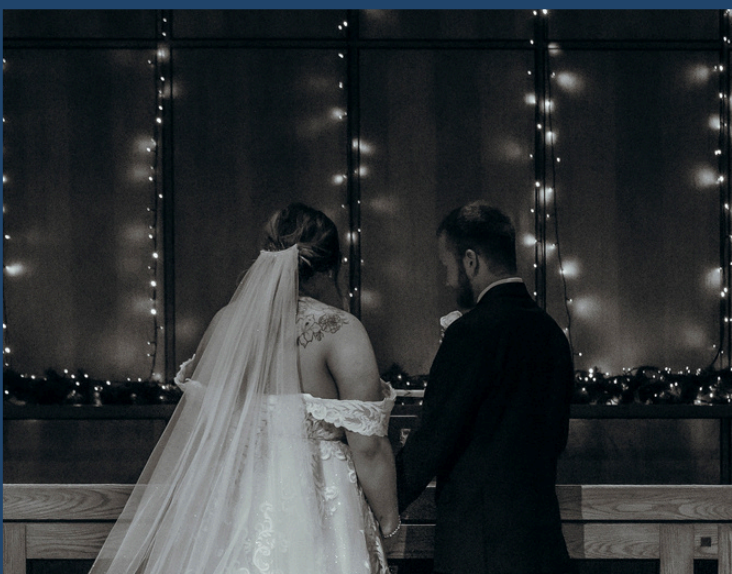

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church Wedding Guide





“Therefore what God
has joined together,
let no one separate.”

Matthew 19:6





We're so glad
you're
considering
being married
in our church.

Your desire to begin your marriage here tells us something meaningful and that is that you're inviting God into this covenant and longing to build a Christ-centered home. That matters deeply to us, and it's our prayer that God richly blesses you as you prepare for this next chapter.

We believe marriage is a sacred and joyful gift. When a wedding takes place in the church, it's not just a beautiful setting for a memorable day, but it's an act of worship. In this service, you are making promises before God and your community, giving thanks for His love and committing your lives to one another under His care.

Because of this, we approach weddings with both joy and reverence. Everything we do is meant to reflect the beauty, significance, and sacredness of the moment, keeping the focus on Christ and the covenant you are entering into together.

To help you prepare, we've created this guide as a helpful resource. It will walk you through what to expect and answer common questions so you can plan your wedding with clarity, confidence, and peace.



Before
the
Wedding

Reserving Your Date

We're honored you're considering celebrating your wedding here, and we'd love to help you reserve your date.

To officially secure your wedding day, the \$500 wedding fee must be submitted to the church office. In the event that plans change fees paid will be fully refunded if the cancellation occurs at least six months prior to your wedding date.

Because of the rhythm of the church year and previously scheduled events, weddings are not held during the following times:

- Holy Week (from the weekend prior to Palm Sunday through Easter Sunday)
- Thanksgiving weekend
- December 1 through January 2
- Confirmation Saturday

Rehearsals are typically held the evening before the wedding at 5:00, 5:30, or 6:00 p.m. For Saturday weddings, we ask that the ceremony begin at 3:00 p.m. or earlier. If you have a unique scheduling request, we're happy to talk through options with you—just reach out to the church office.

Choosing a Pastor

One of the great joys of a church wedding is having a pastor walk with you through this meaningful moment. We encourage you to request one of our pastors to officiate your ceremony.

Because of schedules and ministry commitments, pastors are usually able to confirm their availability about six months prior to your wedding date. We will keep your request on file and do our best to honor your preference.

If you have a visiting pastor from the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS) you would like to officiate, this may be possible with approval from our Lead Pastor. In some cases, couples ask about including a pastor from another denomination.

We're open to those conversations but ask that they be discussed early and directly with one of our pastors so we can thoughtfully and faithfully guide what participation may look like.

Premarital Conversations

One of the most meaningful parts of preparing for your wedding day is preparing for your marriage itself. Premarital counseling is not something we require but it is something we deeply believe in.

Each of our pastors approaches premarital counseling a little differently, so you'll work directly with the pastor officiating your wedding to set up your sessions. If you've been approved to work with a visiting LCMS pastor, arrangements can be made accordingly with that individual.

These conversations are designed to help you build a strong, healthy foundation for your life together. You'll talk through things like communication, expectations, conflict, faith, and the unique dynamics of your relationship. Our hope is that this time equips you with tools and insights that will help your marriage not only last, but truly flourish.

