

CUSTOMIZING YOUR WEDDING CEREMONY

One of the things the pastor officiating at your ceremony will discuss with you when you meet with him or her will be the wedding 'order of service' – that is, the specific details of the wedding ceremony itself.

We encourage you to use the order of service that follows as a starting point. It's a nice, standard ceremony that many of our pastors like to use. *(Please note that – with the exception of some of the vows, etc – the pastor will not read from this word-for-word at your ceremony! The pastors' words provided in this document are there just to give you a general sense of what he/she will say.)*

You are welcome to omit or rearrange most elements of the service as you'd like – so if it's helpful, please print it out and make notes on how you'd like to make the service your own. If you have questions about this, the pastor who'll be officiating for you (and/or his or her assistant) will be able to help you.

WHERE DO WE START? LOOK FOR THE QUESTIONS IN BLUE – those are the things you'll want to discuss and decide on together!

Planning on having a bulletin or program at your wedding but not sure what to include on it? The orange headings on the following pages can be used as the items you'll list in your bulletin/program!

While many of the details on the following pages apply whether you're having your wedding at Heartland or at a different site, there are a number of things that follow that are specific to Heartland. Other sites may operate differently – so if you're having your wedding at a site other than Heartland, sync with your site's coordinator on those specifics.

PRELUDE MUSIC & SEATING OF GUESTS

About 30 minutes before your ceremony is set to start, you'll want to have your venue open for guests to arrive & find a seat. Your prelude music (it's good to have 45 minutes of music selected for this) will be played during this time.

WHAT'S YOUR PREFERENCE ON PRELUDE MUSIC? *Please check all that apply...*

- We're using RECORDED MUSIC ONLY our prelude music...and:
 - We'll provide the songs on a jump drive – we'll get them to you by 1-2 weeks before the wedding
 - We don't have a preference on prelude music – please use a Heartland playlist (*soundman's choice!*)
- We're using LIVE MUSIC ONLY – *please describe (e.g. string quartet, etc) and list contact info for the main contact*

- We're using A MIX of recorded & live music as prelude – *please explain and list contact info for your main contact*

Notes: _____

WHAT'S YOUR PLAN FOR YOUR USHERS? *Please check all that apply...*

- We will not be using ushers at all – our guests are welcome to seat themselves as they arrive
- We're using ushers...and:
 - They will seat ALL of our guests (*for this option, you'll want to have 1 USHER per 50 GUESTS*)
 - They will seat ONLY the family members listed in the "Seating of Family" later in this document
 - We want ALL of our guests seated by "bride's side / groom's side"
 - We want to reserve some seats and have JUST FAMILY seated by "bride's side / groom's side" in those seats (bride needs _____ seats, groom needs _____ seats)
 - We are not using "bride's side / groom's side" – our guests can sit wherever they want

If you're using ushers, please list their names:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Who will be your "head usher" (who's on point for the usher team)? _____

Notes: _____

LIGHTING OF CANDLES & SEATING OF FAMILY

WHAT'S YOUR PREFERENCE FOR YOUR DÉCOR CANDLES?

You may opt to have your décor candles lit in advance (so they are already burning when guests arrive) – or you can opt to have a friend or family member (or a couple of people) light the candles as the ceremony gets rolling.

- We'll skip the formal candle lighting part – having the candles lit before our guests arrive is great with us
- We'll include candle lighting in the ceremony – and the person/people lighting the candles will be:

If you're including this element, you may opt to have a special song during this – or, if you don't have a specific song you'd like during this, we can allow your prelude music to continue through this part of the service.

- Continue our prelude music for this part
- We do have a specific song we'd like during this – it is : _____
 - This song will be played from a recording
 - This song will be performed live by _____

Notes: _____

(If applicable) WHAT ABOUT THE LIGHTING OF YOUR UNITY CANDLES?

If you'll be including a unity candle later in your ceremony, there'll be two candles (the ones on either side of your unity candle) representing the two of you – and you have a few options for those.

