Table of Contents

Congratulations	2
Scheduling	2
Pre-Marriage Counseling	3
Wedding Coordinator	4
Fees, Honorariums and Deposits	5
Music	6
Technical Support	7
Receptions at Gloria Dei	8
Facilities and Equipment	8
Legal and Safety Requirements	10
Photography	11
Florists and Decorators	12
Catering	13
Marriage License	14
Rehearsal	15
Usher Guidelines	15
Wedding Timeline	17
Frequently Asked Questions	19
Insert 1- Wedding Application	
Insert 2 - Suggested Order of Service	
Insert 3 - Wedding Details form	

Table of Contents

Congratulations

Congratulations on your engagement! We are pleased that you are considering Gloria Dei Lutheran Church as the site for your upcoming wedding ceremony. We will do what we can to help you make your wedding a joyful and memorable occasion.

Your wedding service will be a worshipful celebration of unity that emphasizes Christian marriage, conducted by one of our Gloria Dei ministers in consultation with you. Every couple will enjoy a time of pre-marital counseling with our pastors. We strive to establish a relationship with each couple because you are special in God's eyes and in our eyes as well.

So that your wedding preparations go as smoothly as possible, we would like you to read the following guidelines carefully.

Congratulations

Scheduling

Couples interested in holding their wedding at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church should contact the wedding administrative assistant (281-333-4535) who will answer initial questions and provide the guidelines and an application. The guidelines and application are also available online at www.gdlc.org.

When the completed wedding application along with the appropriate deposit and counseling fee are submitted, the wedding administrative assistant will confirm the wedding date and reserve it on the calendar. Weddings generally occur on Fridays and Saturdays. Weddings are not held at Gloria Dei on Sundays, in the month of December, New Year's Eve or Day, or during Holy Week. Please do not announce your date until confirmation is received from the church.

Your wedding coordinator will contact you within ten days of the confirmation. From this time on, all questions or concerns should be directed to the wedding coordinator.

Scheduling

Counseling

Pre-marriage counseling is required for all couples married at Gloria Dei. Because you desire to have your wedding ceremony here, we want to support your marriage and its continual growth. Our primary influence will be for you to attend worship and become involved in the life of the church family. We strive to inspire, encourage and equip couples to establish a Christian home and to enter into this sacred relationship not only committed to one another but with a firm commitment to Jesus Christ.

Pre-Marriage Seminar

Pre-Marriage Counseling is offered, in a seminar format, typically the first Saturdays of March and August from 10:00-4:00 pm. A month before the Pre-Marriage Seminar the couple will receive an invitation. Please respond with an RSVP via email. During the seminar the couple will meet other couples and have meaningful discussions about Christian marriage.

After the Pre-Marriage Seminar, the couple will receive an online marriage assessment that will be completed separately. Upon completion of the assessment, the counseling pastor will schedule a meeting with the couple to discuss the results of the assessment. This may or may not be the same pastor as the one who is officiating the ceremony.

Also at this meeting, the couple will turn in the Suggested Order of Service to the counseling pastor. He may ask for additional counseling sessions, if needed, to consult with the couple.

Coordinator

A Wedding Coordinator will be assigned to assist with the planning process and arrangements up to and including your wedding day. The Wedding Coordinator is a representative of Gloria Dei whose organizational skills and knowledge will assist you in making your wedding meaningful. She will contact you and set up an appointment to discuss the specifics of the wedding arrangements, the rehearsal and the wedding service, including the reception if it is held at the church.

Wedding Coordinator

The Wedding Coordinator will:

- ◊ Contact you within ten days of approval of your wedding application.
- ◊ Meet with you and be available by phone or e-mail as needed during the engagement and again, not less than two weeks prior to the wedding, to finalize the wedding plans .
- ◊ Contact the florists, decorators, photographers, and caterers to advise them of the church's guidelines, set up schedules, and oversee their activities on your wedding day.
- ◊ Contact you not less than one week prior to the wedding to check on all preparations and interact with the church staff to arrange for the setup and cleanup of facilities.
- ◊ Direct the wedding rehearsal and the usher training. Rehearsals should start and end on time and last one hour.
- ◊ Facilitate the activities on the wedding day, open the facilities to all parties, direct and coordinate the activities of the day.
- ◊ Provide direction and assistance before and during the wedding service so that the wedding takes place according to schedule.

