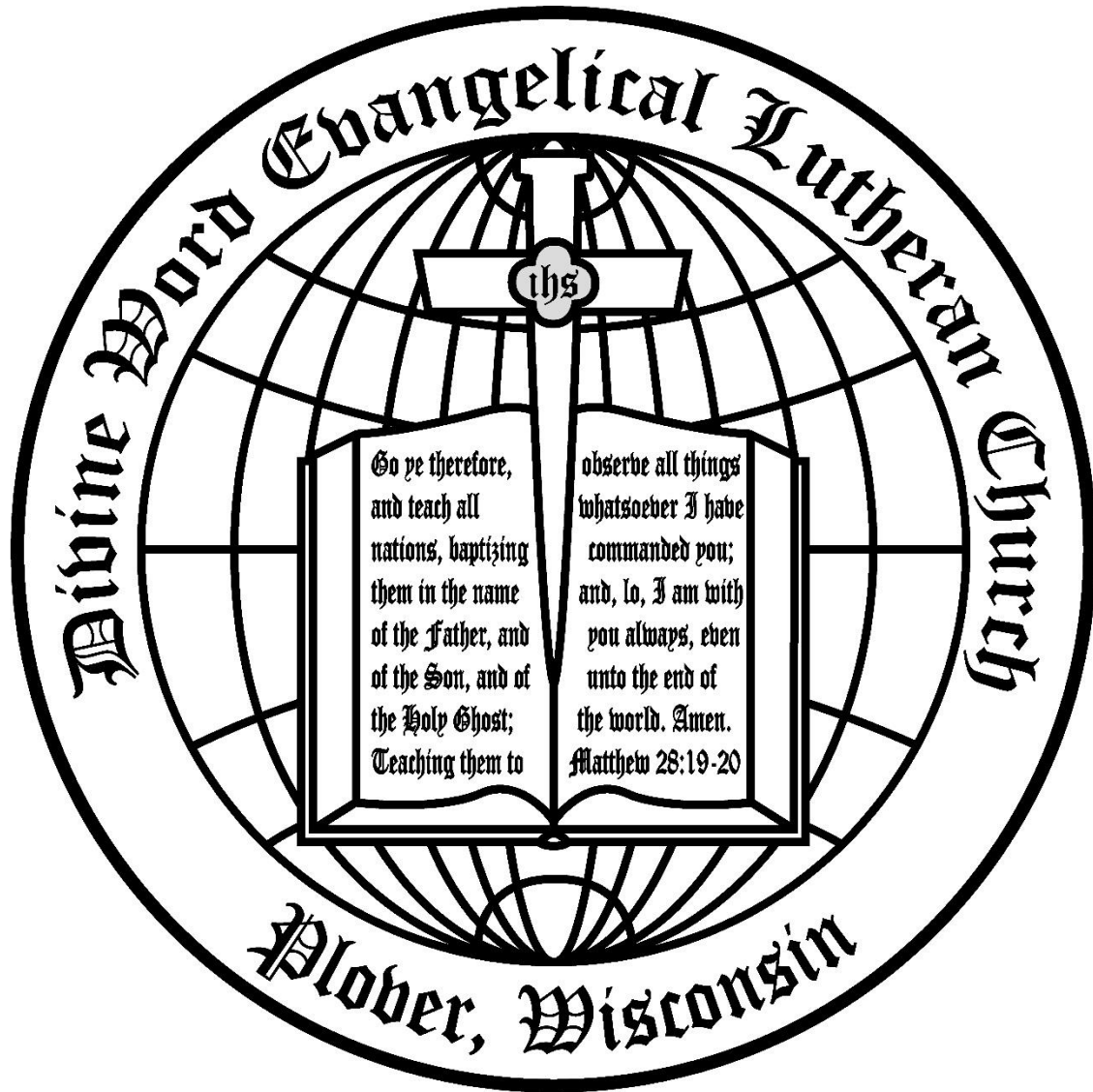


# CHURCH POLICIES



**DIVINE WORD EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
PLOVER, WISCONSIN**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>001 – ASSISTING OTHERS</b>	<b>3</b>
001.01 MAJOR DISASTER	
001.02 MEMBER ASSISTS COMMUNITY MEMBER	
001.03 DIVINE WORD ASSISTS MEMBER	
001.04 ASSISTANCE REQUESTED OF PASTOR	
<b>002 – COMMUNITY ACTIVITY</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>003 – DISABILITY AND DEATH</b>	<b>4</b>
003.01 DISABILITY	
003.02 DEATH	
003.03 COMMON SENSE	
<b>004 – SEVERE WEATHER</b>	<b>4</b>
004.01 TORNADO	
004.02 SNOW/COLD WEATHER	
<b>005 – FUND RAISING</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>006 – FACILITY USAGE</b>	<b>5</b>
006.01 ELIGIBILITY	
006.02 PERMISSIONS	
<b>007 – TABLES AND CHAIRS</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>008 – LIBRARY</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>009 – CONDUCT</b>	<b>7</b>
009.01 SEXUAL MISCONDUCT	
009.02 CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION	
<b>010 – HOLY COMMUNION</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>011 – FUNERAL</b>	<b>8</b>
011.01 MEMBER FUNERAL	
011.02 NON-MEMBER FUNERAL	
011.03 EULOGY	
<b>012 – CHOIR</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>013 – CONFIRMATION CLASS</b>	<b>9</b>
013.01 ELIGIBILITY	
013.02 ATTENDANCE	
013.03 ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS	
<b>014 – WEDDING</b>	<b>10</b>
014.01 GENERAL	
014.02 PRE-MARITAL COUNSELING AND SCHEDULING	
014.03 PERSONNEL	
014.04 REHEARSALS	
014.05 WORSHIP SERVICE	
014.06 PHOTOGRAPHY AND RECORDING	
014.07 RECEPTION	
014.08 FEES AND GRATUITIES	
<b>015 – KEY FOB POLICY</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>016 – ENDOWMENT AND TRUST FUNDS</b>	<b>Unchanged/Under Review</b>
<b>017 – GIFT ACCEPTANCE</b>	<b>Unchanged/Under Review</b>

## **001 – ASSISTING OTHERS**

*(JANUARY, 2018)*

As a Christian, Lutheran congregation, we will do all we can to help those in need.

*“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.” (Galatians 6:10, NIV84)*

### **001.01 – MAJOR DISASTER**

When a Divine Word member, or a member of the community has undergone some type of major disaster, and their need is known, to reinforce their need, we will post their name, address or the agency serving as the charitable group gathering the funds on the bulletin board and on our internet resources to directly contribute to their need.

### **001.02 – MEMBER ASSISTS COMMUNITY MEMBER**

When a Divine Word member knows someone in the community who has a need, we will ask our member to write a letter of explanation to that person or family. The member will sign their name with contact information so our families could contact our member if they would like more information. The name and address of the person in need would also be listed so that our members could contribute directly to the individual's need

