

# God's Design for Marriage

**An Explanation of Christian Marriage, Wedding  
resource list and Ceremony Information Form**

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church  
425 Patchen Dr. Lexington KY 40517  
(859) 269-1777 [www.gslclexington.org](http://www.gslclexington.org)

## God's Design in Creation

### Mankind

Gen. 1:26–27 narrates the creation of "*mankind*," consisting of "male and female," by the triune God, who speaks in the plural, "Let us make man in our image." Luther connected this creation to redemption: "Just as at that time God rejoiced in the counsel and work by which man was created, so today, too, He takes pleasure in restoring this work of His through His Son and our Deliverer, Christ" (*Luther's Works, American Edition*).



### Image of God

The *Image of God* was the original righteousness, knowledge of God, faith, and life in conformity with God's will. This *Image* was lost in the fall into sin (Gen 3). Yet, already in Gen 3:15, the Gospel promises the restoration of God's *Image*. The original creation serves as a pattern of the restoration that is to come, when believers will be raised to eternal life and again comprise a humanity "similar to God in life, righteousness, holiness, wisdom, etc." (*Luther's Works*, 1:65).

## Man's Solitude "Not Good"

In Gen. 2:18–25, God called the man's solitude "*not good*" in contrast with God's verdict on the rest of creation as "*very good*." To remedy Adam's solitude, God formed from his flesh one woman—not two or more women, nor another man. In marriage, one woman is reunited with one man, and the two become one flesh.



*God could share His Love directly with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden.*

---

***Marriage is "the closest of all relations of love."***

(E. W. Hengstenberg, "Prolegomena," 303).

---



*We will be reunited again with God in Heaven.*

Some Lutheran theologians have even wondered whether God may have created marriage at least partly for the purpose of anticipating Christ's spiritual marriage with His church. In God's eternal plan, Christ's redemption and union with His church may have served as the pattern for the first marriage in creation (Franz Delitzsch, *Hohelied*).

## God's Design in Redemption

Jesus reaffirms God's design in creation for marriage: One man and one woman for life (Matt. 19:1–12). St. Paul assumes this when he requires that a pastor be "the husband of one wife" (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6). The New Testament also affirms this by the way it employs the marriage motif to express God's design in redemption. The New Testament links the relationship between the one husband and one wife in Christian marriage to the spiritual marriage of the only Savior, Jesus Christ, to His bride, the "one holy catholic and apostolic church" (Apostles' Creed).



*Jesus is our Bridegroom.*

Already in the Old Testament God spoke of His relationship to His redeemed people as a marriage. Israel was Yahweh's wife, married to Him by His exodus redemption, but later estranged or even divorced because of her unfaithfulness--though also with the promise of remarriage through an act of divine mercy (Is. 54:5–8; Ezek. 16:60-63; Hos.1–3).

---

***The New Testament portrays Jesus not yet as the Husband, but as the Bridegroom (Matt. 9:15; John 3:29) who has come to invite all people to God's wedding feast (Matt. 22:1-14; 25:1-13).***

---

In the wedding parables Jesus does not include a bride, since the bride consists of all who respond to His Gospel invitation to believe in Him. All baptized believers are part of *His bride, the Church*. Now we await the return of our *Bridegroom*. The Church is not yet Christ's wife, but His betrothed and waiting virgin bride (2 Cor. 11:2; Rev. 22:17). A tension is implicit in this motif because she is now betrothed, but individual Christians must keep watch and guard our faith and purity in Christ, lest we be excluded from the wedding (Matt. 22:11–13; 25:13). "The wedding of the Lamb" (Rev. 19:7) will take place after Christ's second coming. At that time the "*bride*" will become "*the wife of the Lamb*" (Rev. 21:9).

## Incorporated into One Body

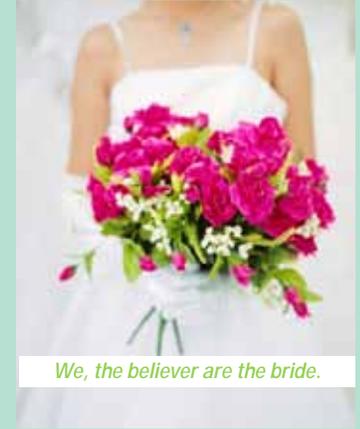
The Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper pertain to this spiritual marriage. St. Paul alludes to Holy Baptism when he describes how Christ has cleansed His bride "by the washing of water with the Word" (Eph. 5:26). Through Baptism into Christ we have been incorporated into our Lord's body. We also receive His true body and blood in the Lord's Supper, which strengthens our faith and joyful anticipation of the return of our Bridegroom. The Lord's Supper proclaims "the Lord's death until He comes" (1 Cor. 11:26). It is "a foretaste of the feast to come," which will be "the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end" (LSB, p. 166; cf. Rev. 19:7, 9).

