

## Getting Started

Couples are encouraged to attend one of our Sunday Platforms to get acquainted with the Ethical Society and to learn more about our wedding services.

*"John and I want to thank you for the lovely service you provided at our wedding ceremony. A number of people mentioned how interesting and appropriate it was and you did a wonderful job. It was a very special day for us and your service made the day perfect. Thank you!"*

*"Thank you again for making our wedding so memorable. Thanks for all the advice, and especially for starting our life together as a couple."*

*"Fred and I wanted to send a quick note to tell you how very pleased we were with our wedding ceremony. Donna did a wonderful job and we instantly felt very warm and comfortable in her presence, as did all our guests!"*

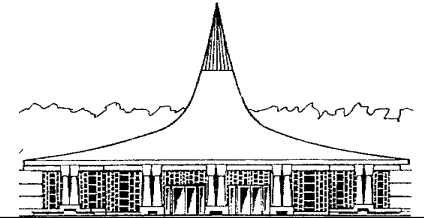


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# Interfaith Marriages



**Personalized  
Non-Denominational**

**Ethical Society of St. Louis**

Officiants Authorized  
in the state of Missouri

## What is the Ethical Society of St. Louis?

The Ethical Society of St. Louis is a diverse community of caring people dedicated to bringing out the best in the human spirit. Living by ethical principles such as love, justice, honesty, and freedom, we experience spiritual harmony within ourselves and in our relationships.

Providing wedding ceremonies for inter-faith couples is one aspect of our service to the community. Our own membership is made of people whose religious heritage is Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim and others.

We perform wedding ceremonies for couples who seek a meaningful non-denominational ceremony to be performed away from a court or government office.

## What is an Ethical Culture ceremony like?

Our ceremonies are jointly planned with the couple so no two are alike. An Officiant will provide the couple with ideas and a sample ceremony with a number of options, which include:

- Welcoming the guests.
- Considering parents, family and friends.
- Discussing the Ethical meaning of marriage.
- Performing the vows and the ring ceremony.
- Pronouncing the marriage and offering a blessing.

Some couples will add musical interludes, candle or wine ceremonies, or reading of poems or prose selections.

## Who officiates the Ceremonies?

Ethical Culture weddings are performed by Assistant Leaders for Adjunct Services. Each Adjunct Leader is selected by the Ethical Society of St. Louis because of demonstrated leadership and familiarity with the principles of Ethical Culture. They are experienced with teaching, counseling, or public speaking.

Adjunct Leaders are trained by the Society, certified by the American Ethical Union, and authorized by the courts to conduct weddings in the state of Missouri.

In addition to weddings, Adjunct Leaders also lead Memorial Services, Commitment Ceremonies and Baby Namings.

## How is the Wedding Ceremony created?

Every wedding is unique and every couple has something special to include. The first step is meeting the officiant to see if everyone is comfortable with one another. If everyone agrees to proceed, the process of crafting a personally meaningful wedding ceremony begins.

As part of the wedding interview, the officiant gives the couple a sample Ethical Culture wedding ceremony. The couple works with the sample to add and delete material to make the ceremony strongly personal and appropriate to their individual circumstances and traditions. The officiant serves in an advisory capacity for other aspects of the ceremony.

## Where are the Ceremonies performed?

Each couple selects and arranges the location of their wedding. Weddings have been held in homes, hotels, parks, community rooms, restaurants, historical mansions and the Ethical Society Auditorium or foyer. Each couple should think of what kind of location would make them feel comfortable and reflect the kind of style they prefer.

## What is the fee?

Adjunct Leaders officiate at weddings as a service to the community and receive no compensation. However, a tax-deductible contribution to the Ethical Society of St. Louis is required. The suggested amount is \$300.00, with very small weddings being slightly less. These fees are due on the day of the wedding.

## Securing a license:

Each couple arranges for their own license in the jurisdiction or county in which the ceremony is to be performed, not where the couple resides, by visiting the Marriage Bureau in a local court house.

St. Louis City: City Hall  
1200 Market St  
(314) 622-3257

St. Louis County: Administration Bldg.  
41 S. Central  
(314) 615-7180