Working with the Wedding Coordinator

To help your day run smoothly, a wedding coordinator will be assigned to you as a representative of our church. Once your wedding fee is received (no later than six months prior to your wedding), your coordinator will reach out to begin planning with you.

You'll meet together at least five months before your wedding to walk through details such as the ceremony flow, use of the space, and church guidelines. They'll also be there to answer questions and help you navigate the planning process with confidence.

Any unique or out-of-the-ordinary elements should be discussed and approved by the officiating pastor ahead of time. Our goal is to support your vision while also honoring the sacred nature of the service.

Planning Your Music

Music plays an important role in your wedding ceremony, helping set the tone for this act of worship. Because of this, all music should reflect and honor the presence of God and the covenant you are entering into.

We understand that musical tastes vary, and we're happy to work with you—please simply discuss your selections with your officiating pastor early in the process.

- Gloria Dei reserves the right to approve all vocal and instrumental selections.
- If you plan to use one of our organists or pianists, please consult with them regarding approved music. Their contact information is included at the back of this booklet.
- If you choose to bring in an outside musician, all music must be approved by the officiating pastor at least eight weeks before any programs are printed.
- Outside musicians are also asked to meet with a member of our Worship Ministry or Executive Director before scheduling rehearsal time.

Marriage License & Legal Requirements

As you prepare for your wedding, you'll also need to obtain a marriage license from your County Clerk's office.

By law, the officiating pastor must have the license in hand in order to perform your ceremony. We ask that you bring the full packet (including the Certificate of Marriage) with you to the rehearsal.

The marriage license can be signed during the ceremony or after the ceremony. The pastor will complete and sign the necessary documents and return them to the County Clerk's office for you.

Working with Your Florist

Flowers and special decorations help make your wedding day beautiful, and your florist can provide items like candelabras, aisle runners, and pew ribbons. If you're planning anything unusual or elaborate, please check in with your wedding coordinator so we can make sure everything fits smoothly with the church space.

- If using candelabras, please use dripless candles and place plastic under them to protect the carpet. A member of your wedding party will light and extinguish them, and the wedding coordinator will provide instructions at the rehearsal or on the wedding day.
- For pew ribbons, bows, or flower arrangements, plastic clips are available to borrow from the church.
- If the florist needs early access to the church, coordinate with your wedding coordinator so the doors can be unlocked.
- You're welcome to leave your flowers to decorate the church for Sunday services, as long as no other wedding has reserved this opportunity. If this is your preference, let your wedding coordinator know early.

Use of Church Rooms and Cleaning

Your wedding fee includes post-ceremony cleaning of the spaces used. Please gather all personal belongings and leave the rooms as you found them.

If you want to use the kitchen or other rooms not reserved for your wedding (like rooms 130/132 or the Sanctuary), contact the church office at **(515) 276-1700**. Any space used for food or refreshments should be cleaned before your ceremony begins.

Photography and Videography

To maintain the dignity of the worship service:

- Flash photography is only allowed during the processional & recessional of the ceremony. We ask there is no flash photography during the ceremony as it can be highly distracting for those involved. Our goal is to respect the sanctity of the service but also allow a photographer to capture this important moment.
- Please encourage your photographer to meet with the pastor, prior to the wedding ceremony, in order that everything runs smoothly for your big day.
- Pre-ceremony and post-ceremony photos, including reenactments of important moments, are encouraged.
- All photography and videography should be conducted respectfully, reflecting the sacredness of the church.
- Videotaping and audio recording are allowed from designated areas only. Your wedding coordinator will show you where cameras can be set up.



The Rehearsal

The Rehearsal

All wedding participants should attend the rehearsal, including:

- Bride and groom
- Maid or matron of honor
- Best man
- Attendants
- Ushers
- Flower girl and ring bearer
- Parents of the bride and groom

The rehearsal usually lasts 45–60 minutes. Even though it is a rehearsal, the church is still a sacred space, so all participants should conduct themselves reverently. Please do not enter other rooms or use church equipment without permission.

We encourage you to bring all final honorariums or payments for the pastor, musicians, or soloists, as well as a final printed program & marriage license with you to the rehearsal.