### **001.03 – DIVINE WORD ASSISTS MEMBER**

When it comes to the attention of the Pastor of a specific need in our congregation, he will take that to the Board of Elders Chairman. Depending on the need, they will determine the next step and report to the Board of Elders as to that step at either their next scheduled meeting or in a more immediate fashion when the need dictates such an action.

### **001.04 – ASSISTANCE REQUESTED OF PASTOR**

1. When a request is to assist with rent, utilities, or any other major expenditure over \$50, the Pastor will contact the Chairman of the Board of Elders to see if we take the matter to our elders for their consideration.
2. When a request is for gas and/or food, the Pastor has the discretion to assist up to \$40.00. He will ask the party who has received assistance to sign their name on our “Assistance Received” form. Pastor can help a person or family two times in this manner. If there is a third request, he will contact the Chairman of the Board of Elders for their consideration. If the request is granted, and there is a fourth request within a twelve month period, before we consider granting the request, we will need to take the request to the full Board of Elders before we would consider granting that request.

## **002 – COMMUNITY ACTIVITY**

*(JANUARY, 2018)*

We will not put posters on the bulletin board or on our internet resources which are soliciting funds from the members of Divine Word to support a community organization's fundraiser.

## **003 – DISABILITY AND DEATH**

*(JANUARY, 2018)*

### **003.01 – DISABILITY**

If a pastor of Divine Word Evangelical Lutheran Church is not able to fulfill his duties and obligations of his Call due to a disability as defined by the medical field, and he can no longer function as the pastor, housing and salary shall continue for a maximum of six months. At the end of six months, this situation shall be reviewed. If deemed necessary, the Divine Word Lutheran voters shall have the option to extend the benefits for another six months. At the end of a year, unless there are extenuating circumstances as stated by the pastor and agreed upon by the voters, the pastor shall begin part-time or full-time duties. If he was not able to do this, Divine Word Lutheran shall ask the pastor to consider resigning for medical reasons so they can issue a call for a pastor to serve them full-time. If the pastor resigns due to a disability, he and his family shall have forty-five days to vacate the parsonage and find other living arrangements.

