**The Christian Wedding**

*at*

***St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church (Fuelling)***

***Decatur, Indiana***

***A Wedding Booklet***

**Statement of Philosophy**

St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church (Fuelling) exists to “disseminate the Gospel of Jesus Christ according to the confessional standard of the Lutheran Church,” namely, to bear witness to his salvation of sinners and His victorious presence in the world through His means of grace, which are the true proclamation of God’s Word and proper administration of His Sacraments (St. Peter Lutheran Church Constitution, Article II). All proper activity of St. Peter Lutheran Church revolves around this statement of purpose. Therefore, all weddings at St. Peter (Fuelling) are carried out in a manner consistent with this singular purpose.

While a “church wedding” is not absolutely necessary for a couple to be wed in the eyes of the LORD, it is a wonderful way to begin your married life. Weddings are solemnized here at St. Peter because we believe in and desire God’s grace and blessing that he desires to shower upon His people. Marriage was created by God in the Garden of Eden, even before humanities Fall into sin, and as such marriage is of God’s own creative design. In the Rite of Holy Matrimony, a man and a woman begin their life together before the altar of God’s grace as forgiven sinners and fellow saints with the whole company of God’s family on earth and in heaven.

Every wedding at St. Peter Lutheran Church begins with the invocation of God’s Triune Name, followed by these words: “In marriage we see a picture of the communion between Christ and His bride, the Church. Our Lord blessed and honored marriage with His presence and the first miracle at Cana in Galilee. This estate is also commended to us by the apostle Paul as goof and honorable. Therefore, marriage is not to be entered into inadvisedly or lightly, but reverently, deliberately, and in accordance with the purposes for which it was instituted by God. The union of husband and wife in heart, body, and mind is intended by God for mutual companionship, help, and support that each person ought to receive from the other, both in prosperity and adversity. Marriage was also ordained so that man and woman might find delight in one another. Therefore, all persons who marry shall take a spouse in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust, for God not called us to impurity but in holiness. God also established marriage for the procreation of children who are to be brought up in the fear and instruction of the Lord so that they may offer Him their praise” (*Lutheran Service Book*, “Holy Matrimony,” p.275)

Confessing these words in love for all who worship at St. Peter, weddings are ordinarily conducted in the context of a congregational service of the Word of God, the dignity of which is preserved within the character of the regular worship life at St. Peter. The Wedding Service thus reflects and confesses our beliefs and practices as orthodox Lutheran Christians, and the wedding’s form is consciously and deliberately planned with this confession in mind. As with all congregational services conducted at St. Peter, Jesus Christ is the central focus of the Rite of Holy Matrimony. In the same regard, music included within the Rite of Holy Matrimony at St. Peter shall be in keeping with the doctrinal requirements of The Lutheran Confessions and the liturgical practice of St. Peter Lutheran Church. “Only doctrinally pure hymns and forms shall be used in public worship and in all official acts” (St. Peter Constitution, Article X). There are contained within this booklet a list of approved selections for couples to consider as they discuss their Wedding Service. Since God’s called servant to St. Peter (the pastor) is accountable both to the congregation and to the Lord for the public worship conducted here, he thereby bears the spiritual responsibility for and maintains supervision over the entire wedding service.

Because we understand a wedding to be a congregational worship service, the use of the church and our property or facilities for weddings is not open to everyone who might express a desire to be married here. Our church, property, and facilities are available, first, to members in good standing of St. Peter Lutheran Church (Fuelling), and second, to members in good standing of a sister congregation of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod who can demonstrate a reasonable connection with the congregation of St. Peter. The request to be married at St. Peter by LCMS couples who are not members of St. Peter shall be made by their pastor, and such requests require the approval of the St. Peter pastor, elders, and deacons of the congregation (whose decision shall be ratified by the Church Council). All clergy participants in weddings at St. Peter shall be ordained pastors in good standing of the LCMS, and their participation shall be at the invitation and discretion of the pastor of St. Peter.

