

## **Wedding Planning Guide**

### **First Lutheran Church**

### **Lake City, MN**

*Congratulations on your engagement! What an exciting time for you as you begin planning for your married life together. Our hope is that in this time of dreaming and planning, you will experience the great love God has for you.*

*At First Lutheran, we are committed to helping you build a healthy marriage as well as help you prepare for this special day. The following information outlines the steps we take to make both of these things happen.*

*We pray God bless both of you in the days ahead.*

### **First Lutheran Contacts:**

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## **Before Your Wedding Day....**

### **Scheduling**

You will want to plan your wedding date as soon as possible so that the use of the church facilities can be arranged without conflict. The wedding date is set in consultation with the pastor. If your wedding date needs to be changed or another venue is selected, please notify the church office as soon as possible.

### **Premarital Counseling**

The pastor schedules sessions with the couple in order to prepare for the ceremony, but more importantly, to prepare for your future life together. Presently, couples are asked to complete an online inventory through Prepare/Enrich which will explore major issues surrounding married life

together. The nominal cost for processing and summarizing the results will be covered by the couple and paid directly to Prepare/Enrich. The pastor usually spends a good portion of the first session getting to know the couple and following sessions focus on the strengths and growth areas of your life together as well as planning the ceremony. Each session usually lasts about one hour.

## **Marriage License**

It is the couple's responsibility to obtain the marriage license from the county clerk within the county where the wedding will be held. The license should be given to the pastor at the rehearsal or prior to the ceremony so necessary signatures can be collected. The pastor will mail the license to the appropriate county office.

## **Director of Music**

The Director of Music will be a valuable resource to you as you plan your ceremony. She will work with you to select the variety of music for your wedding and if necessary, help you identify additional musicians (both instrumental and vocal) to meet your needs. The Director of Music is an accomplished pianist and organist but if you have an organist or pianist of your own, please confer with the Director of Music. If you would like the Director of Music available for the rehearsal, please note the fee schedule. She will play for about 10 minutes prior and after the ceremony as well as any hymns or special music you have selected within the service.

Remembering that this is a service of worship, you may choose music that is both meaningful and appropriate for your wedding celebration. The Director of Music will work with you in your selection and if there are any questions whether your selection is appropriate, you can also talk with the pastor.

## **Soloists and Instrumentalists**

First Lutheran has access to a variety of soloists and instrumentalists that may be available. If you prefer to provide a musician for a solo that requires accompaniment, please give advance notice to the Director of Music in order to arrange rehearsals. Due to copyright law, if you are using music the Director of Music does not own, you will need to purchase your own copy. No unauthorized reproductions of music are allowed.

## **The Rehearsal**

The pastor will conduct the rehearsal. Normally, the rehearsal lasts about 30-45 minutes. The wedding party will be in attendance as well as anyone like the ushers, readers or musicians should be in attendance. Musicians will want to become familiar with the space and sound equipment and readers may want to rehearse their parts.

## **The Pastor and the Reception**

If you do choose to invite the pastor to your wedding reception or rehearsal dinner, please extend the courtesy of sending a written invitation in advance of the event as you would any other guest. If attending, the pastor would be happy to offer a prayer before the meals.

## **Your Wedding Day....**

### **A Service of Worship**

Since you have chosen a church sanctuary for your wedding ceremony, you are also acknowledging that it is a service of worship. A wedding at First Lutheran Church is conducted with reverence and beauty where thanksgiving to God is offered for the gift of love the couple has found in each other. Therefore, the principles governing a worship service also apply to a wedding service. God has instituted marriage and rejoices that we invite God to bless and preserve it. By asking Jesus to be present at your wedding, you are beginning a marriage centered in Christ and the Word. The pastor will work with you in selecting appropriate scripture, hymns, vows and other elements of the service. (Please see below for some initial suggestions.)

### **Homily**

Preaching the Word of God is appropriate at any service of worship. The pastor will reflect on God's Word, especially the lessons you have chosen and will offer a brief homily (sermon) during the service.

