



Guidelines for a Christian Marriage

Introduction

When a couple chooses to be married in the Church, the wedding ceremony becomes a service of worship celebrating the beauty of God's love for us. The Book of Order (part of the PCUSA constitution) says, "Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage involves a unique commitment between two people...to love and support each other for the rest of their lives." The Book of Order also states, "In the Reformed tradition, marriage is also a covenant in which God is an active part, and in which the community of faith publicly witnesses and acknowledges." Because we want to help make your wedding meaningful, the guidelines listed below have been established to help assure and preserve the beauty, dignity, and communal reverence which surrounds the worship service in which the wedding takes place.

Pre-Wedding Arrangements

Scheduling the Ceremony

Please contact the Church Office (530) 662-5254 concerning times of both the wedding ceremony and the rehearsal. Be sure to clear these times with the minister who is responsible for the marriage service. It is helpful to know the wedding plans at least six months in advance. This notice will be helpful to assure your first choice concerning time and date of the wedding and to allow for adequate time for pre-marital counseling.

Meeting with the Pastor

1. **Pre-marital Counseling:** Out of concern for the success of a marriage, the Church requires couples to receive instruction prior to the wedding service. The minister is required by the Presbyterian constitution to determine if the couple "demonstrates sufficient understanding of the nature of the marriage covenant and commitment to living their lives together according to its values." Normally there will be three or four counseling sessions with the Pastor or with a qualified professional counselor.
2. **Responsibilities:** The minister may choose not to perform a wedding whenever he or she is convinced that Christian commitment and responsibility are lacking, and the marriage is not one which offers promise of being blessed by God. The minister may also seek the counsel of the session.
3. **Other Ministries:** Normally the congregation's minister will preside over the wedding service. A minister of another church, who is asked by the couple to officiate or assist in a wedding in this church, is asked to make such a request to the church office or the





current minister at least a month before the wedding date. If the minister of this church is unavailable, he or she will discuss with you the selection of another pastor.

Wedding Coordinator

The Church provides a wedding coordinator to offer guidance and assist prior to, and during the wedding ceremony. All weddings need to use the coordinator who provides the following services:

- Explains policies and procedures
- Discusses wedding plans, etiquette, and decorations
- Conducts wedding rehearsal (In Pastor's absence)
- Assists with flowers
- Supervises bridal party
- Instructs ushers

The wedding coordinator should be contacted by the couple as soon as the date of the wedding is set.

Music

The position of the Presbyterian Church is that the marriage service “shall be conducted in a manner appropriate to this covenant and to the forms of Reformed worship.” It, therefore, follows that the music used shall reflect the manner appropriate to the covenant and Reformed worship.

The minister and the session are the final authority in the ordering of worship and the selection of music. Early in the planning, couples should be sure to select their music and discuss it with the minister.

Music suitable for marriage rite should embody the high standards of quality necessary for any musical offering used in a service of worship. Texts should focus on God and emphasize the corporate, rather than the private nature of worship. Music involving congregational participation, such as hymns, spirituals, or psalms can greatly enrich a marriage service and is encouraged. In order to assist you in your selection, you will find a list of music in the appendix. Selections are not limited to this list, however.

Musicians

The minister can provide the couple a list of organists who might be available for wedding. It is the responsibility of the couple to arrange for all musicians. The minister needs to be aware of organists, soloists, or instrumentalist who will be involved in the worship service.





Use of Church Facilities

The Building

Most weddings will normally use the sanctuary, narthex, restrooms, and the fireside room. Larger parties may also need to use the nursery room. Other rooms, if not in use, may be used at an additional cost as per your contract.

The sanctuary can seat 250 people comfortably. At least two ushers are suggested to handle most weddings. Larger weddings may want to use four. There are dressing rooms available and restrooms in the narthex.

The church building is opened one hour prior to the wedding, at which time the sanctuary may be decorated. If any more time is needed, arrangements can be made with the Wedding Coordinator. Normally the building shall be vacated one hour after the wedding. No decorations are to remain in the church overnight without permission. The church cannot insure the safety of personal items or valuables delivered or left in the church.

For your safety and the protection of the church facilities, we ask that there be no throwing of rice, flower petals, or bird seed. Please notify guests of this policy.

Smoking and the use of alcoholic beverages are not allowed in any of the church buildings.

Flowers and Decorations

Flowers and other decorations used in the service should add to, rather than distract from the ceremony.

1. **Candles:** You can obtain candelabra and candles through a florist or rental service. All candles must be of the dripless variety.
2. **Flowers:** Flowers may not be placed upon the Communion Table. The church has two flower stands available for your use. The church welcomes the gift of wedding flowers for Sunday worship.
3. **Furnishings:** We ask that care be taken of all church property. All paraments, chairs, furnishings, and seasonal decorations will be left in place for weddings. Only masking tape may be used to attach decorations to church aisle chairs.
4. **Aisle Runner:** If an aisle runner is desired, it can be furnished by the florist. It must be taped down to the floor for safety. We suggest using clear packing tape or painter's tape. The center aisle from the chancel steps to the narthex is 40 feet. (Do not use duct Tape)





The Wedding

Rehearsal

The rehearsal is vitally important because it sets the tone for everything that follows and prepares us for the service of worship. The rehearsal normally will last about thirty minutes and will be conducted by either the Pastor or the Wedding Coordinator.