Wedding Fees

"Hold the date" Wedding Deposit (refundable) $200

Chapel Wedding

Fees include:

◊	Facilities rental	none
◊	Facilities Coordinator	$ 75
◊	Pre-marital counseling	$175
◊	Officiating Pastor's Honorarium	$200
◊	Wedding Coordinator	$150
◊	Organist or keyboardist	$200
◊	Technical support	$100
		TOTAL = $900

For a wedding in the Worship Center, the additional facility fee is $200

Reception Fees

Reception Deposit (refundable)	$250
Life Center Auditorium	$500
Tablecloth rental (limited quantity)	$10 each
Uniformed Police Officer, if alcohol is served	(as contracted)

The wedding deposit (and reception deposit, if held at Gloria Dei) is due with the Wedding Application at the time you set the date for your wedding. The deposit is refundable after the wedding, if the wedding guidelines have been followed. Should the wedding be cancelled, the deposit is refundable 30 days prior to the wedding date, with appropriate notification to the Wedding Coordinator or the Officiating Pastor. Additional fees may be charged for music and technical personnel (see notes under Music and Technical sections). The remaining fees, payable to Gloria Dei, are due to your wedding coordinator two weeks prior to your wedding.

Music

Reverence and dignity appropriate for a Christian marriage should be the basis for selecting the wedding music. Many appropriate selections are available and the Church Organist or the Worship Director will be delighted to assist you with your selections. Secular "pop" songs and Broadway show music would be appropriate at rehearsal dinners and wedding receptions but are not considered to be appropriate for the religious ceremony.

The Church Organist or the Worship Director will schedule accompanists for any wedding conducted in the Chapel or Worship Center, whether the music is traditional or contemporary. Please contact the Church Organist or Worship Director as soon as your wedding has been scheduled to ensure their availability. The wedding coordinator will provide contact information. If you plan to use a soloist or other instrumentalist(s) at your wedding, the Organist or Worship Director will be happy to assist you in the selection of such musicians or will need to approve your selection if you wish to use a family member or friend. When the music is selected, please update the Suggested Order of Service form.

The organist or pianist for your wedding will consult with you, should you desire, and make suggestions of appropriate musical selections that will enhance your ceremony. Your wedding fee includes your music consultation, a one-hour rehearsal with the soloist or other musicians, and playing for the ceremony. It does not include the organist's or pianist's attendance at the rehearsal or additional rehearsals. If his or her presence is necessary at the rehearsal, an additional $50 will be charged. The bride and groom should meet with the organist or pianist to discuss music selections soon after the meeting with the coordinator and no later than six weeks before the wedding. It is the couple's responsibility to contact the assigned organist or pianist to set up the consultation.

The arrangement and key used in music by additional soloists or instrumentalists should be provided to the organist or pianist no later than two weeks before the wedding. The soloist or instrumentalist must schedule the one-hour rehearsal time with the organist or pianist at a time convenient for both. If additional rehearsal time beyond the scheduled one-hour rehearsal is necessary, an additional fee of $35 per hour will be charged by the organist or pianist. CDs or other recorded music may not be used at the wedding.

Technical Support

Since amplified sound is needed at weddings in both the Chapel and the Worship Center, a church provided technical engineer must be present to operate the audio/visual systems. The technical engineer is scheduled through your Wedding Coordinator. Basic support includes:

- ◊ a microphone for the officiating pastor
- ◊ a microphone for the pulpit/lectern (if necessary)
- ◊ a microphone for one singer/vocalist
- ◊ an audio recording of the ceremony on CD
- ◊ possible microphone for groom

The basic sound-check begins approximately 45 minutes prior to the ceremony start time. Please have your vocalist and guest readers available at that time. If your ceremony requires anything beyond basic technical support, please discuss this with the Wedding Coordinator and the Organist or Keyboardist at least 4 weeks prior to the ceremony. Additional charges may apply for additional support and additional time may be necessary prior to the ceremony for the sound-check.

Any visual projection for the wedding or reception should be arranged directly with Gloria Dei's Director of Technical Arts at least eight weeks prior to the wedding. An additional charge will be negotiated for this service.

Receptions

The Life Center Auditorium is available for wedding receptions, on a non-conflicting basis, when the wedding is held at Gloria Dei. The details for the room arrangement will be discussed and communicated through the Wedding Coordinator. Requests for a reception in a different space in the building should be arranged through your Wedding Coordinator.