### **Holy Communion**

It is always appropriate to celebrate Holy Communion as part of worship including during your wedding ceremony. Adding this Holy Sacrament to your service will only add about 10 minutes. The bride and groom may assist in distributing the bread and wine if they choose.

### **Vows**

Your promises (or vows) are to reflect the fact that this is a life-long commitment in which you promise to work through all the difficulties of marriage, as well as celebrate and treasure the many joys. You will find a sample vows below to choose from. If you revise them or write your own in order to make them unique, please review them with the pastor. Finally, please consider memorizing your vows. By doing so, the vows appear more natural (rather than "repeat after me...") and those vows will be etched in your heart.

## **Bulletin**

If you wish the church office staff to create and print a bulletin for your service, please notify the office at least one month in advance of the ceremony. The bulletin will be printed on plain white paper. You may also provide your own decorative paper.

The office staff will need the following information two weeks prior to your wedding:

- Titles and composers of all music (processional, recessional, solos) as well as the titles of any congregational hymns.
- Properly spelled names for all persons participating (wedding party, parents, soloists, other musicians, readers, ushers.)
- Bible Lessons chosen
- Reminder to please refrain from taking photos during the service in order to truly be present in the moment.
- Other information including a greeting from the bride and groom, direction to the reception, etc.)

## **Photographer**

Photographs can be taken before, during and after the ceremony. However, no flash pictures shall be taken during the worship service.

## **Audio and Video**

First Lutheran will provide microphones for readers and soloists. If you hire your own videographer, please have them consult with the pastor before the service regarding camera placement and other tips for videography etiquette during a worship service.

## **Dressing Rooms**

Dressing rooms are available for both men and women. All dressing rooms are classrooms and most include mirrors.

## **An Important Note on Restrictions**

First Lutheran does not permit the following on the grounds (Church building, parking lot, church grounds):

- Alcohol. If any member of the wedding party arrives intoxicated to the rehearsal or the wedding, they will not be allowed to participate.

·Throwing rice, confetti, birdseed or similar items.

·Sparklers or fireworks

·Tobacco (except in designated areas)

·Weapons

·Pets

## Fee Schedule

*(paid directly to the individual)*

Pastor \$200

Director of Music \$150

*(includes planning meeting [in-person or phone] and wedding day. Attendance at rehearsal will be an additional \$50 and each additional soloist rehearsal will be \$50/hour)*

Soloist/Instrumentalist

*(To be negotiated between musician and couple)*

Use of Building (non-member use) \$150

## Service Options

### Vow Options

1. I take you, name, 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.
  
2. In the presence of God and this community, I, name, take you, name, to be my *wife/husband*; to have and to hold from this day forward, in joy and in sorrow, in plenty and in want, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, as long as we both shall live. This is my solemn vow.

## Giving of the Rings Options

1. Name, I give you this ring as a sign of my love and faithfulness.
2. Name, I give you this ring as a symbol of my vow.  
With all that I am, and all that I have, I honor you,  
in the name of the Father,  
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

## Wedding Biblical Texts Options

*(Feel free to pick an option from the Old Testament, a psalm and a New Testament reading. Pastor will pick a gospel reading. If you need help, let the pastor know.)*

### **FIRST READINGS – Old Testament**

Gen 1:26-28 (NRSV) Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." 27 So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. 28 God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."

Gen 1:31 (NRSV) God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.

Gen 2:4-9 (NRSV) These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created. In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, 5 when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up--for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; 6 but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground-- 7 then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. 8 And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. 9 Out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Gen 2:18-24 (NRSV) Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner." 19 So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. 20 The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. 21 So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. 22 And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. 23 Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall

be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken." 24 Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.

Gen 2:15-24 (NRSV) The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die." 18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner." 19 So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. 20 The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. 21 So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. 22 And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. 23 Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken." 24 Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.

Ruth 1:16-17 (NRSV) But Ruth said, "Do not press me to leave you or to turn back from following you! Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God. 17 Where you die, I will die-- there will I be buried. May the LORD do thus and so to me, and more as well, if even death parts me from you!"