---

**The New Testament portrays the spiritual marriage between the *Bridegroom and His bride* as the pattern for Christian marriage (Eph. 5:21–33).**

---

The marriage theology of Ephesians 5 flows from the Christology and ecclesiology in Ephesians 1–4. Just as Christ is the head of the Church, which is His own body (Eph. 1:22–23; 4:15), so the husband is the head and loves his wife as his own body (5:23, 28–31). St. Paul uses "mystery" for God's will revealed in the Gospel (Eph. 1:9) and for the mystical union of Christ and His church, to which he relates the physical union of Christian husband and wife (Eph 5:31–32).



*We, the believer are the bride.*



# YOUR WEDDING AT GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN CHURCH

## The Sanctuary

The Sanctuary where your wedding service would take place can seat about 125 people. It has a sound system, a piano and an organ. The colors on the altar will be determined by which liturgical season relates to the date that your wedding takes place. [Liturgical Season Color Explanation](#)  
For members of GSLC, an honorarium is suggested for the Pastor and organist. Non-members will be charged a negotiated fee based on the size and length of the wedding.

Season	Dates (approx.)	Color
<b>ADVENT</b>	<b>November-Dec 20</b>	<b>Blue</b>
CHRISTMAS	Dec 25-Jan 10	White
EPIPHANY/LORD'S BAPTISM	Jan 10-Jan 16	White
<b>EPIPHANY</b>	<b>Jan 17-Feb 7</b>	<b>Green</b>
Transfiguration	Feb 14	White
<b>LENT</b>	<b>Feb 21-March 21</b>	<b>Purple</b>
<b>Holy Week</b>		<b>Scarlet (r)</b>
EASTER	April-May	White
<b>PENTECOST</b>	<b>June</b>	<b>Green</b>



## Fellowship Hall

The Fellowship Hall is an open 40 ft x 60 ft room with a cathedral ceiling. The church has ten 8ft rectangular folding tables that can seat 6-8 people. *(There is a no-alcohol policy).*





## WEDDING RESOURCES

We aren't wedding planners, but we would be glad to recommend some very good businesses and people that have had years of experience with weddings. We even have some congregational members who have businesses related to flowers, desserts, and music.

Please contact the Pastor with some possible wedding dates and arrange a time when you can meet with him for the ***Marriage Counseling*** class as well as having him talk to you about appropriate music selections.

Please check any of the below areas that you would like recommendations for:

Organist/ Pianist: _____	Flower Arranger: _____	Invitations: _____	Decorations: _____
Vocalist: _____	Wedding Planner: _____	Equipment Rental: _____	Wedding Gowns/Tuxes: _____
Musicians: _____	Cake Decorator: _____	Wedding Supplier: _____	Videographer: _____
Photographer: _____	Gifts/Favors: _____	Caterer: _____	Consultant: _____

*...God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. 1 John 4:8-10*

# MARRIAGE CEREMONY INFORMATION

## General Wedding Info:

Wedding Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Wedding Time of Day: \_\_\_\_\_

Rehearsal Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Rehearsal Time of Day: \_\_\_\_\_

## Wedding Party:

Bride	Groom
FirstName: _____	FirstName: _____
Middle Name: _____	Middle Name: _____
Last Name: _____	Last Name: _____
Married LastName: _____	
Mobile Ph: _____	Mobile Ph: _____
Email: _____	Email: _____
Occupation: _____	Occupation: _____
Religious Background: _____	Religious Background: _____
Mother's Name: _____	Mother's Name: _____
Father's Name: _____	Father's Name: _____
Maid of Honor: _____	Best Man: _____
Relation: _____	Relation: _____
Bridesmaid: _____	Groomsmen:: _____
Relation: _____	Relation: _____
Bridesmaid: _____	Groomsmen:: _____
Relation: _____	Relation: _____
Bridesmaid: _____	Groomsmen:: _____
Relation: _____	Relation: _____

Mailing Address After Wedding: \_\_\_\_\_

Ushers: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

Acolytes: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

Photographer: \_\_\_\_\_ Videographer: \_\_\_\_\_

Wedding Planner: \_\_\_\_\_ Floral Arranger: \_\_\_\_\_

**Marriage Service** Public: \_\_\_\_\_ Private: \_\_\_\_\_ Rings: Single: \_\_\_\_\_ Double: \_\_\_\_\_

# of Guests: \_\_\_\_\_ Organist: \_\_\_\_\_ Soloist: \_\_\_\_\_ Musicians: \_\_\_\_\_

Hymn/Song Preferences: \_\_\_\_\_

Scripture Preferences: \_\_\_\_\_

Marriage License: \_\_\_\_\_ Reception Location: \_\_\_\_\_