor at Zion.

## □ Premarital counseling – minimum of two sessions

All couples married at Zion Lutheran are required to participate in pre-marriage preparation sessions with a licensed counselor. These are designed to help you look at yourself, your partner, and your relationship as you prepare for married life together.

You can arrange for these counseling sessions through Lutheran Social Services in Aberdeen. This consists of two sessions, each lasting about an hour. The cost will be approximately \$125 (in addition to \$35 for an online couple's assessment). A report will then be forwarded to the Zion pastor. Any proposed wedding date is tentative until these sessions are complete. If you live away from the Aberdeen area, alternate counseling arrangements can be made with a congregation in your area. Please talk to the Zion pastor about these arrangements.

For Aberdeen, contact:  
Brian Grandpre, LSS Counseling Services  
110 6<sup>th</sup> Ave SE, Suite 200  
605-262-6300 / 1-800-584-9248  
[www.LssSD.org](http://www.LssSD.org)

It is highly recommended that this counseling be scheduled as far in advance of the wedding as is practical, so that you will have the time to discuss the issues that are raised during these sessions.

## ☐ Meet with the Organist/Pianist

The Zion organist/pianist plays for all weddings at Zion. In the event that she has a scheduling conflict with your wedding date, she'll provide names of other local organists who are approved to play our organ. She will also be able to assist you in music selection and help find vocalists and/or instrumentalists for your wedding. You should plan to consult with her regarding music selection at least three months prior to the wedding.

The use of prerecorded music played through the sound system (as a substitute for live music) is strongly discouraged. There are a variety of options for your wedding music, such as organ, piano, soloist or vocal ensembles with organ/piano, acoustic guitar, string quartets.

Our organist will be able to assist you in music selection and to help you with vocalists and instrumentalists. Since schedules fill up fast, it is important to contact the organist and soloist (if using one) as soon as your wedding date has been confirmed. It is the responsibility of the couple to contact all of the musicians.

If you wish to have another organist play, that person first must be approved by and meet with the Zion organist.

Contact Sonya Kempf at Zion  
605-225-6755

## ☐ Meet with wedding coordinator

A wedding coordinator is required for all Zion weddings. She will assist in your general plans for the wedding and will guide you through the details for the rehearsal and wedding day. She will also lead the wedding rehearsal and be present on the day of the wedding. The wedding coordinator will contact you to schedule this meeting well in advance of your wedding day.

## ☐ Meet with the pastor (1-2 meetings in addition to initial meeting with the pastor)

The pastor will meet with you one or two more times, and **these meetings should be completed at least two weeks before the wedding.** The pastor will talk with

you about your relationship, marriage, faith in Jesus Christ, and guide you through planning the wedding service.

### **☐ Secure a marriage license**

South Dakota law requires couples to secure a license to marry. You may apply for a license at the Register of Deeds Office in any South Dakota courthouse a maximum of 20 days and a minimum of 5 days before the wedding. The marriage license should be brought to the church office by Monday before the rehearsal and wedding. It is recommended that you drop off the license as soon as you get it.

### **☐ Wedding fees**

In order to receive the member rate, you must be an active member of Zion Lutheran Church for a full year prior to your wedding date.

	<u>Member</u>	<u>Non-member</u>
Use of sanctuary	\$0	\$200
Use of fellowship hall for reception	\$100	\$200
Use of kitchen for reception	free will offering	\$20
Sound System	\$75	\$75
Sound System, if only recorded music is used	\$100	\$100
Custodian if reception is not held at the church	\$75	\$75
Custodian if reception is held at the church	\$125	\$125
Pastor	optional honorarium (suggested \$100-\$150)	\$200

	<u>Member</u>	<u>Non-member</u>
TalkPoints book	\$11	\$11
Wedding Coordinator	\$100	\$100
Organist & Soloist	arrange with musician(s) and pay them directly musician(s)	arrange with musician(s)
Premarriage preparation	arrange with counselor (usually approx. \$125)	arrange with counselor (usually approx. \$125)