Ecclesiastes 26:1-4,16-21 NRSV Happy is the husband of a good wife; the number of his days will be doubled. 2. A loyal wife brings joy to her husband, and he will complete his years in peace. 3. A good wife is a great blessing; she will be granted among the blessing of the man who fears the Lord. 4. Whether rich or poor, his heart is content, and at all times his face is cheerful. 16. Like the sun rising in the heights of the Lord, so is the beauty of a good wife in her well-ordered home. 17. Like the shining lamp on the holy lamp stand, so is a beautiful face on a stately figure. 18. Like golden pillars on silver bases, so are shapely legs and steadfast feet.

Song 2:8-10 (NRSV) The voice of my beloved! Look, he comes, leaping upon the mountains, bounding over the hills. 9 My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Look, there he stands behind our wall, gazing in at the windows, looking through the lattice. 10 My beloved speaks and says to me: "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away;

Song 2:10-13 (NRSV) My beloved speaks and says to me: "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away; 11 for now the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. 12 The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing has come, and the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land. 13 The fig tree puts forth its figs, and the vines are in blossom; they give forth fragrance. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.

Song 2:14 (NRSV) O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the covert of the cliff, let me see your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely.

Song 2:16a (NRSV) My beloved is mine and I am his;

Song 8:6-7a (NRSV) Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm; for love is strong as death, passion fierce as the grave. Its flashes are flashes of fire, a raging flame. 7 Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it. If one offered for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly scorned.

Isa 54:5-8 (NRSV) For your Maker is your husband, the LORD of hosts is his name; the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called. 6 For the LORD has called you like a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit, like the wife of a man's youth when she is cast off, says your God. 7 For a brief moment I abandoned you, but with great compassion I will gather you. 8 In overflowing wrath for a moment I hid my face from you, but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you, says the LORD, your Redeemer.

Isaiah 55:6-11

Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near; [7] let the wicked forsake their way, and the unrighteous their thoughts; let them return to the Lord, that he may have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. [8] For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord. [9] For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. [10] For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, [11] so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

Isa 63:7-9 (NRSV) I will recount the gracious deeds of the LORD, the praiseworthy acts of the LORD, because of all that the LORD has done for us, and the great favor to the house of Israel that he has shown them according to his mercy, according to the abundance of his steadfast love. 8 For he said, "Surely they are my people, children who will not deal falsely"; and he became their savior 9 in all their distress. It was no messenger or angel but his presence that saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

Jer 31:31-32 (NRSV) The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. 32 It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt--

Jer 31:33-34 (NRSV) But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 34 No longer shall they teach one another, or say to each other, "Know the LORD," for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, says the LORD; for I will forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Lam 3:21-23 (NRSV) But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: 22 The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; 23 they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

## ***PSALM READINGS***

Psalm 1:1-3

Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or take the path that sinners tread, or sit in the seat of scoffers; [2] but their delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law they meditate day and night. [3] They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper.

Psa 23 (NRSV) The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not want. 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters; 3 he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake. 4 Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff-- they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD my whole life long.

Psa 33 (NRSV) Rejoice in the LORD, O you righteous. Praise befits the upright. 2 Praise the LORD with the lyre; make melody to him with the harp of ten strings. 3 Sing to him a new song; play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts. 4 For the word of the LORD is upright, and all his work is done in faithfulness. 5 He loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of the steadfast love of the LORD. 6 By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of his mouth. 7 He gathered the waters of the sea as in a bottle; he put the deeps in storehouses. 8 Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. 9 For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm. 10 The LORD brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; he frustrates the plans of the peoples. 11 The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. 12 Happy is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage. 13 The LORD looks down from heaven; he sees all humankind. 14 From where he sits enthroned he watches all the inhabitants of the earth-- 15 he who fashions the hearts of them all, and observes all their deeds. 16 A king is not saved by his great army; a warrior is not delivered by his great strength. 17 The war horse is a vain hope for victory, and by its great might it cannot save. 18 Truly the eye of the LORD is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love, 19 to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine. 20 Our soul waits for the LORD; he is our help and shield. 21 Our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name. 22 Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us, even as we hope in you.