If you schedule your reception at Gloria Dei, we will provide tables and chairs and the kitchen is available for your caterer. With advanced reservation, a limited number of white tablecloths are available at a rental cost of $10 each. All existing decorations, previously installed by the church for seasonal events, should remain in place.

Receptions should be scheduled to end by 9:00 pm.

Facilities

Capacity

The Chapel seats 350 people. The Worship Center will seat 1,000. The Life Center will easily accommodate a reception for 300 people.

Unity/Christ Candelabra

A Unity/Christ candelabra, matching the Chapel altar, is available for your use. The wedding party is responsible for the large center candle and tapers.

Chapel Kneeler

The kneeler is an optional item during Chapel weddings. If you want to use the kneeler for the prayer during the wedding ceremony, please inform the Officiating Pastor at your wedding service consultation and the Wedding Coordinator before the rehearsal so that plans are in place to include it and place it at the altar.

Use of Church Equipment

Coffeemakers are available from the church for your reception and should be requested through the Wedding Coordinator. Use of any other equipment (except technical equipment) is at the discretion of the Wedding Coordinator. Technical audio/visual (sound, video, lighting, projection) equipment may only be operated, set-up, moved, disconnected, or otherwise handled by church technical personnel.

Smoking

Smoking is not allowed anywhere in the building.

Alcohol Policy

Beer, wine and champagne are the only alcoholic beverages allowed at the reception. These beverages may be **consumed only in the designated dinner or reception area and during the designated time period**. No hard liquor is permitted anywhere on the church campus, including the parking lot. A uniformed police officer must be on duty during the time that alcoholic beverages are served at the wedding reception. The Wedding Coordinator will give you information on hiring an officer.

No alcoholic beverages are to be consumed by any member of the wedding party prior to the wedding or wedding rehearsal on church property. **No illegal drugs** are allowed on church property. Anyone appearing to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol during the rehearsal, wedding, or reception will be asked to leave the premises. The Officiating Pastor, in consultation with the Wedding Coordinator, will reserve the right to **cancel your wedding** in the event members of the wedding party are under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance.

Entering and Exiting the Building

The wedding party should arrive for the wedding at the agreed upon time for dressing and pictures and leave following the wedding at the agreed upon time. Please make sure you check all dressing rooms so that all personal items are removed and secured before, during and after the wedding service. You may want to ask a specific person to be in charge of removing these items and placing them in a secured location.

Legal and Safety Requirements

Legal and Safety Requirements

The host families are responsible for the conduct and safety of their guests. The church will not be held legally responsible for misconduct of wedding guests. The Wedding Coordinator will contact the host family if a guest's behavior is unacceptable, and the host family must then ask the offending guest(s) to leave the premises.

For the protection of members of the wedding party and guests, certain safety guidelines should be observed.

- ◊ Aisle runners pose a tripping hazard and should not be used.
- ◊ Aisle candles, even with hurricane shades, pose a fire hazard and therefore should not be used.
- ◊ Because the throwing of rice, birdseed, flower petals, potpourri or confetti pose a tripping hazard and may damage carpet and tile, they should not be used.

Gloria Dei is not responsible for any personal property or valuables left on the premises. The family should designate someone to be responsible for personal property of the members of the wedding party during the wedding and reception.

Photography

Please provide the wedding photographer's name(s) and contact information to your Wedding Coordinator so that she can arrange the set-up time for the photography for your wedding. Pre-service photos in the Chapel or Worship Center should be completed at least 30 minutes prior to the service time. Photographs taken after the service should be completed within 30 minutes of the close of the service. Photographers may take pictures before and after the service in any part of the building (except offices) including the Commons, entrance hallway, garden, and Chapel.

The following instructions are to be communicated to photographers:

- ◊ Flash photographs should not be taken during the service, except during the entrance and exit of the bridal party.
- ◊ Photographers (video and still) should not walk around during the service.
- ◊ Still photos may be taken from the rear of the Chapel or Worship Center during the ceremony.
- ◊ When a video camera is used, the position of the camera should be approved by the Wedding Coordinator before the service and the photographer should remain in that location.
- ◊ Standing on furniture or placing equipment on the furnishings in order to take photos is not allowed.