Off-site weddings (member or non-member): \$250 plus mileage (at current IRS rate)

All monetary gifts and/or fees (**except** for the organist/soloist(s)/musician(s) and the pre-marriage counselor) may be paid with one check written to "Zion Lutheran Church" and **are due in the church office one week before the wedding.**

## *A Christian Wedding Service*

### **Planning the wedding service**

As you meet with the pastor to plan your service, we encourage you to bring ideas about ways to personalize your wedding. Of course, what is done in the service should be appropriate to a service of worship and consistent with the Christian understanding of marriage.

**Order of service** (see example on the last page of this booklet.)

The order of service most often used at Zion Lutheran is to be found page 287 of the Evangelical Lutheran Worship book. Some changes will be permitted upon the request of the bride and groom, as long as such changes are consistent with the sacred nature of the service.

## Selecting Scripture Readings

You are encouraged to select scripture that will be consistent with themes you want to emphasize. Two or three readings is appropriate. Members of your family or wedding party may serve as readers of the scripture you select. Or, you may have the pastor do the readings. Readings during the wedding service shall only be from the 66 canonical books of the Bible. Below is a list of possible scripture readings:

Genesis 1:26-31	Matthew 19:4-6
Genesis 2:18-24	Mark 10:6-9
Deuteronomy 6:4-9	Luke 8:4-8
Ruth 1:12-18	Luke 12:22-30
Psalms 33:1-9	John 2:1-10
Psalms 100	John 15:9-17
Psalms 117	Romans 12:1-2
Psalms 117	1 Corinthians 6:13-20
Psalms 127	1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13
Psalms 128	Ephesians 5:21-33
Psalms 136	Philippians 2:1-11
Psalms 150	Philippians 4:4-8
Ecclesiastes 3:1-12	Colossians 3:12-17
Song of Songs 2:10-13	1 Peter 3:1-9
Song of Songs 8:7	1 John 3:18-24
Hosea 1-3	1 John 4:7-12

Please share your scripture choices with the Pastor.

## The Vows

Wedding vows are one of the most important parts of your wedding. They represent the promises you make before God and to each other as you begin your life together as husband and wife. Your vows will shape your marriage. Below are some vows that you may choose. You can also combine them to make them your own.

Alternatively, you may choose to compose your own vows for the ceremony. If you do, please remember that a vow is more than a declaration of love. It must include



a promise of lifelong commitment (i.e. until death parts you). Your pastor will preview your vows prior to your wedding day.

- #1: I take you, \_\_\_\_\_, 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 (LBW)
- #2: I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you \_\_\_\_\_, to be my wife (husband), to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, until death parts us, according to God's holy law; and for this I promise you my faithfulness (SBH - red book, Service Book and Hymnal).
- #3: I take you \_\_\_\_\_, to be my wife (husband), and these things I promise you: I will be faithful to you and honest with you. I will respect, trust, help and care for you; I will share my life with you; I will forgive you as we have been forgiven; and I will try with you better to understand ourselves, the world, and God; through the best and worst of what is to come, until death parts us.
- #4: I take you \_\_\_\_\_, 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 in 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.
- #5: \_\_\_\_\_, 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.

## **Before the Service**

You may arrive up to 4 hours before your wedding begins. Everything must be removed 1/2 hour after the ceremony has ended.

The ushers should arrive about forty-five minutes prior to the beginning of the service, unless they are asked to be part of the pictures.

Candles should be lighted approximately 10 to 15 minutes before the beginning of the wedding service if they are to be lighted by the ushers. If you have chosen specific people to be candle lighters, the candles may be lit immediately before the seating of the parents.

No guests will be seated after the parents have been seated until the bridal party has entered the sanctuary.