### **003.02 – DEATH**

If a pastor of Divine Word Evangelical Lutheran dies while serving as pastor, salary for the pastor's family shall continue for three months. The family is permitted to live in the parsonage for three months. After three months, while the family would no longer receive financial compensation, the family may continue to live in the parsonage provided there is no date as to when the next pastor and family would be moving in. Divine Word Lutheran shall give the wife and family of the deceased pastor thirty days' notice as to when they shall vacate the parsonage

### **003.03 – COMMON SENSE**

In matters like the above, not every scenario can be put down in print. As children of God, we trust that the pastor's wife and family and the congregation and voters would act in such ways that all parties are treated fairly and act responsibly

## **004 – SEVERE WEATHER**

*(JANUARY, 2018)*

### **004.01 – TORNADO**

1. **Tornado Watch** – Ushers shall be informed that one usher will monitor the weather by radio or internet during the time of a tornado watch. This will be done as knowledge of such a watch becomes available to the congregation.
2. **Tornado Warning** – In the event of a tornado warning being issued, observed either on the radio, internet, or the sounding of the local storm siren, church will immediately cancelled and the congregation will be directed to seek shelter

### **004.02 – IMPASSABLE ROADS DUE TO SNOW AND/OR SEVERE COLD**

A public announcement will be issued on the local radio stations at least one hour before the beginning of church services. Cancellations will also be posted on our internet resources and/or emailed to members in the same time frame. The Pastor and an officer of the congregation will make the determination as to the severity of the conditions and the canceling of church services.

## **005 – FUNDRAISING**

*(JANUARY, 2018)*

1. All fundraisers and pertinent information are to be presented in a timely manner to the President and the Divine Word Board of Elders for recommendation to the Church Council for approval. If approved, the fundraiser will be advertised through the normal channels of congregational communication.
2. The fundraising event will be for a specific purpose/goal and should not be held for the benefit of the church operating budget.
3. For fundraisers which take place on our church property, we won't advertise to the public nor actively invite the general public to participate in the fundraiser.
4. Divine Word ministry groups will not do fundraisers off site as we deem it in the best interests of ministry to fund our own ministry activity. In the rare situation of looking for financial support through a fundraiser off site due to a catastrophic event (for a member or for a person(s) outside our congregation), follow step #1 above.
5. Ministry groups may do fundraisers offsite to support worthwhile community groups.
6. Any events promoting any form of gambling or raffling won't be allowed.
7. The church may be used for fundraising events that do not in any way benefit the church as long as the event is sponsored OR conducted by a member of the church, and the benefit supports what Scripture supports. These events may be advertised outside the church. In addition to the policy for church usage, we would expect that those involved with the fundraiser would be responsible for the orderliness (no alcohol or smoking) of the fundraiser along with cleaning up after the fundraiser. A group may optionally offer a gift to the church for the use of its facility.
8. In order that we are not offending our members by bombarding them with fundraisers, common sense will be used as to the number of times our ministry groups have fund raisers at church (and if we need guidance regarding common sense, the Board of Elders will deal with that as requests needed).

## **006 – FACILITY USAGE**

*(JANUARY, 2018)*

This policy has been drafted to provide guidance in determining if an individual or group should be granted permission to use our facility. While this policy would not be applicable for Church functions, it would be applicable to members who wish to use the facilities for non-Church functions (i.e. Anniversary Celebration). The facilities at Divine Word are an excellent outreach tool and consideration of this should be made with each request. Member usage of tables and chairs is exempt from this policy.

### **006.01 – ELIGIBILITY**

1. Usage of the buildings and grounds of Divine Word Lutheran Church should not be granted to organizations or individuals that would profit from its use.
2. Usage of the facility must not contradict the beliefs of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. This is not to imply that groups or individuals that do not specifically share our specific beliefs should be denied.
3. Requests to use our facilities are to be directed to the Board of Elders to review a group's eligibility.

