

PREFACE - ON MARRIAGE

Excerpts from the Directory for Worship

Presbyterian Church (USA)

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage, a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

In preparation for the marriage service, the minister asked to lead the service shall provide for a discussion with the man and woman concerning:

- the nature of the Christian commitment, assuring that at least one is a professing Christian,
- the legal requirements of the state,
- the privileges and responsibilities of Christian marriage,
- the nature and form of the marriage service,
- the vows and commitments they will be asked to make.
- the relationship of these commitments to their lives discipleship,
- the resources of the faith and the Christian community to assist the in fulfilling their marriage commitments.

This discussion is equally important in the case of a first marriage, a marriage after death of a spouse, and a marriage following divorce.

If the minister is convinced, after discussion with the couple, that commitment, responsibility, maturity, or Christian understanding are so lacking that the marriage is unwise, the minister shall assure the couple of the church's continuing concern for them and not conduct the ceremony. In making this decision, the minister may seek the counsel of the session (the governing body of the local congregation).

Christian marriage should be celebrated in the place where the community gathers for worship. As a service of Christian worship, the marriage service is under the direction of the minister and the supervision of the session. The marriage ordinarily takes place in a special service, which focuses upon marriage as a gift of God and as an expression of the Christian life.

The service begins with scriptural sentences and a brief statement of purpose. The man and the woman shall declare their intention to enter into Christian marriage and shall exchange vows of love and faithfulness. The service includes appropriate passages of scripture, which may be interpreted in various forms of proclamation. Prayers shall be offered for the couple, for the communities that support them in the new dimension of discipleship, and for all who seek to live in faithfulness. In the name of the triune God, the minister shall declare publicly that the woman and the man are now joined in

marriage. A charge may be given. Other actions common to the community and its cultures may appropriately be observed when these actions do not diminish the Christian understanding of marriage. The service concludes with a benediction.

Music suitable for the marriage service directs attention to God and expresses the faith of the Church. The congregation may join in hymns and other musical forms of praise and prayer. Flowers, decorations, and other appointments should be appropriate to the place of worship, enhance the worshippers' consciousness of the reality of God, and reflect the integrity and simplicity of Christian life.

I. POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

A. Scheduling

1. The date and time of both the wedding and the rehearsal (if needed) must be set in consultation with the pastor performing the ceremony.
2. It is expected that clergy on the staff of First & Central Presbyterian Church will perform all marriage ceremonies.
3. We welcome the participation of other clergy. However, this must be cleared with the Pastor prior to the invitation being extended to clergy outside the congregation.
4. Because weddings are services of worship performed by the Church, our facilities are not "rented" for weddings of non-members performed by clergy not associated with First & Central Presbyterian Church.

B. Counseling

1. Pre-marriage counseling must be arranged with the pastor performing the ceremony. Ordinarily, this counseling shall include at least three meetings with the couple. Therefore, arrangements should be made at least three months prior to the day of the wedding.
2. It is the couple's responsibility to make themselves available for the counseling.

C. Music

1. All music arrangements must be made through First & Central Presbyterian Church's Minister of Music. The couple is responsible for contacting the Minister of Music as soon as possible after the wedding date has been set with the Pastor in order to assure the services of the

Minister of Music and to set a time for a consultation on the selection of the music for the wedding.

2. Ordinarily, First & Central Presbyterian Church's Minister of Music will provide organ music for weddings. If other musicians are desired, they must be approved by the Minister of Music, in conjunction with the approval of First & Central Presbyterian Church's Session's (governing body) Worship Council. Other musicians shall not be invited until the Minister of Music has been consulted.
3. The use of vocal soloists or other instruments must be arranged and coordinated with First & Central Presbyterian Church's Minister of Music. Soloists and instrumentalists shall not be invited until the Minister of Music has been consulted. The Minister of Music will coordinate rehearsal times with the vocalists or instrumentalists.
4. In selecting music (organ, vocal, etc.) it should be kept in mind that the wedding is a service of worship. (refer to the Preface Statement.)

D. Photography

1. Flash photography is not permitted during the wedding service. The Pastor will be glad to remain after the service for posed photographs. Non-flash photographs during the service may be permitted, if arranged previously with the pastor.
2. If there is an "official" photographer (professional or volunteer) for the wedding, she/he must remain at the rear of the Sanctuary or Chapel (behind the last person in the congregation) or in the balcony at all times. The Pastor requests that this photographer meet with the pastor briefly before the ceremony to review the ground rules.
3. If videotaping is desired, the camera and other equipment must be placed in the balcony at the rear of the Sanctuary. A hand-held camera may be used at the rear of the Sanctuary or Chapel (behind the last person in the congregation). A fixed, unstaffed camera may be set up in the choir area to focus on the front. Additional lighting is not permitted.
4. Photographers and persons video-taping must stay out of the aisles and behind the congregation at all times.

