

Blackhawk's Premarital & Wedding Process

At Blackhawk, we believe a wedding is a Christ-centered celebration of a man and a woman being united by God, and that the biblical vision for marriage provides the best foundation for a life of following Christ together. Because a God-honoring marriage goes far beyond the wedding day, all couples getting married at Blackhawk and/or using a Blackhawk pastor as their officiant are *required* to complete the premarital process outlined below; it is also *available* to any couple who calls Blackhawk home, regardless of wedding location or officiant. Questions? Please reach out to Rachel at rmetzger@blackhawkchurch.org.

Couple Profile Form

The first step for any couple is to complete the [Couple Profile Form](#). Once submitted, our team will be in touch via email regarding the applicable process (e.g., a wedding at Blackhawk, a wedding offsite with a Blackhawk officiant, or participation in our premarital resources only).

Note: we value marrying couples who are aligned spiritually (2 Corinthians 6:14), which means we will provide a Blackhawk officiant when the bride and groom are either both Christ-followers or both not Christ-followers. Wherever you currently land, we would love to hear from you.

SYMBIS

The cost of SYMBIS is \$105 per couple, which covers the following:

- **Assessment** | You will take the online [SYMBIS](#) (Saving Your Marriage Before It Starts) assessment, which includes topics such as mindset, wellbeing, social support, finances, expectations, personality dynamics, sexual intimacy, communication, conflict resolution and spirituality.
- **Appointment** | You will meet with a trained SYMBIS Facilitator to talk through your assessment results in a 1.5-2-hour meeting, available in person or virtually.

The Pre-Marriage Course

[The Pre-Marriage Course](#) is a six-week course hosted at Blackhawk that helps build strong foundations for your relationship by learning skills of communicating well, appreciating differences, exploring beliefs, embracing commitment, and being supportive. This course also provides a chance to connect with other engaged couples and mentor couples. The Pre-Marriage Course (and related materials) costs \$30.

Note: There may be situations when professional Christian counseling is recommended instead of or in addition to the course, especially in the case of remarriage. There may also be times when we recommend or offer the additional step of meeting with a pastor.

Get married!

The following pages offer resources for planning your wedding:

- Page 2 | Sample Service Order
- Page 3 | Musicians
- Page 4 | Marriage License Application
- Pages 5-8 | Planning a Wedding Ceremony at Blackhawk
- Pages 9-10 | Planning a Wedding Ceremony at an Offsite Venue

Planning Your Wedding Ceremony | Sample Service Order

This sample service order provides a helpful starting point for planning your wedding ceremony. When you meet with your officiating pastor, they can provide examples of the *Declaration of Intent*, *Vows*, and *Ring Vows*, if needed.

The outline below reflects a 30-35-minute ceremony and includes common elements many couples choose to include. You can rearrange, add, or remove parts to best reflect your vision for the day.

- Processional (family seating, bridal party and bride entrance)
- Welcome
- Declaration of Intent
- Prayer
- Worship song/special music
- Reading
- Pastoral Message
- Exchange of Vows
- Exchange of Rings
- Symbolic Act (e.g., unity candle, communion, foot-washing)
- Prayer of Blessing
- Pronouncement of Marriage
- Presentation of Couple
- Recessional

Planning Your Wedding Ceremony | Musicians

Here is an optional resource that lists Blackhawk musicians. Please note:

- Each musician sets their own fee in coordination with the couple, so rates may significantly vary.
- Musical styles differ, so we encourage you to request an audio sample of their singing or playing before confirming their participation.
- Attendance at the rehearsal is not required or guaranteed. If a musician is unable to attend, they will coordinate directly with the pastor and wedding coordinator to confirm cues and details.
- Most musicians can offer recommendations for instrumentalist and vocalist combinations, if desired.

Piano & Voice

Hannah Busse, hbusse@blackhawkchurch.org
Daphne Conour, daphnec29@gmail.com

Jenny Bottoni, jenniferbottoni@gmail.com

Guitar & Voice

Nate Finch, n8finch@gmail.com
Jenna McCann, mcmasterharper@yahoo.com

Chris Kopp, ckopp@blackhawkchurch.org
Olivia Ruckstuhl, oliviaruckstuhl@gmail.com

Piano only

Sarah Uecker, sarah.uecker@gmail.com

Daniel Yeh, dotdy86@gmail.com

Guitar only

Trent Stafford – trentonstafford1@gmail.com

Voice only

Judy Bessac, jabessac@msn.com
Dahn-Young Dong, ddong22@wisc.edu
Nicole Petroff, npetroff08@gmail.com

Sid Boersma, sidboersma50@gmail.com
Kerryn Foley, kerrynfoley@gmail.com
Kristen Thomason, kristen.m.thomason@gmail.com