Psa 34 (NRSV) I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth. 2 My soul makes its boast in the LORD; let the humble hear and be glad. 3 O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together. 4 I sought the LORD, and he answered me, and delivered me from all my fears. 5 Look to him, and be radiant; so your faces shall never be ashamed. 6 This poor soul cried, and was heard by the LORD, and was saved from every trouble. 7 The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them. 8 O taste and see that the LORD is good; happy are those who take refuge in him. 9 O fear the LORD, you his holy ones, for those who fear him have no want. 10 The young lions suffer want and hunger, but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing. 11 Come, O children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD. 12 Which of you desires life, and covets many days to enjoy good? 13 Keep your tongue from evil, and your lips from speaking deceit. 14 Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. 15 The eyes of the

LORD are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry. 16 The face of the LORD is against evildoers, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. 17 When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears, and rescues them from all their troubles. 18 The LORD is near to the brokenhearted, and saves the crushed in spirit. 19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD rescues them from them all. 20 He keeps all their bones; not one of them will be broken. 21 Evil brings death to the wicked, and those who hate the righteous will be condemned. 22 The LORD redeems the life of his servants; none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.

Psa 37:3-7 (NRSV) Trust in the LORD, and do good; so you will live in the land, and enjoy security. 4 Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart. 5 Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act. 6 He will make your vindication shine like the light, and the justice of your cause like the noonday. 7 Be still before the LORD, and wait patiently for him; do not fret over those who prosper in their way, over those who carry out evil devices.

#### Psalm 65:1-13

Praise is due to you, O God, in Zion; and to you shall vows be performed, [2] O you who answer prayer! To you all flesh shall come. [3] When deeds of iniquity overwhelm us, you forgive our transgressions. [4] Happy are those whom you choose and bring near to live in your courts. We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house, your holy temple. [5] By awesome deeds you answer us with deliverance, O God of our salvation; you are the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas. [6] By your strength you established the mountains; you are girded with might. [7] You silence the roaring of the seas, the roaring of their waves, the tumult of the peoples. [8] Those who live at earth's farthest bounds are awed by your signs; you make the gateways of the morning and the evening shout for joy. [9] You visit the earth and water it, you greatly enrich it; the river of God is full of water; you provide the people with grain, for so you have prepared it. [10] You water its furrows abundantly, settling its ridges, softening it with showers, and blessing its growth. [11] You crown the year with your bounty; your wagon tracks overflow with richness. [12] The pastures of the wilderness overflow, the hills gird themselves with joy, [13] the meadows clothe themselves with flocks, the valleys deck themselves with grain, they shout and sing together for joy.

Psa 67 (NRSV) May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, 2 that your way may be known upon earth, your saving power among all nations. 3 Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you. 4 Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth. 5 Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you. 6 The earth has yielded its increase; God, our God, has blessed us. 7 May God continue to bless us; let all the ends of the earth revere him.

Psa 100 (NRSV) Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth. 2 Worship the LORD with gladness; come into his presence with singing. 3 Know that the LORD is God. It is he that made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. 4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him, bless his name. 5 For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations.

Psa 103 (NRSV) Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. 2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits-- 3 who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, 4 who redeems your life from the Pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, 5 who satisfies you with good as long as you live so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. 6 The LORD works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed. 7 He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel. 8 The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. 9 He will not always accuse, nor will he keep his anger forever.

10 He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. 11 For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; 12 as far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us. 13 As a father has compassion for his children, so the LORD has compassion for those who fear him. 14 For he knows how we were made; he remembers that we are dust. 15 As for mortals, their days are like grass; they flourish like a flower of the field; 16 for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more. 17 But the steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children, 18 to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments. 19 The LORD has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all. 20 Bless the LORD, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, obedient to his spoken word. 21 Bless the LORD, all his hosts, his ministers that do his will. 22 Bless the LORD, all his works, in all places of his dominion. Bless the LORD, O my soul.