- We're not including a unity candle / we will be doing an alternative to the unity candle (You'll have a chance to describe your unity candle alternative when you get to page 10. But if it includes something that happens here – early in the ceremony – like maybe your moms bringing in an item for this and placing it in the appropriate spot on the stage, etc, please go ahead and mention that part of things below.)
- We'd like those 2 candles lit with the rest of our décor candles, as indicated in the previous question
- We'd like those 2 candles left unlit – we'll light them ourselves off one of our (already lit) décor candles during the part of the ceremony when we light our unity candle
- We'd like our moms to light those 2 candles, just before they are seated for the ceremony
- We have a different plan for these 2 candles (please describe in the "notes" below):

Notes: _____

WHAT'S YOUR PREFERENCE FOR SEATING OF FAMILY?

You may opt to have select family members seated as a part of the ceremony, just prior to the processional – or you can opt out of this. It's your call! What would you like to do?

- Let's skip this – we want all family to be seated during the seating of guests, not as a part of the ceremony
- We want the family members listed below to be formally seated as the ceremony begins. They are listed below in the order (and if applicable, in the pairings) we want them seated, along with the name of the usher/person we'd like to escort them. (No preference on who escorts them? Just write "usher"!)

Seating of Groom's Grandparents (Please list couples together on the same line if they should be seated together.)

- Name/Names: _____ Escorted by: _____
- Name/Names: _____ Escorted by: _____
- Name/Names: _____ Escorted by: _____
- Name/Names: _____ Escorted by: _____

Seating of Bride's Grandparents

- Name/Names: _____ Escorted by: _____
- Name/Names: _____ Escorted by: _____
- Name/Names: _____ Escorted by: _____
- Name/Names: _____ Escorted by: _____

Seating of Groom's Parents

- Name/Names: _____ Escorted by: _____
- Name/Names: _____ Escorted by: _____

Seating of Bride's Parents (If the father of the bride will escort her down the aisle, don't list him here!)

- Name/Names: _____ Escorted by: _____
- Name/Names: _____ Escorted by: _____

If you're including this element, you may opt to have a special song during this – or, if you don't have a specific song you'd like during this, we can allow your prelude music to continue through this part of the service.

- Continue our prelude music for this part
- We do have a specific song we'd like during this – it is : _____
 - This song will be played from a recording
 - This song will be performed live by _____

Do any of these family members (or any of your other guests) have mobility issues (wheelchairs, walkers, etc)? Or is there anything else (family dynamics, etc) we should be mindful of? If so, please note that here:

THE PROCESSIONAL

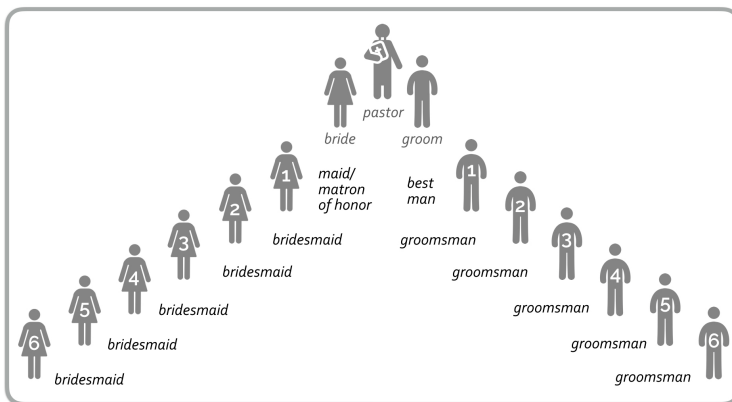
HOW WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR WEDDING PARTY TO ENTER?

- We'd like them to enter as COUPLES (guys & gals come in together in pairs)
 - We'd like them to enter as couples but have an uneven number – please help us figure out the best plan for this!
 - We'd like them to enter as couples but have an uneven number – see “notes” below for how we'd like to adjust for this
- We'd like them to enter SEPARATELY – all the guys first, then after that, all of the gals

The song we've chosen for our wedding party's entrance is: _____

- No preference for a specific song – please continue our prelude music for this part of things!
- This song will be played from a recording
- This song will be performed live by _____

Notes: _____



WHO'VE YOU CHOSEN AS YOUR WEDDING PARTY?

Please list them in the order you'd like them to stand during the ceremony!