Other Instruments

(Cello) Sarah Uecker, sarah.uecker@gmail.com
(Flute) Jenna McCann, mcmasterharper@yahoo.com
(Hammered dulcimer) Nate Finch, n8finch@gmail.com
(Violin) Suzy Wu, shuwensuzywu@gmail.com
(Violin) Ava Norberg, ava.norberg@gmail.com
(Violin) Ann Johnson, jeff_ann_johnson@yahoo.com

Groups

(Johnson Family Violin Quartet) Ann Johnson, jeff_ann_johnson@yahoo.com
(Breezy Hill Bluegrass Band) Dawn Dorning, dawndorning@yahoo.com

Planning Your Wedding Ceremony | Marriage License Application

Visit clerk.danecounty.gov/marriage for important information on the process of applying for a marriage license (required documents, current cost, etc.).

You must apply for a marriage license at least four full days prior to the wedding date (or a waiver fee will be applied), but not more than 60 days prior to the wedding date. To schedule a license application meeting, visit clerk.danecounty.gov/Marriage/Schedule-Marriage-License-Appointment. After scheduling your appointment, you will receive a confirmation email with a Zoom meeting link.

Questions? Contact the Dane County Clerk (608.266.4121, county.clerk@countyofdane.com).

Planning Your Wedding Ceremony | at Blackhawk

Blackhawk is honored to host weddings. These guidelines outline the timeline and available options for your special day. Questions? Please email Rachel at rmetzger@blackhawkchurch.org.

Timeline

- **4-12 Months Before Wedding** | Your wedding date can be reserved at Blackhawk (note: due to the ministry calendar process, fall wedding dates often cannot be confirmed until late spring). See "Determining the Wedding Ceremony Date & Location" for more information.
- **3-6 Months Before Wedding** | You will be billed based on the location/space and supporting services you're utilizing, and you have one month to make your payment. (See "Cost" for more information.) You will also be asked to complete the [Weddings: Facility Use Agreement & Waiver of Liability](#) form.
- **3-4 Months Before Wedding** | (If applicable) You will be assigned a Blackhawk pastor as your wedding officiant. You will also be assigned a Blackhawk wedding coordinator, who will schedule a meeting with you to discuss the items available for your wedding.
- **1-2 Months Before Wedding** | (If applicable) You will meet with your Blackhawk wedding officiant to discuss ceremony details (see "Sample Service Order"), and you will stay in contact with your Wedding Coordinator to finalize all wedding details. Also, you should apply for a marriage license (see "Marriage License Application" for more information). You will be billed for any new additional supporting services.
- **2 Weeks Before Wedding** | All facility setup requests are due, and we cannot guarantee requests made after this timeline. Your coordinator will also work closely with your officiating pastor, Tech, and Facilities to ensure a smooth day (see "Supporting Staff").
- **1 Week Before Wedding** | Media (music, slideshow, pictures) and any hired videographer audio feed access request is due to your Blackhawk wedding coordinator so Tech can prepare the media for your ceremony (see "Supporting Staff – Tech"). Note: Projection (slideshow and pictures) is not available for Atrium weddings.
- **Rehearsal Day** | The ceremony venue will be reserved the day before the wedding for a 1-hour rehearsal between 4-7 pm*.
 - Your Blackhawk wedding coordinator will direct the rehearsal with your pastor. The rehearsal typically includes the wedding party, parents, musicians, and other ceremony participants.
 - Musicians should schedule individual practice sessions outside of the rehearsal time. If they want to reserve practice space at Blackhawk, please submit your request through the wedding coordinator at least one month before the wedding.
 - *Depending on ministry events, the ceremony venue may be reserved as early as noon for decorating. If desired, please request this option through your wedding coordinator at least one month before the wedding.
- **Wedding Day** | The building and Blackhawk wedding coordinator are available for a 5-hour block (we are unable to accommodate requests for additional time).
 - *Reservation start time:* Your Blackhawk wedding coordinator will open the building, be available throughout your reservation to answer questions, and help keep the wedding party on schedule. You are allowed to bring refreshments for the wedding party (note: alcohol is not allowed).
 - *1.0-1.5 hours before the ceremony:* Tech arrives to prepare for sound, video and lighting checks.
 - *1 hour before the ceremony:* Blackhawk pastor arrives. Also, the sound check occurs, so please have the ceremony venue cleared of people not involved in the sound check (including photographers).
 - *At service time:* your Blackhawk wedding coordinator will cue the processional.
 - *Reservation end time:* All people and supplies must be out of the building by the end of the 5-hour period.

Determining the Wedding Ceremony Date & Location

Here are general reservation guidelines (subject to building availability). *Note:* your reservation includes the ceremony venue, a room for the bride and her attendants, and a room for the groom and his attendants.

Day/Time

For **Monday-Friday** weddings, the building can be used for five hours between 7 am and 8 pm.

