

A Wedding Handbook



Immanuel Lutheran Church

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Monday through Thursday, 8:00 am to 2:00 pm

(Summer hours: 8:00 am to Noon)

A Note to the Bride & Groom

Congratulations! The people of Immanuel Lutheran Church join in extending to you our best wishes as you anticipate and prepare for your married life together. We hold you in our prayers, asking God's richest blessings and guidance upon you. May God also guide us as we love and serve you in your marriage's beginning as well as in the future. Our purpose in this ministry is to bless you with a Christian marriage. We ask that you attend worship together on a weekly basis as a spiritual discipline in preparation for your life together.

As a starting point for our mutual conversation and planning we offer you this Wedding Handbook. It is not intended as a comprehensive guide to your wedding day. Other pamphlets, books, and resources are already available at libraries, bookstores, and online for everything from simple planning task lists to complex wedding day etiquette. Our hope is that the following pages will give you many answers and insights as you prepare for the heart of your wedding day, the worship service itself.

Our church website also contains premarital resources on the Wedding page, found under "Life Passages." Included there is a helpful "Discussion Guide for Couples" by Prepare/Enrich. Prepare/Enrich is the source of the premarital inventory you will be completing during your wedding preparations.

Let's set a time to talk. Call me when you're ready.

In Christ,

Pastor Steve Salberg

(Updated April 17, 2020)

WEDDING PRELIMINARIES

Where does the Conversation Begin?

As you prepare for your wedding here at Immanuel Lutheran Church, the conversation must begin with Pastor Steve Solberg as the one responsible for oversight of this ministry. He is herein referred to as “your pastor.” See “Visiting, Assisting Clergy” below for gaining the involvement of other pastors.

Selecting the Time and Date

Your wedding service may be held at the church most any time during the year and any time during the day not in conflict with other church activities. Most couples choose a Saturday, but this is not a must. The practice of making vows within the normal Sunday morning congregational worship has even been desired by some who have a small guest list. One restriction will be observed: Weddings will not be performed in the church during Holy Week, as this is a period of solemn reflection and penitence in which a wedding celebration would not be appropriate. Obviously, you should consult with your pastor before making any other arrangements.

Pre-marital Pastoral Sessions

Since marriage is so serious a commitment and since the divorce rate has now reached epidemic proportions, it is the church's intent to help you get your marriage off to as good a start as possible. You will, therefore, meet with your pastor for 4 to 6 sessions, usually about 1-1/2-hours in length, in preparation for your wedding and marriage. Prior to the first or second session, you will also complete an **online marriage inventory through PREPARE/ENRICH (there is a fee of \$40, payable to Immanuel Lutheran Church, for this excellent resource)**. As you meet with your pastor you will explore strengths and growth areas in your developing relationship, receive homework to further empower you, and plan your wedding service. If you have children, they too may be included in one of these sessions. All this we will do in light of God's scriptural witness. Alone we struggle, and our relationships die, but with God and the body of Christ there is wonderful grace to sustain us in our marriages.

If you live a great distance away from Negaunee you may wish to negotiate with your pastor to have your pre-marital pastoral sessions with another pastor or counselor closer to you. This is especially a benefit if you will have ongoing ties with that pastor and congregation after you are married. One session at Immanuel Lutheran is required, however, to plan out service details and allow your pastor the chance to get to know you as a couple.

Visiting, Assisting Clergy

A guest pastor (friend or relative of the bride or groom) may be welcome to assist at the wedding service. This should first be discussed with your pastor (here at Immanuel Lutheran) who will in turn extend the invitation to the other pastor.

Marriage License Application in Michigan

After consulting with your pastor, be sure to learn about the legal requirements in preparation for your wedding.

Immanuel Lutheran is in Marquette County. If you are a resident of Marquette County or live out-of-state, up-to-date information regarding application for marriage license may be gained from the Register Of Deeds, 234 W Baraga Ave, Marquette, MI 49855, 906-225-8330. If you are a resident of another Michigan county, please work with your county's Register of Deeds.