(The order in which your wedding party stands is your choice. You can arrange them by height, by how long you've known them, by their standing in your fantasy football league...however you want! That's totally up to you!)

MAID/MATRON OF HONOR: _____

- Maid of honor: she's single (stands next to bride)
- Matron of honor: she's married

BRIDESMAID 2: _____

BRIDESMAID 3: _____

BRIDESMAID 4: _____

BRIDESMAID 5: _____

BRIDESMAID 6: _____

(stands furthest from bride)

BEST MAN: _____

(stands next to groom)

GROOMSMAN 2: _____

GROOMSMAN 3: _____

GROOMSMAN 4: _____

GROOMSMAN 5: _____

GROOMSMAN 6: _____

(stands furthest from groom)

Notes: _____

INCLUDING ANY RING BEARERS OR FLOWER GIRLS?

Kids are often too wiggly to stand with the wedding party for the whole ceremony, so we suggest choosing a "wrangler" (mom/dad, grandparent, etc – someone not standing up with you as a part of your wedding party) with whom they can sit after the processional – especially if you've got very young kiddos participating.

RING BEARER 1: _____ (Age: _____)

"WRANGLER" NAME & RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD: _____

RING BEARER 2: _____ (Age: _____)

"WRANGLER" NAME & RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD: _____

RING BEARER 3: _____ (Age: _____)

"WRANGLER" NAME & RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD: _____

RING BEARER 4: _____ (Age: _____)

"WRANGLER" NAME & RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD: _____

FLOWER GIRL 1: _____ (Age: _____)

"WRANGLER" NAME & RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD: _____

FLOWER GIRL 2: _____ (Age: _____)

"WRANGLER" NAME & RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD: _____

FLOWER GIRL 3: _____ (Age: _____)

"WRANGLER" NAME & RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD: _____

FLOWER GIRL 4: _____ (Age: _____)

"WRANGLER" NAME & RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD: _____

Notes: _____

HOW WILL THE BRIDE MAKE HER ENTRANCE?

The bride will come down the aisle by herself

The bride will be escorted down the aisle by _____
(please note name & relation to bride: e.g., father of the bride)

The song to be played as the bride enters is: _____

This song will be played from a recording

This song will be performed live by _____

Notes: _____

WELCOME & PRAYER

The pastor will open the ceremony by saying something like this:

On behalf of the (BRIDE last name) and (GROOM last name) families, I'd like to welcome you on this beautiful day and in this magnificent setting, as we get to witness one of the most sacred moments of a lifetime: the union of (GROOM first name) and (BRIDE first name).

Let's Pray: Heavenly Father, we are really grateful for this day. And we invite You and Your very spirit to fall upon us in this moment and we ask your Son Jesus to be the Author and Completer of the covenant that (GROOM first name) and (BRIDE first name) are about to make this day. We pray this in your name, amen.

The pastor will ask the congregation to be seated.

Notes: _____

COUPLE'S STORY

The pastor may share a bit of your story here & then continue by saying something like this:

We are here today to witness the union of (GROOM first name) and (BRIDE first name).

The Scriptures teaches us that God created us both male and female with the intention that husband and wife would live together in love and fidelity. In fact, it was God who said, "It is not good for man to be alone." And, (GROOM first name), your buddies and I all agree with that. It is not good for you to be alone, my friend. You have, in (BRIDE first name), have outdone yourself. For (BRIDE first name) – may I just say on (GROOM first name)'s behalf that you are a beautiful bride!

Notes: _____

DECLARATION OF INTENTION

The pastor will continue the ceremony, saying something like this:

(GROOM first name), will you have this woman to be your wife, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy bond of marriage? Will you love, comfort, and honor her in all seasons of life and remain faithful to her so long as you both shall live?

■ Groom responds: **"I will"**

(BRIDE first name), will you have this man to be your husband, to live together after God's ordinance in the holy bond of marriage? Will you love, comfort, and honor him in all seasons of life and remain faithful to him so long as you both shall live?

■ Bride responds: **"I will"**

Notes: _____

DECLARATION & CONSENT (OPTIONAL)

Traditionally, if the bride is being escorted in by her father, at this point, the pastor will ask: "Who gives this woman to be wed?" The father of the bride traditionally responds: "Her mother and I do." The bride then kisses her father, her father gives her hand to the groom, and her father is seated.