### **Following the Service**

When the wedding has concluded, please be sure that all decorations, flowers, and candles that you have provided are removed from the sanctuary. In addition, assign a person to check to see if anyone has left clothing or valuables in the church. These items may then be taken to the reception. Please make sure all garbage is placed in the garbage cans. It is the responsibility of the wedding party to leave the church in as good a condition as possible following the wedding.

# *Music for the Wedding Service*

The Marriage Service is a service of worship, and the music therefore must be carefully and discriminately chosen. It should embody high standards of quality and the texts should reflect the praise of God, the steadfast love of Christ for his church as the foundation and model for love and fidelity in marriage, the invocation of God's presence and blessing. In every case, music selected should be of high quality and not cloud the mood of the service with triteness or sentimentality.

In summary, if you can answer "yes" to all of the following questions, the music you propose is probably appropriate:

- + Does this music and its text/lyrics reflect praise to God?
- + Is it based on or does it reflect a scriptural theme?
- + Is it appropriate for use in a regular service of worship?
- + Is the music within the ability of the musicians to play or sing with assurance?

All music must be approved by the pastor in consultation with the organist/pianist. The wedding bulletin must be approved by the pastor prior to its printing.

## *Other Details*

### **BULLETINS**

The wedding bulletin reminds your guests that your wedding is a worship service and that they are joining together with you, as you worship God on this special day in your life. If you wish to have a wedding bulletin, you may choose among various covers at one of the local print shops or wedding supply stores.

The pastor will help you prepare the order of service which is printed on the inside of the bulletin. Carefully proofread the final copy of your bulletin before it is printed. Be sure that you have accurately spelled the names of all the people who are participating in the wedding and who are listed in your bulletin.

## **DECORATIONS AND FLOWERS**

- The altar candles, candelabras, sanctuary candle, and Paschal Candle are part of the normal furnishings of the church and are not to be moved or removed for a wedding. The candles on the altar will normally be lit during your wedding. Please plan your choice of wedding decorations around these permanent fixtures.
- Any pew decorations will be the responsibility of the bridal party. Please take care that nothing that is attached to the pews leaves a mark on the wood (no tape). The use of candles as pew decorations is not allowed because of the danger to guests and the bridal party.
- Please ask the officiating pastor when it will be possible to decorate the church for your wedding and reception.
- Only real flowers are to be placed on the altar. We also have flower stands available.
- If you wish to leave flowers for the Sunday worship service, please inform the pastor. This will allow the church to properly recognize your gift on Sunday morning.
- We do not allow white aisle runners as they pose a tripping hazard on the carpeted floor for the wedding party and they are very difficult to keep straight.
- Your wedding will be held during one of the many seasons of the church year and the chancel paraments have the color and symbols of that particular season. Together with the large banners on the wall behind the altar, they cannot be changed or removed for the wedding.

## **DRESSING ROOMS**

The bride and her bridesmaids may choose to dress at home or the church. The nursery, located near the restrooms, is available for use as a dressing room. Included in the nursery is a full-length mirror.

The groom and his attendants may dress in classrooms A&B or upstairs in a Sunday School room (not air conditioned).

The church is not responsible for personal belongings left in these rooms during the wedding. We suggest that you assign someone to be responsible for checking to make sure no items are left behind after the wedding.

## **GIFTS**

Families are responsible for any gifts brought to the church. Arrangements should be made for the protection of the gifts before and during the service and for taking the gifts from the church building following the wedding or reception.

## **GUEST BOOK**

A guest book table and tablecloth will be provided by the church. The bridal party is responsible for placing the Guest Book in the Narthex. It is recommended that you have two pens to be used for signing the guest book.

## **GUESTS' CONDUCT**

As the wedding is set within the context of worship, participants and guests are expected to conduct themselves accordingly. **THE USE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND ILLEGAL DRUGS ARE NOT PERMITTED ON THE CHURCH PREMISES (BUILDING OR PARKING LOT)** for any reason (not even on a party bus). Please make this known to all participants. If alcohol is found inside the building or in the parking lot, the pastor reserves the right to cancel the wedding. Persons under the influence of alcohol or other controlled substances will not be permitted to participate in the wedding.