The Wedding

The Wedding Day

- **Dressing rooms:** The bride and attendants may use rooms 130/132; men may use the cry room or boardroom. Your coordinator will show you these spaces.
- Flowers should arrive in plenty of time.
- The rings can either be given to the best man or placed on the altar prior to the ceremony. Please note that if you are using a ringbearer the rings they carry should only be symbolic and not the actual rings.
- Ushers should arrive at least 30 minutes early. The coordinator will give instructions at the rehearsal.
- Traditional seating: Groom's family on the right, bride's family on the left, though seating flexibility is allowed. Parents and grandparents are usually ushered in last, with the bride's mother seated in the first pew on the left.
- Aisle runners should be placed before the ceremony. Discuss placement with your coordinator.

After the Wedding

There are three ways that most couples go about thanking their guests who have come to their wedding ceremony.

1. After the recessional the couples may come back into the worship space and dismiss their guests, row-by-row, starting in the front.
2. The couple, and sometimes parents, can form a receiving line outside the worship space.
3. Many couples also choose to thank their guests at the reception during dinner.

No matter what you decide please discuss this with your pastor as they can give final announcements to your guests after the recessional.

Transportation for the couple should be parked at the south main entrance and can leave after photos are complete or the receiving line ends.

Miscellaneous Guidelines

- **Church paraments and vestments** (altar, pulpit, lectern cloths, pastor robes) remain as they are; custom “wedding colors” are not used.
- **No smoking** anywhere on church property, including restrooms.
- **No alcohol** is allowed anywhere on church property (including parking lot), except during Holy Communion.
- **Parking:** South entrance driveway is reserved for the wedding party after the ceremony. Handicapped spaces are near both entrances.
- **No throwing rice, birdseed, or releasing balloons.** Real flower petals are not allowed inside or outside due to staining.



Our Church
Facilities

Facilities

Here are some important details of the worship space to help with planning:

- **Seating & Space:** The Sanctuary seats approximately 400 guests. Please refer to current church facility policies for seating arrangements.
- **Aisles:** Each aisle is 60 feet long.
- **Altar Area:** The glass shelf behind the altar is 19 feet long and 13 inches deep. There are 14 pews on each side of the center aisle.
- **Arch & Doorway:** The doorway to the Sanctuary is 7 feet tall and 6 feet 6 inches wide—perfect for arches or floral arrangements.
- **Decorations:** Pew clips are available if you'd like to use them but please check with your wedding coordinator. A table is available for your guest book; please bring your own table covering. Plastic must be placed under all candles, candelabras, and unity candles to protect the carpet.
- **Prohibited Items:** For safety and respect of the space:
 - Tobacco and alcohol are not allowed anywhere in the building or on church grounds.
 - No tacks, pins, nails, glue, or tape may be used on furniture or the building. Furniture and carpet must remain fully protected from moisture or candle wax.
 - No furniture in the Sanctuary may be moved without prior permission from the officiating Pastor & Director of Worship. Consult your wedding coordinator for any requested changes.
 - Please do not throw rice, birdseed, or real flower petals. Balloons may not be released. Silk petals are allowed but must be cleaned up after the ceremony.

What the Church Does Not Provide

To help you plan accordingly, please note that the church does not provide:

- Printing of bulletins (all music must be approved before printing).
- Guest book or plume pen.
- Aisle runner.
- Unity candle, candles, candelabras, or bases for unity candles.
- Video recording of the service (outside videographers must be arranged separately).



Wedding
Fees

Church Fees

We're honored to host your wedding and want to make the process clear and simple as you plan your day.

Standard Wedding Fee – \$500

This fee includes:

- Wedding coordinator
- Audio operator (managing microphones and sound)
- Facility use, including the Sanctuary, narthex, cry room, and rooms 130/132
- Post-wedding cleaning
- Payment is due when booking your wedding date.
- Checks should be made payable to Gloria Dei Lutheran Church.
- If additional space is needed, please contact the church office to discuss availability.

Private Wedding – \$100 *(Members Only. If not a member please discuss with Lead Pastor)*

This option is designed for very small, intimate ceremonies (under 25 people).

- Immediate family only
- No wedding coordinator
- No attendants
- Audio only (no music or video)
- No cleaning required

Payment is due at the time of booking and should be made payable to **Gloria Dei Lutheran Church**.

Pastor Honorarium/Payment

- Suggested range: \$200–\$250
- Checks should be made payable to the officiating pastor and given at the rehearsal

The honorarium applies to active members of Gloria Dei as this is part of the calling of the pastors of Gloria Dei. If you are not a member (or have a unique situation), please discuss with your officiating pastor what the payments look like for pre-marital & wedding services.