The marriage license is to be brought to the church office **AT LEAST** by the Wednesday preceding your wedding so that the secretary can type the wedding certificate. Any fees to be paid are to be brought to the church secretary at that time, as well.

Immanuel Lutheran's Fees

Separate checks made payable to the individual must be brought into the church office for each applicable payment by AT LEAST the Wednesday preceding your wedding.

Also there is a charge for bulletins that will be the actual cost of bulletins + \$15 for typing + \$10 per 100 bulletins for copying.

- ◆ Custodian (Roland Koski) - \$25.00
- ◆ Organist—\$100.00
- ◆ Pastor's honorarium—The honorarium usually ranges from \$100 to \$200
- ◆ There is no charge for use of the church

If neither of you is a member of Immanuel, we ask for checks as follows:

Custodian (Roland Koski) - \$50.00

Organist—\$100.00

Use of the church—\$100.00

Pastor's honorarium—\$200.00

Other fees may also be applicable.

Reception Preparations

If you would like the pastor and/or organist to be present at a rehearsal dinner or reception, please make sure to give them an invitation in advance. The pastor would also be happy to lead in table prayer as you request.

If you are planning a reception at the church, please discuss it with your pastor to make the proper arrangements. A hall rental fee will apply.

Rehearsal

If you are planning a small and simple wedding, a formal rehearsal may not be needed. In most cases, however, it is time well spent. Last minute questions can be answered for all parties concerned, and pre-wedding nerves can be eased.

The rehearsal is usually scheduled for the afternoon or evening preceding the wedding service. This may be altered for the sake of convenience. Please see that those in the wedding party, ushers, acolytes, and parents arrive on time; the organist or pastor may have other appointments. The rehearsal should not last beyond one hour.

THE WEDDING SERVICE ITSELF

An Opening Statement

You as a bride and groom are very special and important people. Much attention will be given to you the day of your wedding. You and your relationship will be celebrated. The people you will invite deeply care for you and will be eager to join in such festivities. Bear in mind, though, that since you have decided to be married in the church, you are choosing to place someone besides yourselves at center stage—God who comes to us in Jesus Christ. Your wedding will be a service of Christian worship during which you, your attendants, your family and friends will join in thanking God for the gifts of life and family and asking God to bless you in your life together. Understanding this, your wedding provides an excellent opportunity to declare your faith, your love, and your commitment of your relationship to God as you begin your married life. Who will be the most important one at your wedding? Almighty God who has made His love known to you in Jesus Christ and can sustain you all your days. Your service will reflect this.

The conduct of all participants should be in keeping with the solemnity of the service and in full respect to God, to you, and to other guests. The pastor reserves the right to halt the service if anyone is not conducting themselves with appropriate behavior.

Scripture

The Scripture proclaimed at your wedding is very important. You may choose one or more portions of Scripture to be used in worship. The readings you choose will tell how you have experienced the love of God as you come now to make your vows.

A list of possible Scripture is included in Appendix 2 (pp. 14-19) at the back of this Handbook. A gospel reading and one or two other readings would be appropriate.

Music

One guiding principle should govern the selection of all music. The Christian wedding is a service of worship to the honor and praise of Almighty God. The music is to be God-centered, not bride-centered or person-centered. Obviously, some musical selections are not conducive to the atmosphere of worship and are not appropriate for use in the church. It is not the style of music that may be objectionable, but the message or text of the music. Some "popular" or "romantic" music may be enjoyable to listen to, but the text may speak about love and marriage in a way that conflict with Christian teaching. In this case, the text of the vocal selection should be examined as to its appropriateness.

If certain popular and/or romantic songs have special meaning to you as a couple, consider having this music performed at the reception.

Some instrumental music is also inappropriate as it was never intended for use in the church. The traditional wedding marches of Wagner and Mendelssohn are prime examples. The "Here Comes the Bride" chorus from Wagner's Lohengrin was never intended for church use. In the opera, this excerpt occurs when the bride and groom

enter the bridal chamber and the bed is being readied. The music is even more incongruous for use at a wedding when one considers that, before that act is over, the bridegroom has murdered a rival and is forced to abandon his wife forever. In addition, "Here Comes the Bride" is clearly bride-centered, not God-centered. The Mendelssohn music ("Wedding March") was composed as an accompaniment to Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream." A musical fantasy, attention is centered on a workman named Bottom, who is transformed into a jackal. The jackal courts and bewitches a fairy. The play is filled with sensuality and magic and is inappropriate for a Christian Wedding.