The pastor reserves the right to halt the ceremony if a member of the wedding party or a guest is behaving in an inappropriate manner.

Smoking is prohibited in the building. **NO FOOD or BEVERAGES** are permitted in the sanctuary at any time.

## **PARKING**

All vehicles should be removed from the parking lot immediately following the wedding so that these spaces are available for Sunday morning use.

## **PASTOR AND FAMILY INVITATION**

If you wish the pastor be present at the rehearsal dinner or the reception, please extend an invitation prior to the rehearsal and indicate whether the pastor's spouse

and family are included in the invitation. Please know, though, that the pastor usually needs the remainder of the day to prepare for Sunday worship.

## **PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOS**

Most people contract with a professional photographer to photograph or videotape their wedding. No flash pictures should be taken during the worship service. Flash pictures may be taken during the procession and the recession. Any pictures taken during the ceremony must be done from the back of the church.

If you wish to videotape your wedding, please have the person who is doing the videotaping discuss this with the pastor before the service begins. It is important that this process be as inconspicuous as possible so that it does not detract from the ceremony. All video cameras must be stationary and on a tripod.

Please inform your family and friends that no pictures are to be taken during the service while seated in the sanctuary. Allow those family and friends who wish to take pictures to do so before or after the ceremony. As a matter of courtesy to our reception guests, you should consider taking your wedding pictures prior to the service.

## **PUNCTUALITY / TIMING**

It is courteous to your guests, as well as an aid to a "stress-free" wedding ceremony, if the ceremony begins at the scheduled time. The guest book should be closed 10 minutes prior to the starting time (guests can sign afterwards) and the remaining guests ushered in. The mother of the bride is to be seated at the time the wedding is scheduled to begin. She is the signal to everyone that the wedding is ready to begin.

## **RECEPTIONS AT ZION**

If you wish to use the Fellowship Hall at Zion Lutheran Church for your wedding reception, it is the responsibility of the wedding party to contact the Wedding Reception Committee at the church and to discuss the necessary arrangements/fees. Please contact the church office for a name and number at 225-6755.

## **REHEARSAL**

Rehearsals are to be scheduled when the wedding day is scheduled. It normally occurs at 5:30 p.m. the evening before the wedding. All members of the wedding party (bride, groom, bridesmaids, groomsmen, flower girls, ring-bearers, ushers, and parents of the bride and groom) should be present at the time scheduled for the rehearsal. It is also important that the soloist/ organist/musician(s) be present. The pastor will walk the wedding party through the service from beginning to end. Please urge all who are to be present to be prompt so that your rehearsal can begin on time. Allow approximately one hour for the rehearsal.

**Please note:** Any music on a CD/iPod must be available for the sound operator on the night of the rehearsal. The couple is responsible for downloading music and/or purchasing the CD.

## **RICE / BIRDSEED**

Throwing rice, birdseed, glitter, or confetti is not allowed either inside the church or outside in the parking lot. If you wish, bubble dispensers may be distributed after the ceremony only to be used after the couple has left the Sanctuary.

Please be careful not to leave litter scattered around the parking lot or curbside which might blow onto someone else's yard. The church's neighbors would appreciate it if people would not honk their horns or make loud noises after 9:00 PM.

## **SANCTUARY SEATING**

The sanctuary can comfortably seat 235 people. The sanctuary is air-conditioned during the summer months. The temperature is preset and cannot be adjusted.

## **SMOKING**

No smoking is permitted inside the church building. There are cigarette receptacles outside the NE and NW doors of the Fellowship Hall. Please use the receptacles provided and do not discard cigarettes on the ground.