Musicians

If you would like a Gloria Dei musician or vocalist to be part of your ceremony, please communicate that with your officiating pastor. A list of available musicians is included in this booklet, and you may contact them directly to make arrangements.

The fee for each musician or soloist is \$150, with payment made directly to the individual by cash or check. If paying by check, please make it payable directly to the musician or soloist.

Gloria Dei Musicians:

- Kathy Brammeier (Piano/Organ) – kathys5050@aol.com
- Rhonda Christensen (Piano/Organ) – christensenrhonda@gmail.com
- Lynn Hays (Piano/Organ) – pal4075@msn.com
- Sue Jesse (Organ only) – jessebs@mi-fiber.net
- Jessica Wunsch (Piano only) – alinate0914@gmail.com
- Emma Griffiths (Piano/Vocals) – Emma.Griffiths@gdlc.church
- Laura Valle (Violin) – icouldeat@aol.com
- James Thompson (Piano/Guitar/Vocals) – James.Thompson@gdlc.church

Recorded Music:

If you would like recorded music played by our tech team please discuss this with your officiating pastor.

Please Note:

Due to Saturday evening services in the Family Life Center, Gloria Dei is not available for wedding receptions.

Wedding Scripture

These Scripture passages are optional. Final selections should be discussed with the officiating pastor prior to the ceremony.

Genesis 2:18-24 (ESV)

¹⁸ Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." ¹⁹ Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens 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 livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. ²¹ So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept 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; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." ²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 (ESV)

⁹ Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. ¹⁰ For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! ¹¹ Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? ¹² And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Song of Solomon (ESV)

Set me as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm, for love is as strong as death, jealousy is fierce as the grave. Its flashes are flashes of fire, the very flame of the LORD. Many waters cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it. If a man offered for love all the wealth of his house, he would be utterly despised.

Jeremiah 29:10-14 (ESV)

¹⁰ “For thus says the Lord: When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. ¹¹ For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. ¹² Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. ¹³ You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart. ¹⁴ I will be found by you, declares the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, declares the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.

Matthew 19:4-6 (ESV)

⁴ He answered, “Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, ⁵ and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’? ⁶ So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.”

1 Corinthians 13:1-8a (ESV)

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not 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 have not love, I am nothing. ³ If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing. ⁴ Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant ⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; ⁶ it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸ Love never ends.

Ephesians 5:21-33 (ESV)

²¹ submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. ²² Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ 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. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶ that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ 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. ²⁸ In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, ³⁰ because we are members of his body. ³¹ “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” ³² This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. ³³ However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

Colossians 3:12-17 (ESV)

¹² Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³ bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. ¹⁴ And above all these put on 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 one body. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts 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.

Contact Information

We're here to help you every step of the way. If you have questions or need assistance, please don't hesitate to reach out.

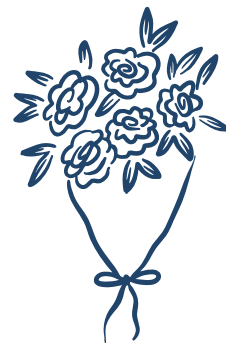
The pastors, facilities director, and technology team can all be contacted through the church office:

Phone: (515) 276-1700



Planning Checklist

Planning Checklist



Planning a wedding comes with a lot of moving pieces, so we've created a simple timeline to help guide you along the way.

Six to Nine Months Before Your Wedding

- ☐ **RESERVE YOUR DATE:** SUBMIT YOUR WEDDING FEE (CHECK PAYABLE TO GLORIA DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH) TO SECURE YOUR DATE. PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR WEDDING DATE IN THE MEMO LINE.
 - Once your fee is received, a wedding coordinator will be assigned and will reach out to you.
- ☐ **SCHEDULE PREMARITAL COUNSELING** WITH YOUR OFFICIATING PASTOR.
- ☐ **SUBMIT YOUR SIX-MONTH INFORMATION FORM** TO THE CHURCH OFFICE (A COPY WILL BE SHARED WITH YOUR COORDINATOR).
- ☐ **BOOK YOUR MUSICIANS (ORGANIST, SOLOIST, INSTRUMENTALISTS, ETC.)**
 - If using musicians outside of Gloria Dei, all music must be approved by the officiating pastor at least eight weeks before printing your wedding program.
- ☐ **REACH OUT TO YOUR WEDDING COORDINATOR ANYTIME WITH QUESTIONS—WE'RE HERE TO HELP.**

One Month Before Your Wedding

- ☐ **SUBMIT YOUR ONE-MONTH INFORMATION FORM** TO THE CHURCH OFFICE.
- ☐ **MEET WITH YOUR OFFICIATING PASTOR** TO FINALIZE CEREMONY DETAILS AND SCRIPTURE SELECTIONS.