In order to avoid disappointment, couples are encouraged to contact the pastor of St. Peter as soon as possible to secure a date for their wedding. Before a wedding is Scheduled on the church calendar, it is necessary that the couple meet with the pastor, whose responsibility it is to assure the congregation that the proposed wedding falls within the Biblical parameters to which we are committed as a congregation. Furthermore, all couples to be married at St. Peter must agree to meet with the pastor for premarital instruction, and they shall express their commitment to be faithful in their reception of the means of grace through weekly church attendance both before and after they are married.

**Facility Usage and Marriage Policy**

The marriage policy of St Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church, Unaltered Augsburg Confession, 1033 E 1100 N, Decatur Indiana 46733, a member congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, is and always has been consistent with the Synod’s beliefs on marriage. We believe that marriage is a sacred union of one man and one woman (Gen.2:24-25), and that God gave marriage as a picture of the relationship between Christ and His bride, the Church (Eph. 5:32). The official position of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, as set forth in 1998 Res. 3-21 (“To Affirm the sanctity of Marriage and to Reject Same-Sex Unions”), is that homosexual unions come under categorical prohibition in the Old and New Testaments (Lev. 18:22, 24; 20:13; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 1 Tim. 1:9-10) as contrary to the Creator’s design (Rom. 1:26-27). These positions and beliefs can be found on the LCMS website, along with other statements, papers and reports on the subject of homosexuality and same-sex civil unions and “marriage.” Our pastor(s) will not officiate over any marriages inconsistent with these beliefs, and our church property may not be used for any marriage ceremony, reception, or other activity that would be inconsistent with our beliefs and this policy.

**Statement of Biblical Principals**

**Please note:** *What follows are several of the Scriptural principals we hold sacred when scheduling and preparing for a wedding at St. Peter Lutheran Church. Couple whose current situation finds them outside of these principles, but who wish to amend and remedy their circumstances, are warmly invited and strongly encouraged to speak honestly and openly with the pastor. St. Peter Lutheran Church and her pastor are committed to the ministry of reconciliation and forgiveness of sins.*

*We hold the following biblical standards sacred not because we regard ourselves as “better than others” but rather because such biblical truths reveal who God creates us to be in Holy Baptism. When these Scriptures reveal our sinful lives and behaviors, God calls us to repent of our sins, receive His forgiveness, and the reflect the righteous Christ in our lives. St. Peter Lutheran Church and her pastor are here to offer precisely that – the truth of God’s Word for your life and salvation, the forgiveness that Jesus Christ won for you on the cross, and encouragement and support to live as the baptized child of God that you are.*

*As you read through these biblical principles, please keep in mind that these are not the opinions of St. Peter Lutheran Church or her pastor, but rather the very word of God – “Written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name” (John 20:31).*

**1) Couple married at St. Peter are not living together before marriage.**

God’s Word declares: “You shall not commit adultery” (Exodus 201:14); and “Let marriage be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous” (Hebrews 14:4); and again, “For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you.” (1 Thessalonians 4:3-8) .

**2) Couples married at St. Peter are not joining in marriage with a non-Christian.**

God’s Word declares: “Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers” (2 Corinthians 6:14). Furthermore, all aspects of the Christian Wedding Service assume and depend upon the fact that both the bride and bridegroom are baptized Christians, making the Rite of Holy Matrimony inappropriate (and dishonest) for non-Christians. Since the Christian wedding invokes the Triune Name of God (given in Holy Baptism), addresses and implores the blessings of the one and only true God, and exhorts the bride and bridegroom to make promises to the Lord and vows to one another in His Name, it would be a hypocritical deception for an unbelieving person to stand before the congregation and speak in the Name of One whom her or she does not acknowledge or worship, making a mockery of the worship and a liar of the bride or bridegroom who is promising to be faithful.

**3) Couples married at St. Peter are not joining in marriage while impenitently living in an unscriptural divorce**.

God’s Word declares: “From the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate…Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her, and if she divorces her husband and marries another she commits adultery.” (Mark 10:6-9, 11-12). As noted above, St. Peter Lutheran Church and her pastor are committed to the Lord’s ministry of reconciliation and the forgiveness of sins. We desire to serve you with the gifts of Jesus’ cross, which off forgiveness for the sin of divorce, and the freedom and peace that living from that forgiveness provides.