## **SOUNDBOARD OPERATOR**

A trained sound operator will be provided to operate the sound board. The operator is also responsible for setting up microphones and practicing with musicians. He/she will be at your rehearsal and available one hour prior to the wedding service. If you use recorded music please have the recording/device available at the rehearsal.

## **UNITY CANDLE OR SAND CEREMONY**

The Unity Candle and Sand Ceremony are meaningful symbols that are often used in marriage services. Zion has an oil base unity candle you can use. A table will be provided for the Unity Candle and/or the Sand Ceremony.

## **USHERS**

It is recommended that a minimum of one usher per 75 guests be present to seat guests and family members. More ushers will be needed if you intend to invite more than 150 guests. Groomsmen may serve as ushers.



*Notes*

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# Planning Notes

How many pews should be reserved in front for parents, grandparents, and relatives, allowing for seven persons per pew? \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any special seating arrangements for family? (e.g. if parents are divorced/remarried)

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Ushers:

- Who will usher the parents of the bride? \_\_\_\_\_
- Who will usher the parents of the groom? \_\_\_\_\_
- Who will light candles (unless you have a candlelighter)? \_\_\_\_\_

Order of the wedding party (where will they stand and who will be matched with whom:

Bridesmaids:

Groomsmen:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(maid/matron of honor)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(best man)

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How will the bridesmaids walk down the aisle?

- alone                       with the groomsmen

Where will you hold your receiving line?

- at the church               at the reception

Would you like Holy Communion to be served?     Yes     No

How would you like to be introduced at the end of the service?

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Who will be the witnesses (2) to sign the marriage license (usually the maid of honor and best man; license will be signed before the service)

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For setup purposes, please check the items below you plan to include in your wedding day:

- Guest book table (guest book provided by couple)
- Gift table: will you provide your own linens?     Yes     No
- Programs/bulletins (printed by couple)

NOTE: If you choose not to print a bulletin, you will still need to provide a printed order of service for the musicians and sound board operator.

- Unity candle (provided by couple)

Who will be responsible for tending to the cards and gifts? \_\_\_\_\_

What time do you need the church opened on the wedding day? \_\_\_\_\_

List who will be ushered in immediately before the processional. The typical order is grandparents of the groom (paternal, then maternal), grandparents of the bride (paternal, then maternal), parents of the groom, mother of the bride.

\_\_\_\_\_ ushered by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ushered by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ushered by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ushered by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ushered by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ushered by \_\_\_\_\_

THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY UNITING

Name and Name  
Zion Lutheran Church  
Aberdeen, South Dakota

Prelude \_\_\_\_\_

Processional \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Greeting, Declaration of Intention, & Prayer

\* Song (Solo or Hymn) \_\_\_\_\_

Scripture Readings (2 or 3)

Homily/Sermon

\* Song (Solo or Hymn) \_\_\_\_\_

Marriage Vows

Exchange of Rings

Announcement of Marriage

Lighting of the Unity Candle / Sand Ceremony (optional)

\* Song (Solo or Hymn) \_\_\_\_\_

Marriage Blessing

Prayers & Lord's Prayer (spoken or solo)

Holy Communion (if desired, begins after the Prayers)

Benediction

Recessional \_\_\_\_\_

Postlude \_\_\_\_\_

THE WEDDING PARTY

OFFICIANT \_\_\_\_\_

PARENTS OF THE BRIDE \_\_\_\_\_

PARENTS OF THE GROOM \_\_\_\_\_

MAID OF HONOR \_\_\_\_\_

BRIDESMAIDS \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

FLOWER GIRL \_\_\_\_\_

BEST MAN \_\_\_\_\_

GROOMSMEN \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

RING BEARER \_\_\_\_\_

USHERS \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

ORGANIST \_\_\_\_\_

SOLOIST (OR OTHER MUSICIANS) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PERSONAL ATTENDANT \_\_\_\_\_

RECEPTION HOSTS \_\_\_\_\_

\* suggested placement for special music selection