Photography

Decor

After you select your florist and/or decorators for the wedding and/or reception, your Wedding Coordinator will contact them to schedule the set-up time. All decorations should be in place so that the pre-service photographs will be completed at least 30 minutes before the service begins. Your Wedding Coordinator will also give final approval of the decorations. All decorations should be removed following the service or after the photographs are completed.

Florists and decorators will be asked to observe the following guidelines:

- ◊ Furnishings should not be moved or relocated.
- ◊ Tacks, pins, nails or glue should not be used to fasten decorations to the furniture or building.
- ◊ Aisle runners should not be used.
- ◊ Aisle candles should not be used.
- ◊ All boxes and trash should be removed before the wedding begins.
- ◊ All florist equipment should be removed following the wedding and/or the reception, if held at Gloria Dei.

Size-appropriate flowers may be used on the altar. If the flowers are to be left for a Sunday worship service, be sure to tell your Wedding Coordinator so she can arrange for proper acknowledgments.

Corsages and boutonnieres may be distributed by the florist or labeled (bride's mother, groomsmen, etc.) for distribution by the Wedding Coordinator.

The florists and decorators will be held financially responsible for any damage to the building, furniture, or carpet. Gloria Dei is not responsible for equipment left at the church.

Catering

You should schedule the reception caterer to meet with the Wedding Coordinator and bride or groom at least two weeks prior to your wedding to review the guidelines.

The following guidelines should be followed:

- ◊ All church equipment should remain at the church.
- ◊ Red-colored punch is not allowed in the facilities.
- ◊ Beer kegs need to have mats placed underneath for safety purposes and floor protection.
- ◊ A uniformed police officer must be present if beer, wine and/or champagne are served.
- ◊ All catering equipment should be removed and the kitchen cleaned following the reception. Gloria Dei is not responsible for catering equipment left at the church.

The License

You will need to obtain your marriage license at least two weeks prior to your wedding and deliver it to the wedding coordinator. She will be responsible for sending it to the county clerk after your wedding.

The requirements of the State of Texas are as follows:

- ◊ The license can be purchased no earlier than 30 days before the wedding or no later than 72 hours before the wedding.
- ◊ Both the bride and groom must appear in person.
- ◊ The fee must be paid in cash.
- ◊ Both the bride and groom must show their Social Security cards.
- ◊ One of the following must accompany the Social Security card:
    - * Valid drivers license (any state)
    - * Birth certificate
    - * Texas identification
- ◊ Blood tests are no longer a requirement.
- ◊ A 72-hour waiting period exists. You will receive the license the same day you apply for it; however, it cannot be used for three days.
- ◊ The license is valid for 30 days only.
- ◊ The minimum age requirement is 18 years of age.

The Rehearsal

Your wedding is a Christian worship service. The rehearsal is a preparation for this service and is usually held the day before the ceremony. The Wedding Coordinator will direct the rehearsal.

All wedding participants and members of the bride's and groom's immediate families should plan to attend the rehearsal. One hour will be allotted for the wedding rehearsal to allow for the scheduling of church facilities and personnel. Please encourage all members of the wedding party be prompt in order to have adequate rehearsal time.

The seating arrangements for during the ceremony should be decided before the rehearsal. Your Wedding Coordinator can suggest proper etiquette for seating of family members. Please note special seating requests on your Wedding Details Form.

Rehearsal

Ushers

Please impress upon the individuals whom you select as ushers that they have an important ministry role at the wedding. They are responsible for the overall decorum before, during and after the service.

The recommended number of ushers is two for each 100 guests. In order to assist wedding guests needing help, the Wedding Coordinator will instruct ushers regarding the location of the restrooms, water fountains, and handicapped seating, etc.

Ushers should seat guests as they arrive. If printed folders are used, they may be placed at the guest registry table or distributed by the ushers.

Usher Guidelines

Ushers, (cont'd.)

At the time the service is scheduled to begin (or after all guests are seated), the Wedding Coordinator will direct the ushers to seat the immediate family members according to the following diagram, beginning with the family members in Pew 3 and moving toward the altar:

Altar	
Pew 1—Empty—Chairs	Pew 1—Empty—Chairs
Pew 2—Bride's Parents and Grandparents	Pew 2—Groom's Parents and Grandparents
Pew 3—Relatives of Bride	Pew 3—Relatives of Groom

Please Note**:** If step-parents are involved in the wedding, tact and diplomacy should rule over the exact rules of etiquette. Traditionally, the natural parent is favored in the order of family seating. Seating arrangements should be discussed with your Wedding Coordinator so those plans are finalized before the rehearsal.