E. Flowers

1. Simplicity is encouraged. The use of elaborate or excessive decoration is strongly discouraged (refer to Preface Statement). The use of sticky tape to attach flowers and/or other decorations to the pews is not permitted.

2. Flowers may not be placed on the Communion Table in the Sanctuary. Ordinarily arrangements are placed on the two side flower stands in the Sanctuary or one arrangement on the flower stand in the Chapel.
3. If the wedding flowers are to be offered for the regular Worship of the congregation of First & Central Presbyterian Church, the Church office should be notified so that acknowledgement can be given in the worship bulletin for that Sunday.

F. Candles

1. Candelabra are available for use at weddings. Pew candles are also available for use on the center aisle.
2. All candles will be provided by the Church. (See appropriate fees.)

G. Dressing For The Wedding

1. It is strongly requested that the wedding party dress at the Church in order to assure that the wedding ceremony begin promptly. Facilities are available for women to dress in the lower level Women's Lounge and for the men to dress in the Choir Room on the second floor.
2. If the wedding party does not dress at the Church, **all persons in the wedding party (including the bride and groom) MUST be at the Church 30 minutes prior to the ceremony.**

H. Miscellaneous

1. **The marriage license shall be brought to the Church Office at least one week prior to the wedding date.**
2. The throwing of rice, birdseed, rose petals, confetti, or others items is not permitted inside the Church building or outside the building.
3. For safety reasons, aisle runners are not permitted.
4. For safety reasons luminaries (candles in bags lining the walk and or stairs) are not permitted.
5. First & Central Presbyterian Church is not responsible for any articles left in our facilities after a wedding.
6. No alcoholic beverages are permitted on Church property.

7. No smoking is permitted in our buildings.

I. Facilities for Reception

1. Memorial Hall (the Church's fellowship hall located beneath the Sanctuary) may be reserved for wedding receptions. This room has a capacity of 200 persons.
2. No alcoholic beverages are permitted on Church property.
3. No smoking is permitted in our buildings.
4. The Church's kitchen may be used by caterers for the preparation of the food for the reception. In such a case, the caterer must provide all kitchenware needed and must leave the facility as it was found.
5. The custodian will open the building 60 minutes prior to your wedding time. Arrangements for more time prior to the wedding must be agreed to by the custodian, and the couple will pay an additional fee to the custodian of \$15 for up to 1 extra hour, \$30 for up to 2 extra hours, etc...

II. **FORMATION**

A. The Pre-Marriage Counseling

The counseling provides an opportunity for the pastor and the couple to become better acquainted. It is also an important time for the couple to discuss with the pastor many of the issues and concerns facing married couples in our day. During these times of sharing, areas discussed will include: future plans and goals, mutual support and responsibilities, time and financial planning, family relationship, sexual relationship, adjustments after marriage, and the role of religion and faith in marriage.

B. The Rehearsal

The rehearsal is intended to assist in assuring that the members of the wedding party understand the flow of the ceremony, have clarified any questions regarding individual roles and responsibilities in the service, that the procession and recession are properly ordered, and that the ushers understand their responsibilities.

(NOTE: The Pastor performing the ceremony will direct the rehearsal. Wedding Consultants/Directors are NOT permitted.)

III. FEES

A. Members of the Congregation

1. Sanctuary or Chapel:	no charge	
2. Custodian:	\$100.00	Rehearsal and Wedding
3. Organist:	\$150.00 \$30.00	Wedding additional fee for each rehearsal with soloists or other musicians
4. Soloist: (if arranged by Church)	\$200.00	
5. Trumpeter	\$225	
6. Pastor:	Honorarium	at member's discretion
7. Use of Memorial Hall and or Kitchen: (for reception)	no charge	
8. Candles:	\$50.00	

B. Non-Member Wedding Package Costs \$3,000 and includes the following: *(Member status is determined at time of wedding inquiry.)*

1. Sanctuary	\$1,075.00
2. Custodian	\$200.00
3. Organist	\$400.00
4. Soloist	\$200.00
5. Trumpeter	\$225.00
6. Pastor	\$600.00
7. Coordinator	\$200.00
8. Candles	\$100.00

C. Required Deposit (Non-members only)

In order to assure that the date requested is held on the church calendar and on the calendars of the Pastor and Minister of Music, a deposit of one half the total cost of the wedding package in the amount of **\$1,500.00** needs to be paid.

1. IN CASE OF CANCELLATION, DEPOSIT IS NOT REFUNDABLE!

2. Please Note: the deposit must be paid in order to reserve the date.

3. To pay deposit please write check to: “First & Central Presbyterian Church”

4. Payment of the balance of fees:

The remainder of all fees **MUST** be paid in full at least **ONE MONTH** prior to the service.