

Knife River Lutheran Church

Marriage Policy

Adopted by Knife River Lutheran Church Council, September 21, 2014

Knife River Lutheran Church (KRLC) encourages marriage as a powerful means of experiencing and sharing love and life together. Christian marriage is an opportunity for two people to formally declare their commitment to love, honor and support each other as an outgrowth of their Christian faith. The love, faithfulness and sacrifice of Christ is reflected in the marriage relationship.

I. Who may be married at Knife River Lutheran Church?

Ordained ELCA pastors are authorized by the ELCA to perform, at their discretion and under the guidance of the church Council, all marriages that are legal in the state in which the pastor serves. It is important that KRLC serve as a community of support for the married couple and that the couple contribute to the life of the church if they are able. For this reason, couples to be married within this church should have an established, meaningful relationship with the congregation and/or the community of Knife River or be closely related to those who do.

II. Who may perform marriages at Knife River Lutheran Church?

The Pastor of KRLC will preside at all marriages associated with KRLC. Couples may request that another ordained Christian minister or recognized leader of another faith (i.e. Judaism, Islam) co-officiate. Participation of co-officiates in the ceremony will be at the Pastor's discretion. In the Pastor's absence, another may solely preside at a wedding with the Pastor's permission. Weddings performed by a Justice of the Peace, persons of unordained status who are not synodically approved, or those credentialed online, will generally not be allowed.

III. Religious Commitment Services

The Pastor is authorized to perform a commitment (blessing) ceremony between two adults who do not wish to have a formal marriage under Minnesota law but seek to commit themselves to each other in a Christian context. Such ceremonies are considered an exception, rather than the norm. A commitment service is not a marriage and conveys no legal rights, obligations or recognition. KRLC encourages marriage whenever possible.

IV. Marriage process

If two adults are interested in being married at KRLC, they must first meet with the Pastor. After the first meeting the Pastor has the authority to determine if the couple shall be legally married at KRLC. In general, pre-marriage counseling is a requirement, both for legal marriages and for commitment ceremonies.