**4) Couple married at St. Peter are not joining in rebellion against their parents.**

God’s Word declares: “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.” “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land” (Ephesians 6:1-2); and “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife” (Mark 10:7)- such “leaving” entails the peaceful and godly separation from one’s family of origin in establishing a new Christian home.

**5) Couple married at St. Peter desire to establish a Christian home, one centered in the life of Christ’s Church according to His will and design for both marriage and family.**

God’s word declares: “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works , not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near” (Hebrews 10:22-25); and, “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior.Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body.“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband (Ephesians 5:21-33)

*Weddings will be schedulaed on the St. Peter Church Calendar after the couple has met with the pastor and expressed their understanding and agreement to abide by St. Peter’s* Philosophy *and* Biblical Principles.

**Planning Your Wedding at St. Peter Lutheran Church**

To be sure, your wedding day will be one of the most important and memorable days of your lives together, and your congregation and pastor are privileged to share this blessed and joyful occasion with you. In order to serve and support you as you prepare for your wedding day, we offer the following notes and details that we are confident will prove valuable in planning an elegant and unforgettable wedding. These policies and suggestions are the result of much study and experience, in addition to hundreds of wedding performed at St. Peter in the last two-hundred years, and the pastor will be happy to explain them in more detail should you have any questions or concerns.

Couples are encouraged to contact the pastor of St. Peter as soon as possible to secure a date for their wedding. In order to avoid disappointment and scheduling conflicts with photographers, reception halls, etc., we strongly advise you not to make any firm plans for your wedding day until you have determined the availability of the church and the pastor. Your wedding date will be secured on the Church Calendar once you have met with the pastor and indicated your understanding and agreement with “The Christian Wedding at St. Peter Lutheran Church.”

During your first visit with the pastor, he will be happy to discuss with you any questions or concerns you have about “The Christian Wedding at St. Peter Lutheran Church.” He will also review the “Wedding Booklet” with you and discuss many of the details regarding your wedding, so that you may proceed with your preparations. The pastor will explain your premarital instruction, answer any questions you may have, and schedule future visits with you. The first meeting is the most helpful opportunity to ask about any special requests or ideas you might be considering and explain any special circumstances or needs your family may have. In regard to special requests, please keep in mind the following:

1) If you would like for another LCMS pastor to participate in your wedding, this should first be discussed with the pastor of St. Peter Lutheran Church. Please remember, as explained above, that this invitation will be extended by the pastor of St. Peter Lutheran Church, not by the couple or by any of their family.

2) If you desire an organist that is not a St. Peter’s organist, please note that the organist and organ and vocal selections must be approved by the pastor and Music Director of St. Peter Lutheran Church.

3) If you desire additional instrumentalists or vocalists, these shall be approved by the pastor and Music Director of St. Peter Lutheran Church. They shall be in contact with the organist as soon as possible to begin the necessary coordination for your wedding day. Please note, as described and explained below, that additional organist fees will apply for each additional vocalist and instrumentalist.

4) We are confident that you will understand your Wedding Service to be one of dignified reverence and elegant piety. Thus, all musical selections and wedding attire shall be in keeping with the sacred nature of the Divine Service and the established practice of St. Peter Lutheran Church.

5) Alcohol is not permitted on St. Peter Church Property. We kindly ask that you please explain this to all who are involved or participating in your wedding.

6) Rice, birdseed, confetti, etc. may not be thrown in the church building or anywhere on St. Peter premises. The pastor can explain the history and meaning of this pagan practice, which is in extremely poor taste and contrary to the biblical understanding or marriage and procreation. Bubbles outside are permitted but not encouraged.

7) The bridal party may use the enclosed section of the Parish Hall on the day of the wedding as a dressing space. The kitchen is also available for your use and convenience. There is a small mirror available for your use, and you are welcome to bring your own, larger mirror. Please assign at least one person to check these spaces after your wedding to make sure they are left as clean as you found them that no personal items have been left behind. Groomsman are encouraged to arrive at church already dressed.