In the selection of vocal music, the question must always be **1) Does it praise God? and/or 2) Does it ask God's blessing on the marriage?** The fact that a song includes the word "God" does not necessarily make the piece appropriate for use in the church. Unfortunately, the fact that you might have heard a piece used in a church wedding doesn't always guarantee that it is appropriate, either. **Be sure to be in conversation with your pastor as you select music for your wedding. Your organist, soloist, or other musicians are also an invaluable resource for music planning. Music must be approved by Immanuel's organist or pastor. Please be in touch with them as soon as possible for planning purposes.**

The use of congregational hymns is strongly recommended together with, or in place of, vocal solos. The advantages are congregational participation and good quality music. A rich selection of hymns is available. The following are *some* appropriate hymns found in the red Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW) hymnbook:

- ELW #359 – Where Charity and Love Prevail
- ELW #414 – Holy God, We Praise Your Name
- ELW #488/9 – Soul Adorn Yourself With Gladness
- ELW #502 – The King of Love My Shepherd Is
- ELW #532 – Gather Us In
- ELW #535 – Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises
- ELW #543 – Go, My Children, with My Blessing
- ELW #585 – Hear Us Now, Our God and Father
- ELW #586 – This Is a Day, Lord, Gladly Awaited
- ELW #631 – Love Divine, All Love Excelling
- ELW #640 – Our Father, By Whose Name
- ELW #765 – Lord of All Hopefulness
- ELW #816 – Come, My Way, My Truth, My Life
- ELW #835 – All Creatures of Our God and King
- ELW #836 – Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee
- ELW #839/40 – Now Thank We All Our God
- ELW #858/9 – Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
- ELW #881 – Let All Things Now Living

Organist and/or Other Musicians

Arrangements for music should be made through the church organist or her designated substitute. You will need to secure one of them for your service. The current organists for Immanuel Lutheran Church are Connie Scanlon, (906) 362-9702 or Connie.Scanlon@charter.net, and Sue Pohlman, (906) 251-1737 or dreamweaver9812@yahoo.com.

You may also wish to consider the use of other instruments in addition to or instead of the pipe organ. For example, the brilliance of a trumpet descant during a congregational hymn adds wonderful power and celebration. Besides the pipe organ, a piano is also available in the sanctuary. Other instruments would be your responsibility.

If you intend to have a vocalist(s) with organ accompaniment, your soloist(s) must contact Immanuel's organist at least four weeks before the wedding. Talk with your pastor if you need help in identifying possible vocalists, etc.

Soloists may not bring their own amplification systems. The church amplification system may be used.

As was mentioned above, please contact your musicians as soon as possible in order to secure them and assure adequate planning time.

Sharing Participation in Worship

Members of the wedding party, friends or relatives may participate in the wedding service by reading the scripture lessons, lighting candles, leading in the prayers, or in other various ways. Some couples, for example, invite their parents and/or children (as the case may be) to give a spoken blessing upon their marriage commitment (e.g., "May you dwell in God's presence forever; may true and constant love preserve you"). Talk with your pastor if you wish to explore this more.

Regarding the wedding party, please keep in mind that there is limited space in Immanuel's altar area. If there are more than five couples serving as attendants, the space becomes crowded.

If you plan to have children involved in the wedding procession (e.g., flower girl, ring bearer), they should be at least 5 years old. Younger children may become frightened.

Holy Communion

In Holy Communion, the community of Christ gathers to be loved, forgiven, strengthened, and united in our Lord Jesus Christ. With this in mind, communion can be celebrated within the context of your wedding service, if you so choose. As the sacramental meal of the family of God, however, Holy Communion must always be open to all worshipers who choose to receive it. It must never be served only to the bride and groom or the wedding party while others are excluded. Please speak with your pastor for more considerations regarding hospitality within this meal. Please talk with your pastor to discuss any necessary arrangements for the communion preparation and distribution.