Lighting of Candles

If you wish to use the wedding Unity Candle, the Officiating Pastor will explain the symbolism when developing your service. The ushers normally will light the small candles at the beginning of the service, however other arrangements for lighting these candles may be made through your Wedding Coordinator.

Ushers, (cont'd.)

Dismissal of Guests

Immediately after the wedding party has recessed, the ushers are to move to the front of the center aisle to escort the parents and grandparents out in this order:

- ◊ Parents of the Bride
- ◊ Parents of the Groom
- ◊ Maternal Grandparents of the Bride
- ◊ Maternal Grandparents of the Groom
- ◊ Paternal Grandparents of the Bride
- ◊ Paternal Grandparents of the Groom

Once the above members of the party have been escorted, two of the ushers will return to the center aisle and "nod" to the guests in alternating rows to dismiss them.

Final Usher Duty

After the post-service photographs are taken, the ushers are asked to extinguish all candles and collect the wedding folders from the pews.

Wedding Timeline

6+ Months Before the Wedding Day

- ◊ Return a completed Wedding Application, including the Policy Agreement, and a deposit check to the Office so that your wedding date can be reserved.
- ◊ Gloria Dei will assign a wedding coordinator who will call you to introduce herself and make an appointment with you to assist in your planning. She will be able to answer all your questions about the ceremony, reception, flowers, cake, etc.
- ◊ Make an appointment with the counseling pastor to schedule pre-marital counseling.
- ◊ Meet with the organist/pianist to discuss music for the wedding.

Wedding Timeline (Cont'd.)

3+ Months Before the Wedding Day

- ◊ Complete the on-line pre-marital survey that will be e-mailed to both the bride and the groom.

3 To 6 weeks Before the Wedding Day

- ◊ Make an appointment with your officiating pastor to discuss your wedding service. Review the Suggested Order of Service Form.
- ◊ If necessary, give music to musicians and soloists.
- ◊ Apply for a marriage license (no more than 4 weeks before the wedding)
- ◊ Any unusual technical support requests for the wedding or reception should be arranged by the technical supervisor.
- ◊

2 Weeks Before the Wedding Day

- ◊ Finalize plans with <u>everyone</u>; wedding coordinator, caterer, florist, attendants, and rental agencies.
- ◊ Remind the wedding party of rehearsal place and time.
- ◊ Give the marriage license and fees to the wedding coordinator.
- ◊ Meet with the officiating pastor regarding the wedding ceremony.
- ◊ Meet with wedding coordinator and caterer to review guidelines.

The Wedding Day

- ◊ Breathe! Give yourself plenty of time to get ready.
- ◊ Don't forget the rings.
- ◊ Have fun!

.

FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions

OK, I have my date and I'm ready to schedule with Gloria Dei. What do I do?

Call the Gloria Dei main number at 281-333-4535 and ask to speak with the wedding administrative assistant. She will check the date and let you know if it is vacant. *A wedding may not be booked until the Wedding Application is completely filled out and the required deposit made.* You may pick up the application and wedding booklet from the church or go to www.gdlc.org to download a copy.

How far in advance do I need to start this process and schedule the wedding?

Ideally, this process should start approximately one year prior to your desired date. Summer wedding dates tend to book pretty quickly, so the sooner you settle on a date, the more likely you are to find it available.

May we have a wedding at Gloria Dei if we are not members of the church?

Weddings at Gloria Dei are reserved for members and their immediate family.

When are weddings held at Gloria Dei?

Weddings generally occur on Fridays and Saturdays. We do not book weddings on Sundays, in December, New Year's Eve or Day, or during Holy Week.

How many people will Gloria Dei's chapel seat? The Worship Center?

The seating capacity for the Chapel is 350 adults. The Worship Center seats 1000 adults.

May I select my own minister to officiate at our wedding?

Our Gloria Dei pastors are assigned. With our pastor's permission, a pastor from another LCMS church may assist at the wedding. Please clear that with our pastor early.

What about music?

Gloria Dei firmly believes that a wedding is a Christian rite and therefore, requires Christian music. Gloria Dei has a well qualified organist and keyboardist that you may use. If you choose to use your own organist or keyboardist, all music should be approved by our resident organist. Traditional and Contemporary Christian music may be used, however, no CDs or recorded music may be used.