Psa 112 (NRSV) Praise the LORD! Happy are those who fear the LORD, who greatly delight in his commandments. 2 Their descendants will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed. 3 Wealth and riches are in their houses, and their righteousness endures forever. 4 They rise in the darkness as a light for the upright; they are gracious, merciful, and righteous. 5 It is well with those who deal generously and lend, who conduct their affairs with justice. 6 For the righteous will never be moved; they will be remembered forever. 7 They are not afraid of evil tidings; their hearts are firm, secure in the LORD. 8 Their hearts are steady, they will not be afraid; in the end they will look in triumph on their foes. 9 They have distributed freely, they have given to the poor; their righteousness endures forever; their horn is exalted in honor. 10 The wicked see it and are angry; they gnash their teeth and melt away; the desire of the wicked comes to nothing.

Psa 117 (NRSV) Praise the LORD, all you nations! Extol him, all you peoples! 2 For great is his steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever. Praise the LORD!

Psa 121 (NRSV) I lift up my eyes to the hills-- from where will my help come? 2 My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. 3 He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber. 4 He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. 5 The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade at your right hand. 6 The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night. 7 The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life. 8 The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.

Psa 127 (NRSV) Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the LORD guards the city, the guard keeps watch in vain. 2 It is in vain that you rise up early and go

late to rest, eating the bread of anxious toil; for he gives sleep to his beloved. 3 Sons are indeed a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward. 4 Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the sons of one's youth. 5 Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them. He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.

Psa 128 (NRSV) Happy is everyone who fears the LORD, who walks in his ways. 2 You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands; you shall be happy, and it shall go well with you. 3 Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your children will be like olive shoots around your table. 4 Thus shall the man be blessed who fears the LORD. 5 The LORD bless you from Zion. May you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life. 6 May you see your children's children. Peace be upon Israel!

Psa 136 (NRSV) O give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever. 2 O give thanks to the God of gods, for his steadfast love endures forever. 3 O give thanks to the Lord of lords, for his steadfast love endures forever; 4 who alone does great wonders, for his steadfast love endures forever; 5 who by understanding made the heavens, for his steadfast love endures forever; 6 who spread out the earth on the waters, for his steadfast love endures forever; 7 who made the great lights, for his steadfast love endures forever; 8 the sun to rule over the day, for his steadfast love endures forever; 9 the moon and stars to rule over the night, for his steadfast love endures forever; 10 who struck Egypt through their firstborn, for his steadfast love endures forever; 11 and brought Israel out from among them, for his steadfast love endures forever; 12 with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, for his steadfast love endures forever; 13 who divided the Red Sea in two, for his steadfast love endures forever; 14 and made Israel pass through the midst of it, for his steadfast love endures forever; 15 but overthrew Pharaoh and his army in the Red Sea, for his steadfast love endures forever; 16 who led his people through the wilderness, for his steadfast love endures forever; 17 who struck down great kings, for his steadfast love endures forever; 18 and killed famous kings, for his steadfast love endures forever; 19 Sihon, king of the Amorites, for his steadfast love endures forever; 20 and Og, king of Bashan, for his steadfast love endures forever; 21 and gave their land as a heritage, for his steadfast love endures forever; 22 a heritage to his servant Israel, for his steadfast love endures forever. 23 It is he who remembered us in our low estate, for his steadfast love endures forever; 24 and rescued us from our foes, for his steadfast love endures forever; 25 who gives food to all flesh, for his steadfast love endures forever. 26 O give thanks to the God of heaven, for his steadfast love endures forever.