The Vows or Promises

The heart of marriage is a promise made in the exchange of vows between bride and groom. You may use one of the following vows or write your own marriage promises. The ones listed will help you generate some ideas of good, Christian marriage promises. If you do wish to write your own promises, they should be consistent with the Biblical understanding of marriage and make clear that the promises are a lifelong commitment with the help of God. Please consult with pastor. And by the way, memorization of the vows is encouraged (so they can be spoken from the heart), but not essential.

- 1) I take you, _____, 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, _____, take you, _____, 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.
- 3) By the grace of God, I, _____, give myself to you as your *husband/wife* 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.
- 4) I take you, _____, to be my *wife/husband*, and these things I promise you: I will be faithful to you and honest with you; I will obey, respect, trust, help, and care for you; I will share my life with you; I will forgive you as we have been forgiven; and I will try with you better to understand ourselves, the world, and God; through the best and worst of what is to come until death parts us.
- 5) _____, I take you to be my *wife/husband* from this time onward, to join with you and share all that is to come, to give and to receive, to speak and to listen, to inspire and to respond, and in all circumstances of our life together to be loyal to you with my whole life and with all my being until death parts us.
- 6) I, _____, take you, _____, to be my wedded *wife/husband*, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part, according to God's holy plan; and so I give you myself in faithfulness.

Signing of the Marriage License

As a part of your wedding service, you may wish to have a public signing of the marriage license following your vows. If not during the worship, the marriage license will be signed directly following the service. The bride, groom, maid/matron of honor and best man all sign. The official license will be sent to the courthouse from which it was issued. After a week or so, a certified copy of the license may then be gotten from the courthouse for your records and use in any name changes on bank accounts, etc.

Other Service Details

Bulletins

Although not essential, bulletins (wedding folders) can benefit your guests and give you a nice remembrance of your wedding service. If you wish the church office to assist you, your cost will be the cost of the bulletin blanks (available at Christian bookstores and purchased by you) plus \$15.00 for typing and \$10.00 per 100 copies for copying.

See Appendix 1 (pp. 12-13) for the appropriate order of service. You might consider the following piece as an appropriate INSERT in your wedding:

TO OUR WEDDING GUEST

You have come to a Christian wedding, the beginning of another Christian home. In great joy we welcome you to gather with us before God, sharing this holy and happy experience. We now invite you to be fully present during this time of worship by:

- Turning off your cell phones and cameras. We promise to share all of the photos from this special day.
- Breathing a silent prayer to God, asking for His blessing upon us.

May this wedding service remind all married persons of the vows they once made and bring new joy and meaning into their lives.

Thank you for being here today and for being our supportive, encouraging community each day of our married life together.

Seating Capacity

Immanuel's worship space (also known as the *sanctuary* or *nave*) seats approximately 200 people in pews. Each pew comfortably seats 8 adults, and there are a total of 22 full pews (11 on each side) as well as 5 half-pews (2 at the rear on each side and 1 in the front on the bride's side). An additional half-pew can be brought in from the front vestibule, and individual folding chairs can be added down the center aisle. The balcony is also available for up to an additional 20 seats, if not being used by musicians or photographer. Guests in wheelchairs are best seated in the front on either side.

Audio System

Musicians may not bring their own amplification systems. The church amplification system may be used. An audio CD of your service can be made upon request.

Candles

Candles in the sanctuary symbolize the light of Christ shining into the darkness of our world. The two altar candles will be lit during your wedding. During the Easter Season, the Paschal Candle (beside the baptismal font) will be lit. Two 7-light candelabra are also available for your use. No live candles may be carried by the bridesmaids.

Unity Candles and Other Unity Symbols

Many couples choose to symbolize their unity through use of a "unity candle" or other means. The "unity candle" set consists of a larger centerpiece candle with a tapered candle on each side. The two tapered candles are lit before or during the service. Following the pronouncement of the marriage, the bride and groom together use the tapered candles to light the center candle, the two individual flames becoming one. If you would like to have a unity candle lighting ceremony, you will be responsible for obtaining the three candles needed. (A stand is available at the church, if desired.) The church office has catalogs from which you may select candles with Christian symbols. Unity candles are also available at many Christian book and card stores. Again, these candles would be your financial responsibility.