For **Saturday** weddings, the building can be used for five hours between 7 am and 5 pm.

Weddings cannot occur at Blackhawk on Sundays, holidays, or holiday weekends.

Spaces

At **Blackhawk Brader Way** (9620 Brader Way, Middleton), the following spaces are available:

- Westside Auditorium | Seats up to 275 people; includes a stage and four large windows that can provide some natural light.
- Atrium | Seats up to 250 people; an open space with lots of windows that provide great natural light; no stage used in this space.
- Fireside | Seats up to 80-100 people (depending on room set-up); a cozy space with a fireplace and lots of natural light.
- *Note:* The Eastside Auditorium is not available for wedding ceremonies.

At **Blackhawk Fitchburg** (5935 Astor Drive, Fitchburg), the following spaces are available:

- Auditorium | Seats up to 500 people; a large space with no windows.
- Gathering | Seats up to 100-120 people; a cozy space with a fireplace and lots of natural light.

Facility Use Guidelines

Blackhawk has facility use guidelines for any reservation, including weddings.

Setup

In **auditoriums**:

- *Seating* | We provide typical Sunday seating, without modification.
- *Lighting* | We provide typical Sunday lighting. We do not accommodate special lighting arrangements.
- *Stage* | We clear the stage, with instruments removed upon request. Tables can optionally be onstage.
- *Décor* | We keep standard stage décor/backdrop and holiday décor in place, without modification.

In **non-auditorium spaces** (Fireside, Gathering, Atrium):

- *Seating* | We provide standard chair seating from a selection of standard layout options.
- *Décor* | We keep standard décor and holiday décor in place, without modification.

Decorations

Blackhawk does not provide or set up decorations for weddings, so loved ones are welcome to bring and arrange their own décor as part of their plans. When doing so:

- Tape cannot be used on walls, doors, glass, or fixtures.
- Staples, tacks, and nails cannot be used on wood surfaces.
- Candles must be contained in glass hurricanes (except for family/unity candles).
- No rice, confetti, glitter, or similar items can be used indoors or outdoors. Bubbles can be used outdoors.

- If petals are used (e.g., a flower girl in a wedding), only artificial petals can be dropped on Blackhawk's floors. Additionally, we discourage the use of aisle runners due to slippery floors. If an aisle runner is used, thick fabric is recommended (Westside aisle: 50 feet).
- Fire protection practices must be followed, including thoughtful selection and use of extension cords, decorations, and other materials.

Blackhawk does not provide storage space for décor or supplies; all personal items should be removed immediately following the service.

Other

- Consumption of alcohol is prohibited. If doing communion, please use grape juice.
- Smoking is prohibited on church property.
- Activity must remain in public or reserved spaces.
- Exterior doors may not be propped open.
- Hallways, exits, stairways, and walkways must be free of obstruction.
- Blackhawk Brader Way's parking ramp (upper and lower) is off limits to buses. The lower level west service entrance (door #11) is available for bus loading and unloading.

Supporting Staff

These Blackhawk staff roles are present to support a smooth wedding day.

Officiating Pastor

Blackhawk pastors are available to officiate weddings that occur at Blackhawk. We are also happy to host non-Blackhawk pastoral officiants, pending an approval process.

Coordinator

For weddings at a Blackhawk building, a Blackhawk-assigned wedding coordinator is required.

Facilities

In preparation for and on the wedding day, Blackhawk Facility staff ensure setup and cleanup of Blackhawk assets. Depending upon Facility entry time, Blackhawk Facilities staff may not be here upon arrival; however, Facilities will be present with ample time prior to the service, through the service and after to clean and reset used spaces for the next ministry event.

Tech

Blackhawk Tech staff manage the tech needs of the wedding (e.g., microphones, auditorium lighting, playing music, showing a slideshow). As mentioned in the Timeline – Wedding Day, Tech staff arrive 1.0-1.5 hours before the ceremony. Tech staff are not available for wedding rehearsals, or for recording or streaming your wedding ceremony. If a hired videographer seeks an audio feed from the Blackhawk soundboard, this request needs to be requested in advance as detailed in the Timeline – 1 Week Before Wedding. Videographer is responsible for testing and monitoring this feed to their recording equipment.

If couples have specific music or media for the ceremony, these items should be provided to your Blackhawk wedding coordinator at least one week prior to the service, who will provide it to Tech staff. Note: most Tech staff work Sunday-Thursday, so any media prep occurs within that timeframe.

- Music (recorded/files/tracks): provide via Dropbox (link provided by Blackhawk) or Spotify playlist. (Note: Blackhawk can project worship music lyrics on request but cannot project secular music lyrics due to copyright laws.)
- Video/picture slideshow: provide video file in .mp4 format via DropBox (link provided by Blackhawk). Please no PowerPoint, Google slides, individual photos, or other presentation formats. Video files should have high quality compression and be in 16' x 9' aspect ratio. (Note: Projection is not available for Atrium weddings)
- Static images (limit 3): provide high quality jpeg image files via Dropbox (link provided by Blackhawk). (Note: Projection is not available for Atrium weddings)

Musician(s)

Couples are responsible for arranging and managing any musician. See "Musicians" for an optional resource that lists Blackhawk musicians.