Psa 145 (NRSV) I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever. 2 Every day I will bless you, and praise your name forever and ever. 3 Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised; his greatness is unsearchable. 4 One generation shall laud your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts. 5 On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate. 6 The might of your awesome deeds shall be proclaimed, and I will declare your greatness. 7 They shall celebrate the fame of your abundant goodness, and shall sing aloud of your righteousness. 8 The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. 9 The LORD is good to all, and his compassion is over all that he has made. 10 All your works shall give thanks to you, O LORD, and all your faithful shall bless you. 11 They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom, and tell of your power, 12 to make known to all people your mighty deeds, and the glorious splendor of your kingdom. 13 Your kingdom is an everlasting

kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations. The LORD is faithful in all his words, and gracious in all his deeds. 14 The LORD upholds all who are falling, and raises up all who are bowed down. 15 The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. 16 You open your hand, satisfying the desire of every living thing. 17 The LORD is just in all his ways, and kind in all his doings. 18 The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. 19 He fulfills the desire of all who fear him; he also hears their cry, and saves them. 20 The LORD watches over all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy. 21 My mouth will speak the praise of the LORD, and all flesh will bless his holy name forever and ever.

Psalm 146:1-10

Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul! [2] I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God all my life long.

[3] Do not put your trust in princes, in mortals, in whom there is no help. [4] When their breath departs, they return to the earth; on that very day their plans perish. [5] Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God, [6] who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them; who keeps faith forever; [7] who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry.

The Lord sets the prisoners free; [8] the Lord opens the eyes of the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous. [9] The Lord watches over the strangers; he upholds the orphan and the widow, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin. [10] The Lord will reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. Praise the Lord!

Psa 148 (NRSV) Praise the LORD! Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights! 2 Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host! 3 Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars! 4 Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens! 5 Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he commanded and they were created. 6 He established them forever and ever; he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed. 7 Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps, 8 fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command! 9 Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars! 10 Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds! 11 Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth! 12 Young men and women alike, old and young together! 13 Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is above earth and heaven. 14 He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his faithful, for the people of Israel who are close to him. Praise the LORD!

Psa 150 (NRSV) Praise the LORD! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty firmament! 2 Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his surpassing greatness! 3 Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp! 4 Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe! 5 Praise him with clanging cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals! 6 Let everything that breathes praise the LORD! Praise the LORD!

### ***SECOND READINGS –Epistle (New Testament)***

Rom 8:31b-35 (NRSV) If God is for us, who is against us? 32 He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? 33 Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for

us. 35 Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

1 Cor 6:17-19 (NRSV) But anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. 18 Shun fornication! Every sin that a person commits is outside the body; but the fornicator sins against the body itself. 19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own?

1 Cor 12:31 (NRSV) But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.

1 Cor 13:1-8 (NRSV) If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3 If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. 4 Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant 5 or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; 6 it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. 7 It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end.

1 Cor 13:9-13 (NRSV) 9 For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; 10 but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. 11 When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. 12 For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. 13 And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

2 Cor 12:9 (NRSV) but he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

Eph 3:14-21 (NRSV) For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. 16 I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, 17 and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. 18 I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. 20 Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

Ephes. 4:30-32

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption. [31] Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander,

together with all malice, [32] and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.

Ephes. 5:1-2

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us,

Eph 5:21-33 (NRSV) Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. 22 Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Savior. 24 Just as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives ought to be, in everything, to their husbands. 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 in order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word, 27 so as to present the church to himself in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind--yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish. 28 In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Christ does for the church, 30 because we are members of his body. 31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." 32 This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the church. 33 Each of you, however, should love his wife as himself, and a wife should respect her husband.

Phil 4:4-7 (NRSV) Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. 5 Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. 6 Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Col 3:12-17 (NRSV) As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. 13 Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. 14 Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. 16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. 17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

1 Pet 3:1-9 (NRSV) Wives, in the same way, accept the authority of your husbands, so that, even if some of them do not obey the word, they may be won over without a word by their wives' conduct, 2 when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. 3 Do not adorn yourselves outwardly by braiding your hair, and by wearing gold ornaments or fine clothing; 4 rather, let your adornment be the inner self with the lasting beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in God's sight. 5 It was in this way long ago that the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves by accepting the authority of their husbands. 6 Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him lord. You have become her daughters as long as you do what is good and never let fears alarm you. 7 Husbands, in the same way, show consideration for your wives in your life

together, paying honor to the woman as the weaker sex, since they too are also heirs of the gracious gift of life--so that nothing may hinder your prayers. 8 Finally, all of you, have unity of spirit, sympathy, love for one another, a tender heart, and a humble mind. 9 Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse; but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing. It is for this that you were called--that you might inherit a blessing.