Another unity symbol that has recently become popular replaces the above candles with sand. The bride and groom together pour different colored sand, representing all that they are and all that they will ever be, into a transparent glass container. Just as the grains of sand can never be separated and poured back again, so will their marriage be.

Chancel Appointments (Colors)

The appointed color of the season of the church year, reflected in the altar and pulpit cloths (paraments) and Pastor's stole, will be used, and will not be changed to match the colors of the bridal party.

Flowers & Aisle Runners

It is your responsibility to arrange for flowers and white runners, if desired. Flowers in worship symbolize the life of Christ and sacrifice in devotion to God, as the flowers' lives are given when they are cut. If you choose to have flowers, stands of various heights are available at the church for use in flower placement. When considering number and placement of flowers, please bear in mind that the chancel furniture (altar, pulpit, lectern, baptismal font) all have great significance and should not be obscured from view. Let the church secretary know if you wish the flowers to be left for possible use during the Sunday worship. The pastor must be told if any decorations other than flowers are desired.

Aisle runners mark the path of the bride, and have no liturgical significance. An aisle runner may, however, be used. Again, this is your responsibility to procure.

To aid your preparations, the length of the sanctuary aisle (from the base of the chancel steps to the main entrance interior doors) is 40' 3". The narthex (front entryway) is an additional 9' in depth to the main entrance exterior doors.

Picture-Taking during Worship

Flash pictures may *not* be taken during the service by the wedding guests *nor* by the official photographer. This greatly detracts from the worship. Flash photos may be taken of the procession and recession and of posed group pictures before and/or after the worship. At no time should the photographer be in view of the congregation in such a way as to distract them. They may take natural light (no flash) photos from the balcony or behind the last set of pews during the service. Your pastor will take part, when requested, in recreating any parts of the service for a picture before or after the wedding.

Video cameras are permitted during worship with the same considerations as above. At no time should the video photographer "wander" with the camera. Please ask your photographer and/or videographer to consult with your pastor before taking pictures.

Ushers and People's Entrance/Exit

It is a good rule of thumb to have one usher for every 50 wedding guests. Also be thinking about how you wish the ushers to seat people, especially your immediate family and honored guests. At the conclusion of the service, the issue is one of ushering your guests out. Will you or your ushers do this?

Other decisions lie ahead. How will the wedding party enter? Will there be a reception line, and who will it include? The answers will come. God be with you in your planning.

Rice Throwing

Please make sure that no rice or bird seed is thrown inside the church. Be advised that there is nothing Christian about the practice – it's from an old pagan fertility ritual – and it not only causes extra work for the custodian but can be a safety hazard. Some couples have requested bubbles. Bubbles are permitted outside.

Alcoholic Beverages and Smoking

The church's building and grounds are smoke-free. It is also the policy of Immanuel Lutheran Church that there are **no** alcoholic beverages brought to or consumed in or around the building before or after the wedding. The Pastor reserves the right to cancel or halt any service when a member of the party or any guests in the church are under the influence or conducting themselves with inappropriate behavior.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

(From the red Evangelical Lutheran Worship, pp. 286-291)

GATHERING

Prelude

Procession

Greeting p. 286

Declaration of Intention p. 287

Prayer of the Day p. 287

WORD

Readings

Sermon

Hymn of the Day

MARRIAGE

Vows p. 288

Giving of Rings p. 288

Acclamation p. 288

Other symbols of marriage may be used at this time

Marriage Blessing p. 289

Prayers of Intercession p. 289

The Lord's Prayer p. 290

SENDING

Peace p. 290

Blessing p. 290

Dismissal p. 291

Recession

Postlude

ORDER OF WORSHIP (with Holy Communion)

(From the red Evangelical Lutheran Worship, pp. 286-291)

GATHERING

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WORD

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MEAL

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Communion	
Prayer after Communion	

SENDING

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Dismissal	p. 291
Recession	
Postlude	

SOME POSSIBLE BIBLICAL TEXTS

FOR A CHRISTIAN WEDDING

The following quotes are excerpts from the *New Revised Standard Version* and will give you a quick glance at the contents of the larger passage. When you find one of interest, please look up the complete passage in your own Bible. Comparing different translations or versions might even help you in better understanding the text. Remember, these are only suggestions. You may choose other Bible passages.