## **006.02 – PERMISSIONS**

1. Upon receipt of a recommendation from the Board of Elders, the Church Council is to make the decision to or not to allow use of Divine Word's facilities.
2. If the need for the facility cannot wait for the next Council and or Board of Elders meeting The Pastor and Council President may grant permission for one-time usage and continued usage up until the next Council meeting when a decision can be made by the Council.
3. A request for a free will offering should be made with permission for one time use.
4. A request for an offering to help offset expenses of continued usage (electrical, heat) should be made.
5. Groups wishing to use the facility on a long term basis must provide Proof of Liability Insurance. The insurance policy should contain a "Hold Harmless" clause to protect Divine Word.
6. Any commitment for the usage of our facilities must be retractable on short notice without financial repercussions for Divine Word. This provision is to guarantee the facility's availability for members of the congregation (Funerals, Weddings, etc.).
7. The building must be returned to a condition that is as good as (or better than) it was prior to use.
8. The use of Alcohol and Tobacco is not permitted in the Church Facilities.

## **007 – TABLES AND CHAIRS**

*(JANUARY, 2018)*

Through the years we have been happy to loan out tables and chairs to members for various occasions and needs. As will happen through normal wear and tear through the years, many of the tables are showing wear. With this in mind, for every 1 table and 8 chairs borrowed there is a requested donation of \$5.00. This is not a required payment, but a requested donation. Proceeds from the donations would be put toward the purchase of new tables and chairs. If you would like to borrow tables and chairs, we ask that you follow this procedure. Call the church office and speak to the office secretary or to the Pastor. Operating on a first come, first served basis, members can reserve tables and chairs. At certain times, to honor the requests members make, and the needs we have at church, we may not have tables and chairs to loan.

## **008 – LIBRARY**

*(JANUARY, 2018)*

In an effort to provide materials for the members of Divine Word to learn more about God's Word and how to live a Christian life or simply to obtain pleasant reading, viewing, or listening, the person in charge of the library will, with the help of the members, choose materials, by purchase or donation, in various formats and various reading levels for inclusion in the library for the purpose of circulation to members.

Materials, especially for children and teens, should not contain doctrine contrary to the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Church. Materials for adults may contain doctrines not accepted by WELS. If deemed necessary, a warning may be placed in the section of the book containing unacceptable doctrines.

The person in charge of the library will: inventory materials regularly, select new materials, distribute information about new materials, prepare books and materials for circulation, organize and supervise a workable circulation system, weed the collection regularly according to established weeding guidelines, and will serve as the first step for challenged material.

If members find any material that they consider inappropriate, they should call it to the attention of the person in charge of the library first. The person in charge of the library will reconsider the material and then respond to the member. If the member is not satisfied, the member of the adult discipleship board, and the church council president. This committee will read the material, hear comments from the member and the person in charge of the

library and render a decision based on a simple majority. If the member is still not satisfied, the entire church council may duplicate the committee process and will render the final verdict.

## **009 – CONDUCT**

*(JANUARY, 2018)*

### **009.01 – SEXUAL MISCONDUCT**

Divine Word observes the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod policy on sexual misconduct. See document *009.01.D01.01* for the complete policy.

### **009.02 – CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION**

Divine Word observes a recommended policy from the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. See document *009.02.D01.01* for the complete policy.

## **010 – HOLY COMMUNION**

*(JANUARY, 2018)*

*“Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.” (I Corinthians 10:27-29, NIV84)*

As an Evangelical Lutheran Church, we desire to have all professing Christians commune with us at the Lord’s Table. Guided by our Lord’s words in Scripture, congregations of our Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) and Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) practice close communion, celebrating communion with those who have expressed their agreement with the teachings of this church through their church membership.

God wants true unity to prevail among his people, and he wants us to express that unity when we have it. God tells us that complete unity only exists when we agree on the truths he gives us in his Word. On the night he was betrayed, Jesus prayed for us, “May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me (John 17:23, NIV84). When we come to communion as people who believe the same truths about God’s Word, we’re confessing, just as the Apostle Paul did, “Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf” (I Corinthians 10:17, NIV84). Communing together isn’t just a celebration of our unity with Christ; it is also an expression of our doctrinal unity among believers.

We pray that this scriptural practice of close communion is always understood as an act of love. We love our Lord, and want to celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion as he taught us. We love our members, and want them to have the confidence that we are holding to God’s clear Word. We also love our visitors, and want to take their confessions of faith seriously, as well.

If you have not confessed unity in faith with us by declaring membership in a WELS or ELS congregation, please speak with our pastor personally before participating in the Sacrament. If you have any questions or concerns, the pastor would be happy to discuss them with you after the service.