8) The Order of Service is a treasure of God’s holy church that we receive with humility and thanksgiving. While you have a few options and decisions to make about your wedding service, deviations from the Order of Service are rare and must be approved by the pastor.

***Marriage License***

The marriage license shall be obtained by the couple from the County Clerk’s office and given to the pastor no later than one week prior to the wedding. The wedding will not be held without a marriage license in the pastor’s possession. The marriage license is signed on the altar immediately following the service, before any additional pictures are taken. The Best Man and Maid/Matron of Honor will also sign the certificates.

***Wedding Music***

The Couple should contact the Music Director (and organist, if different than the Music Director) at least three months before the wedding date or as soon as possible after meeting with the pastor. A time will be established with the Music Director/organist to meet and discuss musical selections.

The Music Director can offer names of vocalist and/or instrumentalists if you desire. Please note that any additional musicians will affect the organist fee. Vocal and Handbell choirs are permitted but rarely used.

The hymns for the wedding service will be chosen in consultation with the pastor. All other music will be chosen in consultation with the organist and/or Music Director and approved by the pastor. What follows are suggested hymns and music for your consideration.

***Hymns***

*All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name* 549

*All People that on Earth Do Dwell* 791

*Beautiful Savior* 537

*Christ Jesus Lay in Death’s Strong Bands* 458

*Come, Thou Almighty King* 905

*Crown Him with Many Crowns* 525

*From All that Dwell Below the Skies* 816

*Go My Children, with My Blessing* 922

*Gracious Savior, Grant Your Blessing* 860

*Holy God, We Praise They Name* 940

*I Am Trusting Thee, Lord Jesus* 729

*I Know My Faith is Founded* 587

*Jesus Christ, My Sure Defense* 741

*Jesus, Thy Boundless Love to Me* 683

*Kyrie, God Father in Heaven Above* 942

*Let Me Be Thine Forever* 689

*Let Us Ever Walk with Jesus* 685

*Lord, Dismiss Us with Thy Blessing* 924

*Lord Jesus Christ, With Us Abide* 585

*Lord, Jesus Christ, Be Present Now* 902

*Lord, When You Came as Welcome Guest* 859

*Love Divine, All Love Excelling* 700

*My Faith Looks up to Thee* 702

*My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less* 575, 576

*Now Thank We All Our God* 895

*O Father, All Creating* 858

*O Holy Spirit, Grant Us Grace* 693

*O Perfect Life of Love* 452

*O Savior, Precious Savior* 527

*O Trinity, Most Blessed Light* 890

*O Word of God Incarnate* 523

*Oh, Blest the House, Whate’er Befall* 862

*Oh, That I Had a Thousand Voice* 811

*Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways* 707

*Praise the Almighty, My Soul, Adore Him* 797

*Praise to the Lord, The Almighty* 790

*Take My Life and Let it Be* 783, 784

*The Lord’s My Shepherd* 710

*Thine Forever God of Love* 687

*We All Believe in One True God* 954

*With the Lord Begin Thy Task* 869

**Processionals / Recessionals**

*Air (from Overture in D)* J.S. Bach

*Air (from Water Music)* G.F. Handel

*Air on the G String* J.S. Bach

*Allegro from Violin Sonata* A. Corelli

*Andante Tranquillo* C.W. Gluck

*Aria in F Major* G.F. Handel

*If Thou Be Near* J.S. Bach

*Canon in D* J. Pachelbel

*Children of the Heavenly Father* M. Rotermund

*Children of the Heavenly Father* R. Hughes

*Christ is Made the Sure Foundation* D. Johnson

*Choral Song* S.S. Wesley

*Fanfare* J. Lemmens

