

The *Century* on weddings

By [Steve Thorngate](#)

May 15, 2014

When Nadia and I got married, we really went all out on the worship planning. She spread out multiple worship books, adapting her favorite parts and writing collects and petitions from scratch. I recruited not one or two but *ten* friends to lead the music and then got to work writing original service music, reharmonizing hymns, and notating all of it to match in the bulletin.

About that bulletin: it was epically thick. A friend asked me if I sent it to the Library of Congress for archiving. Early in the service, Nadia and I stood to sing the first of many songs, felt the heft of the individual bulletins for the first time, and laughed about the fact that we'd basically self-published a journal:

There were perhaps some excesses.

But I think our reasons for planning a big, fat, liturgical wedding were generally good ones. I write about our wedding and others in "[Church\(y\) Weddings](#)," part of the *Century's* new special issue on weddings. Also in the issue:

- B. J. Hutto on [truth-telling about Christian weddings](#). ("Matthew offers a bold witness, not only because he expects couples married in his church to immerse themselves in church life, but also because he expects those who aren't interested in doing this to be truthful about it, and he understands that he and the church must respect their truthfulness.")
- Katherine Willis Pershey on [a parishioner who got ordained online](#). ("I realized at that moment that Allison wasn't looking for my help in finding a way out of doing what her friends were asking. What she wanted—even if she did not yet know it—was my blessing.")
- Celeste Kennel-Shank on [the challenges of interfaith weddings](#). ("When an interfaith couple told pastor Joyce Shin that they'd like their wedding to include a Hindu ritual involving fire, she wasn't sure at first whether they would be able to conduct it safely in church.")