PLEASE CHECK ONE:

- We'll skip the declaration & consent
- We'll use it "as is" above
- We'll use it, with these tweaks: _____

Notes: _____

SPECIAL MUSIC (OPTIONAL)

PLEASE CHECK ANY THAT APPLY:

- We'll skip this part of things
- We're using this, and the song will be: _____
 - This song will be played from a recording
 - This song will be performed live by _____

Notes: _____

SCRIPTURE READING (OPTIONAL)

PLEASE CHECK ANY THAT APPLY:

- We'll skip this part (or the pastor can select a passage that ties in to the wedding sermon)
- We're including this, and the scripture(s) we'd like to have read are marked on the following page
- There's a different scripture we've chosen and it is _____
- We'd like the pastor to read the scripture(s)
- We have a specific reader (or readers) we'd like to have read our scripture(s) we've selected – their name or names are listed next to their passage(s) on the next page

Notes: _____

SCRIPTURES FOR WEDDINGS

You are welcome to choose any scripture reading you like for your ceremony – but if it's helpful to you to have some ideas to choose from, here are a handful that our pastors like to use! If you'd like, you can check out these passages in different versions (or look for additional/other passages) at biblegateway.com.

GENESIS 1:26-27, 31 *reader:* _____

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them...God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

ECCLESIASTES 4:9-12 *reader:* _____

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

MATTHEW 19:4-6 *reader:* _____

"Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."

1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-8A *reader:* _____

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud, it is not rude. It is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:8-13 *reader:* _____

Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

EPHESIANS 5:21-33 *reader:* _____

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, understand and support your husbands in ways that show your support for Christ. The husband provides leadership to his wife the way Christ does to his church, not by domineering but by

cherishing. So just as the church submits to Christ as he exercises such leadership, wives should likewise submit to their husbands.

Husbands, go all out in your love for your wives, exactly as Christ did for the church—a love marked by giving, not getting. Christ's love makes the church whole. His words evoke her beauty. Everything he does and says is designed to bring the best out of her, dressing her in dazzling white silk, radiant with holiness. And that is how husbands ought to love their wives. They're really doing themselves a favor—since they're already "one" in marriage.

No one abuses his own body, does he? No, he feeds and pampers it. That's how Christ treats us, the church, since we are part of his body. And this is why a man leaves father and mother and cherishes his wife. No longer two, they become "one flesh." This is a huge mystery, and I don't pretend to understand it all. What is clearest to me is the way Christ treats the church. And this provides a good picture of how each husband is to treat his wife, loving himself in loving her, and how each wife is to honor her husband.

COLOSSIANS 3:12-14 *reader:* _____

Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony.

1 JOHN 4:7-19 *reader:* _____

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

We know that we live in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God. And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.

God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him. In this way, love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment, because in this world we are like him. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.

We love because he first loved us.

WEDDING SERMON

WEDDING VOWS

After his/her sermon, the pastor will then continue by saying something like this:

(GROOM first name) and (BRIDE first name), I would like you to face each other, join hands, and repeat after me the words of the marital vows.

(GROOM first name): would you repeat after me?

I (GROOM first name) take you (BRIDE first name) / to be my wedded wife / to have and to hold / from this day forward / for better or for worse / for richer or for poorer / in sickness and in health / to love and respect / serve and cherish / regardless of what lies ahead / This I promise you before God.

(BRIDE first name): would you repeat after me?

I (BRIDE first name) take you (GROOM first name) / to be my wedded husband / to have and to hold / from this day forward / for better or for worse / for richer or for poorer / in sickness and in health / to love and respect / serve and cherish / regardless of what lies ahead / This I promise you before God.

Notes: _____

PERSONAL VOWS (OPTIONAL)

If you will use additional personal vows, the pastor will say, "(GROOM first name) and (BRIDE first name) have also written personal vows, which they will now exchange..."

WHAT'S YOUR PREFERENCE FOR YOUR VOWS?