The entire wedding party should be present at the rehearsal, including ushers, organists, and musicians. Your promptness will allow us to instruct all the participants as to their places and parts in the service. The organist will rehearse the Processional, Recessional, and any special music or solos.

Photography

Couples are encouraged to consider taking formal photographs before the wedding. If this is not possible, the pastor may arrange for re-enactments of the service immediately following the ceremony.

The photographer may take flash pictures during the Processional and Recessional. Only available light photos may be taken from the rear center aisle during the ceremony. Ushers are to explain to guests that flash photos are not to be taken during the service.

Videographer

Wedding services may be videotaped under the following guidelines:

1. Video cameras can be used only from the back of the church. They may not be placed in the aisles, the chancel, the side areas, or overhead.
2. Microphone cords, if used, must be placed discreetly and all cords (mic & power) must be taped to the floor.
3. Only available light may be used when taping.
4. Permission to video tape the wedding must be arranged through the minister at least two weeks prior to the service.

Audio Recording

Recording facilities are not available for audio production. If the wedding is to be audio recorded, the cords should be placed discreetly, and must be taped to the floor.

Reception

If you wish to have a reception at the church, you may use the breezeway in the front of the church. The arrangement of the tables can be discussed with the Wedding Coordinator. Alcohol is not permitted on the campus grounds.

Fees

A list of fees is included in the appendix. A member is one who is listed in the Church's Registry. Children of members, who are not confirmed members themselves, come under the fees for members. All others are grouped under non-member fees.





All church fees are payable to the church at least two weeks before the day of rehearsal. Honoraria for the minister, coordinator, organists, and soloists should be paid by separate check directly to each individual at least two weeks before the day of rehearsal.

Other Responsibilities

1. The marriage license must be delivered to the church office at least one week prior to the wedding. The Pastor cannot conduct the wedding without it.
2. The couple is responsible for advising the florist, the photographer, the family and guests of the above policies.





Suggested Wedding Music

Organ Music

Wedding March	Wagner
Jesus, Joy of Man’s Desiring.....	Bach
Arioso in A.....	Bach
In Thee is Gladness.....	Bach
Sinfonia to Wedding Cantata	Handel
Largo	Handel
Arioso	Handel
Bell Symphony.....	Purcell
Trumpet Voluntary in D	Clarke (previously attributed to Purcell)
Pax Vobiscum	Edmunson
Adoramus.....	Palestrina
Psalm 18.....	Marcello
Wedding March	Mendelssohn
Tocatta from Fifth Symphony.....	Ch. M. Widor
Es is ein Ros’ Entsorgungten	J. Brahams
Nun Danket Alle Gott.....	Karg-Elert
St. Anthony Chorale	Brahms
Hornpipe (from Water Music)	Handel
Processional (from Water Music)	Handel
Trumpet Tune in D.....	Purcell
Sheep May Safely Graze.....	Bach
Air for the G String	Bach

Vocals

O Perfect Love.....	Arr. By Barnby, Burleigh and others
The Lord’s Prayer	Malotte and others
The Twenty-third Psalm.....	Various setting
Jesus, Shepard, be Thou Near Me.....	Bach
My Heart Ever Faithful	Bach
Be Thou but Near	Bach
Jesus, Joy of Man’s Desiring.....	Bach-Bunjes
O Love that Casts Out Fear	Bach-Bunjes
God, My Shepard, Walks Beside Me.....	Bach-Dickinson
O Father, All Creating.....	Buxtehude
O Happy Home.....	Berggren
I Will Sing New Songs of Gladness	Dvorak
O Lord Most Holy	Franck
Entreat Me Not to Leave Thee.....	Gounod
Thanks Be to Thee.....	Handel
The Call.....	Williams





Wedding Policies for Flowers and Decorations

To be given to the Florist

The church will be open for one hour before the wedding service is to begin. If other arrangements are necessary, contact the Wedding Coordinator of the Church Office.

- All candles used in the wedding service must be of the dripless variety.
- Flowers may not be placed upon the Communion Table. The church can provide two stands for this purpose.
- All paraments, chairs, furnishings, and seasonal decorations will be left in place for weddings.
- Only masking tape may be used to attach decorations to church aisle chairs.
- If an aisle runner is used, it must be taped down to the floor safely.
 - We suggest using clear packaging tape
 - The center aisle from the chancel steps to the narthex is 40 feet



Woodland Presbyterian Church
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Wedding Policies for Photographers

To be given to the Wedding Photographer

Couples are encouraged to consider taking formal photographs before the wedding. If this is not possible, the Pastor will arrange for re-enactment of the service immediately following the ceremony. Normally, 30-45 minutes is sufficient time for photographs to be taken.

As the official photographer, you may take flash pictures before and after the service. In addition, flash pictures may be taken as the wedding party processes in and recesses out. Only available light photos may be taken from the rear center aisle during the ceremony.



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