*Grazioso* S.D. Wolf

*He Shall Feed His Flock* G.F. Handel

*If With All Your Hearts* F. Mendelssohn

*In Heavenly Love Abiding* F. Mendelssohn

*Jesu, Jesu, Thou Art Mine* J.S. Bach

*Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring* J.S. Bach

*Jesus, Lead Thou On* R. Wilson

*Largo (Thanks Be to Thee)* G.F. Handel

*Let Us Ever Walk With Jesus* Paul Manz

*Little Prelude in F Major* J.S. Bach

*Little Prelude in G Major* J.S. Bach

*Little Prelude in G Minor* J.S. Bach

*Lord of Love Unfailing* J. Hayden

*Mediation (on the First Prelude* J.S. Bach

*My Faith is Firmly Founded* J.S. Bach

*My Heart Ever Faithful* J.S. Bach

*O Perfect Love* J. Barnby

*Sarabande* A. Corelli

*Sheep May Safely Graze* J.S. Bach

*Sicilano* J.S. Bach

*Sinfonia (Arioso)* J.S. Bach

*Sinfonia* H. Purcell

*Take Thou Their Hands and Lead…* F. Silcher

*Trumpet Voluntary* H. Purcell

**Postludes**

*A Festal Fanfare* J.S. Bach

*Allegretto* S.S. Wesley

*Allegro* A. Corelli

*Allegro (from Concerto No. 8)* G.F. Handel

*Allegro from Suite Gothique* L. Boellman

*Break Forth into Joy* J.S. Bach

*Canticle of Joy* J.S. Bach

*Celebration* Mansfield

*God of Grace and God of Glory* Paul Manz

*Hallelujah, Amen* G.F. Handel

*Hornpipe (from Water Music)* G.F. Handel

*Let the Trumpets Sound!* J.S. Bach

*March* J.S. Bach

*March in D* J.S. Bach

*Musique Royale* S.D. Wolff

*Now Thank We All Our God* Karg-Elert

*Praise the Lord* L. Beethoven

*Praise to the Lord, the Almighty* Paul Manz

*Prelude in Classic Style* Gordon Young

*Processional in C* Hal Hopson

*Psalm XIX* B. Marcello

*Rigaudon* S.D. Wolff

*St. Anthony’s Chorale* F.J. Haydn

*Solemn Processional* G.F. Handel

*Toccata* R. Thygerson

*Toccata in C* J.S. Bach

*Toccata in F Major* D. Buxtehude

*Trumpet Finale* S.D. Wolff

*Trumpet Tune* S.D. Wolff

*Trumpet Tune* H. Purcell

**Solo Music**

*(All Hymns Listed Above)*

*A Faithful Shepherd is My Lord* Mageli

*Abide with Them* J.S. Bach

*Be Thou with Them* J.S. Bach

*Children of the Heavenly Father* P. Christiansen

*In Quiet Faithfulness* J.S. Bach

*Jesu, Joy of Man’s Desiring* J.S. Bach

*Jesus, Shepherd, Be Thou Near Me* J.S. Bach

*Love in Christ* Ralph Schultz

*O Perfect Love* J. Barnby

*Savior Like a Shepherd Lead Us* W. Bradbury

*The Lord’s Prayer* A.H. Malotte

*Thy Will Be Done/Lord’s Prayer* J. Eiler

*Walk With Them Lord* D. Besig

***The Wedding Bulletin and Order of Service***

Order of Service:

Pre-Service Music

The Seating of the Grandparents (Optional)

The Seating of the Mothers (Optional)

The Ringing of the Church Bell

The Processional

The Invocation

The Rite of Holy Matrimony

The Address

The Scripture Readings

The Hymn of the Day

The Wedding Homily

The Exchange of Wedding Promises

The Consent and Blessing of Parents

The Exchange of Wedding Vows

The Exchange of Wedding Rings

The Pronouncement of Marriage

The Lighting of the Unity Candle (Optional)

The Prayers

The Benediction

The Presentation

The Recessional

Note to be included in the bulletin: “Out of reverence and respect for the sacred nature of this Divine Service, the bride and groom kindly request no flash photography.”

***Wedding Fees***

**Organist Honorarium - $125 (additional musicians increase this proportionately)**

**Custodian - $75 (Sanctuary and Parish Hall are cleaned before and after wedding)**

**Candles - $30 (aisle candles only)**

**Musicians – to be determined in consultation with the pastor**

*All fees shall be paid by check and given to the pastor with the marriage license at least one week before the wedding.*

**Notes**

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