Cost

The total cost for an onsite ceremony ranges from \$1,150 to \$1,350, depending on the wedding details. Itemized fees are as follows:

- \$400 | Officiating Pastor (if Blackhawk pastor)
- \$300 | Wedding Coordinator
- \$200 | Tech
- Space Rental
 - \$450 | Brader Way Atrium
 - \$250 | Brader Way Westside or Fireside and Fitchburg Auditorium or Gathering

Planning Your Wedding Ceremony | at an Offsite Venue

Blackhawk is honored to provide pastors to officiate offsite weddings within a 20-mile radius of Madison. These guidelines outline the timeline and available options for your special day. Questions? Please reach out to Rachel at rmetzger@blackhawkchurch.org.

Timeline

- **5-6 Months Before Wedding** | Email Rachel at rmetzger@blackhawkchurch.org to communicate which wedding coordinator option you would like to use (see "Supporting Staff" section below). At that time, you will be billed for the supporting staff you are utilizing and have one month to make your payment (See "Cost" for more information). At this time, please let our team know if your rehearsal will be taking place at a different location than the wedding day venue.
- **3-4 Months Before Wedding** | You will be assigned a Blackhawk pastor as your wedding officiant and (if applicable) a Blackhawk wedding coordinator, who will schedule a meeting with you to discuss the details of your wedding day.
- **1-2 Months Before Wedding** | You will meet with your Blackhawk wedding officiant to discuss ceremony details (see "Sample Service Order"), and (if applicable) you will stay in contact with your Wedding Coordinator as needed. Also, you should apply for a marriage license (see "Marriage License Application" for more information). You will be billed for any new additional supporting services including travel expenses (e.g. mileage, tolls, parking and or lodging) if applicable (see Officiating Pastor below). Any additional billing in this period will be due within two weeks.
- **2 Weeks Before Wedding** | (If applicable) Your Blackhawk wedding coordinator will review all wedding details with you. They will also work closely with your officiating pastor and venue to ensure a smooth day.
- **Rehearsal Day** | (If applicable) Your Blackhawk wedding coordinator will direct the rehearsal with your pastor. The rehearsal typically includes the wedding party, parents, musicians, and other ceremony participants.
- **Wedding Day** |
 - 2 hours before the service: (If applicable) Blackhawk wedding coordinator arrives.
 - 1 hour before service: Blackhawk pastor arrives.

Supporting Staff

These Blackhawk staff roles are present to support a smooth wedding day.

Officiating Pastor

Blackhawk pastors are available to officiate offsite weddings that occur within 20 miles of Madison.

For longer-distance ceremonies, exceptions may be made, in which case an additional Blackhawk billing to cover travel expenses will occur 1-2 months before the wedding. Blackhawk officiants may have limited availability for Sunday and holiday weekend ceremonies.

Wedding Coordinator (*highly recommended*)

To help ensure your rehearsal and wedding day run smoothly, we recommend having a wedding coordinator for offsite ceremonies officiated by our pastors. A wedding coordinator is someone who will fulfill the following responsibilities:

- Meet with you at least 2 months prior to your wedding to discuss your wedding day/ceremony, as well as review the details with you leading up to the wedding day.
- Work closely with your officiating pastor, sound tech, and venue staff to ensure your facility needs are met, and your day runs as smoothly as possible.
- Direct the wedding rehearsal with your pastor.
- Be available on your wedding day for questions, to assist the wedding party with staying on schedule, and to cue the processional.

This role could be covered by any of the following people:

- *Someone from the venue* | This should be someone who has experience coordinating weddings and has seen and approved the above responsibilities.
- *A professional wedding coordinator* | There are many private services for hire in the Madison area. This should also be someone who has seen and approved the above responsibilities.
- *A Blackhawk wedding coordinator* | Our coordinators' services are available for a \$200 fee plus travel expenses if applicable.

Note

- Blackhawk Tech staff and equipment are not available for offsite weddings.
- Couples are responsible for arranging and managing any musician. See "Musicians" for an optional resource that lists Blackhawk musicians.

Cost

The total cost depends on the wedding details. Itemized fees are as follows:

- \$400 | Officiating Pastor (if Blackhawk pastor)
- \$200 | Wedding Coordinator (if Blackhawk wedding coordinator)
- TBD | Mileage (current IRS established standard mileage rate)
- TBD | Tolls & Parking (per estimate)
- TBD | Lodging (depending on location, typically \$100-\$150 per night)