Please check any that apply:

- We'd like to use the traditional vows above, and use them as written above
- We'd like to use the traditional vows above, with a few tweaks (*noted below*)
- We'd like to include our own personal vows, which we've written ourselves (*please provide a written copy to the pastor officiating for you by your final pre-wedding appointment with him/her*)

Notes: _____

EXCHANGE OF RINGS

The pastor will say something like this:

(GROOM first name) and (BRIDE first name) have brought to this marriage as tokens of their commitment and love, rings, which they will now exchange.

(GROOM first name) will you now take (BRIDE first name)'s hands, and repeat after me:

"(BRIDE first name), as a token of our vow / and our abiding love / I give you this ring / and with it I give you / all that is mine."

(Groom places the ring on Bride's finger)

(BRIDE first name) will you now take (GROOM first name)'s hands, and repeat after me:

"(GROOM first name), as a token of our vow / and our abiding love / I give you this ring / and with it I give you / all that is mine."

(Bride places the ring on Groom's finger)

Notes: _____

UNITY CANDLE / COMMUNION (OPTIONAL)

WHAT'S YOUR PREFERENCE FOR THIS?

Please check any that apply:

- We'd like to take communion in our ceremony *(for weddings at Heartland, we'll provide the bread & juice)*
 - We'd like to provide our own communion cup and plate
 - We'd like Heartland/the pastor to provide the communion cup and plate
- We'd like to include a unity candle as a part of our ceremony *(you'll provide your own candles)*
- We'd like to do a spinoff on the unity candle idea, and we'll provide the needed items for this. Here's what we have in mind:

- The song we'd like included during this will be: _____
 - This song will be played from a recording
 - This song will be performed live by _____

Notes: _____

ENCOURAGEMENT FOR COUPLE & PRAYER OVER COUPLE

(The pastor will share some encouragement specific to you as a couple and will pray for you .)

PRONOUNCEMENT

The pastor will say: For as much as you, (GROOM first name) and (BRIDE first name) have consented in marriage, and have witnessed this before God and before this group of people, and have pledged yourselves to each other and have declared the same by the giving and receiving of rings...by the authority given me by God, I now pronounce you husband and wife!

THE KISS

The pastor will say: (GROOM first name), please kiss your new bride!

INTRODUCTION OF THE COUPLE

The pastor will say: Ladies and gentlemen, let me introduce to you first the first time ever...

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE THE PASTOR TO INTRODUCE YOU?

Examples: "Mr & Mrs LAST NAME" | "Mr & Mrs GROOM & BRIDE LAST NAME" | "BRIDE & GROOM LAST NAME" | etc

Any notes on pronouncing your names? _____

RECESSIONAL

The song we'd like played/sung as we exit is: _____

- This song will be played from a recording
- This song will be performed live by _____

Notes: _____

DISMISSAL OF GUESTS

Just before your guests are dismissed, the pastor can give them any specific instructions – like, “Please head over to the reception site immediately – the couple will greet you there” or “Extended family members please stay put for a few minutes so that the photographer can get a quick family picture.”

What instructions would you like the pastor to give your guests just before dismissing them?

The music we'd like played/sung as our guests exit is: _____

- No preference for a specific song – please play our prelude music for this!
- This will be played from a recording
- This will be performed live by _____

MAKING IT LEGAL: YOUR MARRIAGE LICENSE

*Our pastors can't perform a legal wedding without a valid wedding license, **and for your license to be valid, it must be issued by the county in which your CEREMONY SITE is located.** (If you're getting married at Heartland, you'll get your license through Johnson County, KS. If you're getting married at a different venue, please get your license through the county in which your wedding venue is located.)*

- Cool – we have already secured our license and it's for the county in which our ceremony will take place!
- We understand and will be sure we have our license for the county in which our ceremony will take place!

*Marriage licenses vary from county to county, and (though this seems odd) they are often not signed by the bride and groom, but rather by the pastor and two witnesses to the ceremony. Check your specific license for any guidelines on who can sign it...and **if you have any preference about who signs your license, list those folks' names here:***

(These folks should plan on tracking down the pastor just after the ceremony, so that they can sign the license!)

THE END!

Way to go, guys! You just finished planning your wedding ceremony!