1 John 3:18-24 (NRSV) Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. 19 And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him 20 whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. 21 Beloved, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have boldness before God; 22 and we receive from him whatever we ask, because we obey his commandments and do what pleases him. 23 And this is his commandment, that we should believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. 24 All who obey his commandments abide in him, and he abides in them. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit that he has given us.

1 John 4:7-16 (NRSV) Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. 9 God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11 Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. 12 No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. 13 By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. 14 And we have seen and do testify that the Father has sent his Son as the Savior of the world. 15 God abides in those who confess that Jesus is the Son of God, and they abide in God. 16 So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.

1 John 4:18-19 (NRSV) There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love. 19 We love because he first loved us.

Rev 19:1 (NRSV) After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power to our God,

Rev 19:5-9 a(NRSV) And from the throne came a voice saying, "Praise our God, all you his servants, and all who fear him, small and great." 6 Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunderpeals, crying out, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. 7 Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready; 8 to her it has been granted to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure"-- for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. 9 And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb."

Rev 21:5 (NRSV) And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true."

## ***GOSPEL READINGS***

Matthew 3:13-17

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. [14] John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" [15] But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. [16] And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. [17] And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

Mat 5:1-12a (NRSV) When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. 2 Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying: 3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. 5 "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. 6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. 7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. 8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. 9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. 10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven,

*Salt of the earth and light of the world*

Mat 5:13-16 (NRSV) "You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot. 14 "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. 15 No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Mat 7:21 (NRSV) "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven.

Mat 7:24-29 (NRSV) "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. 25 The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock. 26 And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. 27 The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell--and great was its fall!" 28 Now when Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astounded at his teaching, 29 for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.

Mat 19:3-6 (NRSV) Some Pharisees came to him, and to test him they asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause?" 4 He answered, "Have you not read that the one who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' 5 and said, 'For this reason a man shall

leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? 6 So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

Mat 22:35-40 (NRSV) and one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. 36 "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" 37 He said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 38 This is the greatest and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

Mark 8:34 (NRSV) He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me."

Mark 10:6-9 (NRSV) But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' 7 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, 8 and the two shall become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one flesh. 9 Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

Mark 10:13-16 (NRSV) People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. 14 But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. 15 Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." 16 And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

Luke 12:22-31

He said to his disciples, "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. [23] For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. [24] Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! [25] And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? [26] If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest? [27] Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. [28] But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you--you of little faith! [29] And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. [30] For it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. [31] Instead, strive for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

John 2:1-11 (NRSV) On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. 2 Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. 3 When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." 4 And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." 5 His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." 6 Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. 7 Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. 8 He said to them, "Now draw some out, and

take it to the chief steward." So they took it. 9 When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom 10 and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." 11 Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

John 15:9-17 (NRSV) As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. 10 If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. 11 I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete. 12 "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

13 No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command you. 15 I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. 16 You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. 17 I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

John 20:19-23 *Jesus says, Peace be with you*

When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." [20] After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. [21] Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." [22] When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. [23] If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

## **Hymns (All from the Evangelical Lutheran Worship)**

- 312 Jesus, Come! For We Invite You
- 367 Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds
- 414 Holy God, We Praise Your Name
- 502 The King of Love My Shepherd Is
- 520 Dearest Jesus, at Your Word
- 631 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
- 765 Lord of All Hopefulness
- 804 Come Down, O Love Divine
- 816 Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life
- 836 Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee
- 838 Beautiful Savior
- 840 Now Thank We All Our God
- 858 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