# **011 – FUNERAL**

*(JANUARY, 2018)*

We are born with a sinful nature, unless the Lord Jesus Christ returns first, one day we will die. By the grace of God, while we will face death, we know death does not mean we cease to exist. At death our soul is taken to heaven. On the last day, by the power of God Almighty, our body will be brought back to life, reunited with the soul. Body and soul we will be with the Lord forever. This blessing will happen for every human being who has been blessed with faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior from sin. Therefore, at a funeral service, we want to express these Biblical truths.

1. The Lord blessed the deceased with faith in Jesus Christ which gave them the forgiveness of sins and the confidence of one day being taken to heaven.
2. This God-given faith exhibited itself during their time on earth.
3. Because the Lord blessed the deceased with faith in Jesus Christ, we can confess on the Last Day, body and soul, the deceased will be brought back to life and will be with the Lord forever in heaven.

When a person, member or non-member, dies, sometimes the three points are not clear. Therefore, we believe it is important to have a funeral policy to assist the pastor and the board of elders offer the following points to be used as a policy guideline for our congregation.

## **011.01 – MEMBER FUNERAL**

1. The pastor(s) of Divine Word Evangelical Lutheran Church will not officiate at the funeral service of a member who is openly living in sin, has died in that sin, and has expressed no repentance for that sin. This may include the member who despised the hearing and the learning of God's Word by never coming to worship services.
2. When a member has committed suicide, the pastor will need to determine, based on circumstances, if he can officiate at the funeral service or if he can only offer a service of comfort for the family. Generally speaking, whether there is a funeral service or a service of comfort, this service will take place at the funeral home.

## **011.02 – NON-MEMBER FUNERAL**

1. When a non-member has died belonging to a church body other than a Lutheran Church body, unless there are very special circumstances, the pastor(s) of Divine Word Evangelical Lutheran Church will not officiate at this funeral service.
2. When a non-member has died belonging to another Lutheran church, or for some time, was a member of a Lutheran church, but in the recent past had no church home, the pastor(s) will, according to their ability and as time permits, inquire of family members and friends if the person was a Christian. If clear evidence is present that this person is a Christian, the pastor(s) may conduct this funeral service at a funeral home.
3. If a person had no church home, unless there are special circumstances, the pastor(s) would not officiate at the funeral service.
4. As he is able, the pastor(s) will consult with the board of elders when deciding to officiate or not at this funeral service.

## **011.03 – EULOGY**

The policy of Divine Word is that if the family desires a eulogy given by family or friends of the departed that this take place either during the visitation at the funeral home or during the luncheon after the funeral service. Eulogies will not be permitted during the funeral service nor in the sanctuary of the church building to avoid any confusion regarding the fact that it is in Christ and Christ alone that eternal life is obtained (Ephesians 2:8-9).



## **012 - CHOIR**

*(JANUARY, 2018)*

Participation in the Choir is limited to confirmed members of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod or any fellowship body.

## **013 – CONFIRMATION CLASS**

*(JANUARY, 2018)*

### **013.01 – ELIGIBILITY**

While youth confirmation class in and of itself is not commanded at a certain age in Scripture, it has been the practice of our WELS congregations to offer, at a minimum, 2 years of youth confirmation instruction during 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. It is this instruction that provides the scriptural information young people need to be able to examine themselves before partaking of the Lord's Supper (1 Corinthians 11:28) and then the opportunity to make a public profession of faith and unity with their fellow believers on Confirmation Sunday (1 Corinthians 10:17; 1 Corinthians 11:26).

### **013.02 – ATTENDANCE**

There is an expectation of regular attendance by the student in Confirmation classes and Worship services. If one is not found to be in the Lord's house during the years of Confirmation instruction, it only follows that one will not be found in attendance after the instruction is complete. Confirmation is a privilege, not a right. It will be up to the pastor(s) and Board of Elders to make the decision for accepting a youth confirmand on a case by case basis if regular attendance is not found and there are extenuating family circumstances.

### **013.03 – ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS**

There is an expectation that behavior will always be in a Christian manner during class and that all assigned work, quizzes, and tests demonstrates to the pastor(s) that the student has a working knowledge and understanding of the basic teachings of the Bible, which he/she has learned in Confirmation class. While it is understood that each student has different gifts and abilities there is a minimum standard of knowledge of the Scriptures and its teachings that must be shown. When circumstances arise where this is called into question, it will be up to the pastor(s) and Board of Elders to make the decision for accepting a youth confirmand on a case by case basis.