The Old Testament

Genesis 1:26-28

Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness...."

Genesis 2:18-24

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner."

Numbers 6:24-27

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.

Joshua 24:14-15

"...but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord."

Ruth 1:16-17

But Ruth said, "Do not press me to leave you or to turn back from following you! Where you lodge, I will lodge; your people shall be my people, and your God my God. 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!"

II Samuel 7:28-29

"...now therefore may it please you to bless the house of your servant, so that it may continue forever before you; for you, O Lord God, have spoken, and with your blessing shall the house of your servant be blessed forever."

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Proverbs 15:16

Better is a little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble with it.

Proverbs 18:22

He who finds a wife finds a good thing, and obtains favor from the Lord.

Proverbs 31:10-12

A capable wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels. The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain. She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven....

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. For if they fall, one will lift up the other....

Ecclesiastes 7:14

In the day of prosperity be joyful, and in the day of adversity consider; God has made the one as well as the other, so that mortals may not find out anything that will come after them.

Song of Solomon 2:10-13

My beloved speaks and says to me: "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away...."

Song of Solomon 8:7

Many water cannot quench love, neither can floods drown it.

Isaiah 54:5-8

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.

Isaiah 63:7-9

...in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old.

Jeremiah 32:38-39

They shall be my people, and I will be their God. I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for all time, for their own good and the good of their children after them.

Hosea 2:16-20

On that day, says the Lord, you will call me, "My husband...."

The Psalms

Psalm 23

Psalm 33

Rejoice in the Lord, O you righteous. Praise befits the upright.

Psalm 34

I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth.

Psalm 37

Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him, and he will act.

Psalm 67

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us.

Psalm 91

You who live in the shelter of the Most High, who abide in the shadow of the Almighty, will say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust."

Psalm 100

Make a joyful noise to the Lord all the earth.

Psalm 103

But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children, to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments.

Psalm 111

Praise the Lord! I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart.... Great are the works of the Lord...

Psalm 117

Praise the Lord, all you nations!

Psalm 121

The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.

Psalm 127

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. 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.

Psalm 128

Happy is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in his ways. You shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands; you shall be happy, and it shall go well with you. Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your children will be like olive shoots around your table. Thus shall the man be blessed who fears the Lord.

Psalm 136

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.

Psalm 145

I will extol you, my God and King, and bless your name forever and ever.

Psalm 150

Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp! Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe!

The New Testament Epistles (Letters)

Romans 8:31b-39

If God is for us, who is against us?

Romans 12:1-2,9-13

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God....

Romans 15:5-6

May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I Corinthians 13

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude.

II Corinthians 9:8

And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.

Ephesians 3:14-21

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name.

Ephesians 5:1-2,21-33

Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord. 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. Just as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives ought to be, in everything, to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,....

Philippians 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.

Colossians 3:12-17

Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.

Hebrews 13:5

Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, "I will never leave you or forsake you."

I John 4:7-12

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God....

Revelation 19:1,5-9a

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....

The Gospels

Matthew 5:1-10

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven...."

Matthew 5:13-16

"You are the salt of the earth...."

Matthew 6:33

"But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

Matthew 7:24-27

"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. 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. 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. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell — and great was its fall!"

Matthew 18:20

"For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

Matthew 19:5-6

"Have you not read that the one who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' 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'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

Matthew 28:20

"...And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Mark 10:6-9

But from the beginning of creation, "God made them male and female."

Mark 12:28-31

"...you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart...[and] your neighbor as yourself."

Luke 19:5-6

When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today." So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him.

John 2:1-11

Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding.

John 14:27

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid."

John 15:9-17

"As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love."

John 17:20-26

"The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one.... "