Rehearsal Night

- ☐ **BRING YOUR MARRIAGE LICENSE PACKET** TO GIVE TO THE PASTOR.
- ☐ **BRING A FINAL COPY OF YOUR WEDDING PROGRAM** FOR THE WEDDING COORDINATOR.
- ☐ **BRING ANY HONORARIUMS OR PAYMENTS** FOR THE PASTOR, MUSICIANS, OR OTHER PARTICIPANTS.

Marriage Policy

The following is taken from our Governing Board Policy Manual:

The marriage policy of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Urbandale, Iowa, a member congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, is consistent with Scripture and the Synod's beliefs on marriage.

We believe that marriage is a sacred covenant union between one man and one woman (Gen. 2:24–25), which has been created by God the Creator, as Jesus Himself states in Matthew 19:4–6.

This understanding of marriage is both beautiful and purposeful. God gave marriage to humanity as a picture of the relationship between Christ and His bride, the Church (Eph. 5:32). Its purposes and benefits include this reflection of Christ and His Church (Eph. 5:20–33; Rev. 19:6–9), as well as its corresponding witness as Christians seek to be light in a dark world (Matt. 5:14–16; Phil. 2:15–16). Marriage also provides security, solidarity, and servanthood (Song of Solomon 6:3; Phil. 2:3–4).

Scripture teaches that marriage is to be a lifelong union and a gift to be held in honor (Heb. 13:4), and kept pure (1 Thess. 4:2–5). Its purposes include companionship (Gen. 2:18), joy (John 2:1–11), procreation (Gen. 1:27–28; Psalm 127:3–5), and pleasure (Prov. 5:15–20; 1 Cor. 7:1–5).

Therefore, for marriage to “be honored” (Heb. 13:4), in accordance with Scripture, we affirm the above as the only God-acceptable and God-honoring union. As God's justified people (1 Cor. 6:9–11), we honor Him with our beliefs, actions, and our bodies, which are temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:14–20).

Therefore, any sexual interaction (1 Thess. 4:3–6) not confined within the protective and pure union of one man and one woman is outside of God's will. This includes, but is not limited to: lust (Matt. 5:28), pornography, non-marital sex (1 Cor. 7:8–9), adultery, divorce for unbiblical reasons (Matt. 19:9; Mal. 2:14–16; 1 Cor. 7:10–15), same-sex sexual relationships and unions (Rom. 1:18–27), and cohabitation (John 4; Heb. 13:4).

“There must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.” (Eph. 5:3) God gives us these directions to protect us from harm and to lead us to be the light of the world (Matt. 5:14–16).

Therefore, we seek to live faithfully, lovingly, and winsomely—upholding God's truth, calling for repentance, and trusting in God's forgiveness (John 3:16–17; 2 Cor. 5:21). We live in accordance with God's Word through the power of Christ (2 Cor. 12:9–12; 1 Cor. 10:13).

As we affirm and follow the Creator's design (Rom. 1:26–27), marriages performed at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church will be conducted in light of Scripture, recognizing that there may be limited pastoral discretion in certain circumstances. In such cases, our pastors will engage in face-to-face conversation and provide clear, biblical counsel so that couples may pursue faithfulness to God's will for their lives.

However, pastoral discretion cannot and will not be applied in the case of same-sex unions. Gloria Dei Lutheran Church will not perform same-sex marriages, nor allow any pastor or individual to perform such ceremonies on church property. This is in accordance with the official position of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, as set forth in the 1998 Resolution 3-21 (“To Affirm the Sanctity of Marriage and to Reject Same-Sex Unions”), which teaches that such unions are contrary to God's will as revealed in Scripture.

Additionally, church property may not be used for any same-sex marriage ceremony, reception, or related activity. These positions and beliefs can be found on our Synod's website: www.lcms.org, along with additional statements, papers, and reports on this topic.

Ratified May 19, 2015 by the Governing Board of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
Revised January 2026



Gloria Dei
Lutheran Church