# **014 – WEDDING**

(JANUARY, 2018)

*“The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.” Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.” (Genesis 2:18, 22, 24, NIV84)*

## **014.01 – GENERAL**

1. Scripture declares that homosexuality is a sin, which is contrary to God’s intention in creating man and woman (1 Corinthians 6:9-11). Therefore, marriage at Divine Word Evangelical Lutheran Church shall only be between a man and a woman.
2. All weddings must conform to local, state, and federal laws (marriage licenses, etc.). Please contact your local municipality for assistance in these matters.

## **014.02 – PRE-MARITAL COUNSELING AND SCHEDULING**

1. Pre-marital counseling will be required, and will be arranged upon your first meeting with the pastor to schedule your wedding. Final wedding service plans will also be arranged during this process.
2. During Pre-Marital Counseling, the wedding party may work with the pastor to schedule the time and date of the wedding.

## **014.03 – PERSONNEL**

1. Pastors – It is the policy of Divine Word Evangelical Lutheran Church that its own pastor(s) or a pastor of a fellowship body be responsible for and officiate at all wedding services.
2. Organists – The wedding party should request one of Divine Word’s regular organists to play for the wedding. The wedding party is responsible for working out any compensation for the organist with the organist. The organist may also assist the wedding party in choosing music for the service, solos, or instrumentals. If one of the regular organists is not available, the wedding party may work with the pastor to find a suitable replacement.
3. Instrumentalists and Soloists – Additional musicians should be members of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod or any fellowship synod.
4. Ushers – Ushers may be chosen at the wedding party’s discretion and are not required to be members of the WELS or fellowship bodies.
5. Extenuating circumstances that amount exception will be dealt with by the pastors and the Board of Elders as they arise.

## **014.04 – REHEARSALS**

1. The rehearsal should take place the evening before the wedding ceremony
2. It is expected that all members of the wedding party will be present for the rehearsal.

## **014.05 – WORSHIP SERVICE**

1. The wedding ceremony is a worship service and will focus on praising and giving glory to God.
2. The wedding ceremony will be conducted in accordance with established Lutheran practices.
3. Music should be Christ-centered, bringing praise to God. The pastor and organist will be able to assist in finding appropriate music.

4. The Pastor(s) has ultimately the final authority regarding worship, musicians, music, or any other aspects of the worship service.
5. Use of rice, flower petals, or confetti is not permitted on the property.

#### **014.06 – PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO RECORDING**

1. Flash photography is prohibited between the processional and recessional.
2. Photographers and videographers are not permitted in the chancel area during the service.
3. Camera equipment may be placed in the chancel location in an inconspicuous location.
4. It is the responsibility of the wedding party to ensure that the photographer understands this policy.
5. High Definition recording is available from the church. Please talk to the pastor, property board chairman, or tech committee chairman to arrange this.

#### **014.07 – RECEPTION**

1. The Fellowship Hall and Student Center are available for use for receptions. Please refer to Policy 006 for policies regarding the usage of the facility.

#### **014.08 – FEES AND GRATUITIES**

1. Service Folders – The wedding party will be responsible for the cost of service folders ordered and prepared by the church. Cost will vary on the type and number printed.
2. Church Preparation – It will be the responsibility of the wedding party, with the permission of the pastor, to prepare the church appropriately for the service.
3. Facility Usage – There is no facility fee for use of the church or fellowship hall. Gratuity may be made towards this by the wedding party on a voluntary basis.
4. Pastors – There is no fee charged by the pastor(s) to perform a wedding ceremony. Gratuity may be made to the pastor(s) by the wedding party on a voluntary basis.
5. Organists/Vocalists/Instrumentalists – See Policy 014.03.2 and 014.03.3.
6. Video Recording – There is no fee for recording the ceremony with our equipment. Gratuity may be made towards this by the wedding party on a voluntary basis.

### **015 – KEY FOB POLICY**

*(JANUARY, 2018)*

#### **015.01 – WELS COLLEGIANS**

1. Designated Key Carriers – Two Collegian Officers will be issued key fobs, as determined by the Board of Adult Discipleship and/or Campus Pastor
2. Non-Designated Carriers – All other Collegian Officers and Students may purchase a key fob for \$10.
3. Lost/Stolen/Revoked Key Fobs – In the event of a lost or stolen key fob, or if a key fob needs to be revoked, the Chair of Adult Discipleship and/or Campus Pastor should be notified as soon as possible.
4. Replacements – Replacement key fobs can be purchased for a \$10 fee.