

# Wedding Policy

First Presbyterian Church  
Beaver, PA

The congregation and Elders of First Presbyterian Church support the belief that the Christian wedding is a distinctive act of worship wherein a man and a woman come before God's throne of grace seeking his specific blessing upon their marriage. The sanctity and depth of the required commitment were reemphasized by Jesus Christ, who instructed that the two, who become one flesh, are to not divorce, and that Adultery is a destructive sin to the marriage relationship. Therefore, we design wedding services in such a way that invited guests are participants rather than spectators, who by involvement are challenged to renew their own vows of commitment to Jesus, to marriage partners and to family members.

First Presbyterian Church believes that a wedding service is the launching event for a life together in Christ. We place a high priority on each couple's union in Christ, and make costly, time-consuming commitments to each couple that we marry. In turn, we ask that couples make a commitment to building a strong marriage; one that is rooted in Christ. We also give our pastors the freedom to discern whether or not to participate in a wedding ceremony.

## **1. The Married Couple and their relationship with God**

- a. We realize that there are a variety of reasons why a couple might want to be married in a church building, including a beautiful sanctuary, organ, bride's room, center aisle, etc. However, First Presbyterian Church believes that these reasons are secondary to the primary concern, which is the couple's decision to seal their vows before God and invite Him to be at the head of their new life together. Therefore, we encourage and assume that all couples will participate regularly (weekly) in the life of the church (it does not have to be First Presbyterian Church). This is the first commitment that the couple makes to us (and to God), and the one we take most seriously.

## **2. Reservations**

- a. If, after reading this policy, the couple agrees to be married under the guidelines set forth, one of our pastors may be contacted for a meeting so that wedding dates can be discussed. Even if the couple is requesting that another pastor perform the ceremony, one of the First Church pastors must be contacted. It goes without saying that wedding invitations should not be printed until the date has been set with our pastor.
- b. We prefer not to schedule weddings on Sundays or legal holidays, including Holy Week and Christmas Eve/Day. In addition, we prefer that no wedding be scheduled before 10:30 AM or after 7:30 PM.
- c. Once a meeting with the pastor has taken place, and a date has been confirmed by the pastor, we will set in motion the process by which you meet with the organist and the wedding coordinator.

### **3. Pre-Marital Counsel**

- a. You are expected to meet with the officiating pastor and anyone he/she designates for at least four to six pre-marital sessions.
- b. Even if you are not being married by one of the staff pastors we expect you to fulfill this commitment before marriage.
- c. Included in the pre-marital counsel is one meeting for planning the service; and the remainder for examining Scripture's teachings on marriage and for working through pre-marital inventories.
- d. The pastor may, in his/her discretion, expect you to participate even further in premarital work, including attending a weekend retreat, a seminar, reading a book, or meeting a counselor/specialist.

### **4. Music and Worship**

- a. The purpose of music in the wedding service is to glorify God. Therefore, the music chosen for this service will be appropriate for the gathering of God's people. Attached is a list of appropriate music; the organist will be happy to supply you with a list of suitable selections from which to choose. The pastor and/or organist, under submission of the session of First Presbyterian Church, have the discretion to refrain from including music deemed inappropriate for the service.
- b. The couple should plan a meeting with the organist to choose music well ahead of the wedding date. The couple should not invite other musicians to participate until a planning meeting with the pastor and/or organist has been held.
- c. Soloists and/or vocal ensembles are expected to attend the rehearsal. If you need suggestions for qualified vocalists, the organist may help you.
- d. If you choose your own organist, the regular organist must approve the person. The pipe organ of the FPC is a valuable instrument. Only qualified organists familiar with pipe organ techniques and management should be chosen.
- e. Decorations and appointments should not be ostentatious as to distract worshippers from their focus on God.
- f. The service itself should be conducted with dignity and reverence, including prayers for the new family. Vows shall be exchanged, appropriate scriptures read, and a charge given which sets forth both the duty and privileges of marriage.
- g. The pastor shall conclude the ceremony by publicly declaring that the couple is now husband and wife, and the benediction shall be pronounced.

### **5. Rehearsal**

- a. Unless mutually agreed upon by the pastor and couple, a rehearsal will be held the evening before the service. We generally expect the rehearsal to be sometime between 5:00 and 7:00 PM.
- b. The participants, including family, couple, and wedding party/musicians, are expected to be at the wedding rehearsal, on time and ready to practice their parts.

## **6. Photography**

Photographs of a wedding are a wonderful way to record an exciting and life-changing event; however, they can easily upstage the service. Therefore, the following guidelines have been established:

- a. No pictures may be taken during the worship service. All pictures, with the exception of the bride entering and leaving the sanctuary, shall be taken before or after the service. At no other time will photographers enter the aisle or place themselves where they will conspicuously interfere with worship. Please give the attached handout to the photographer.
- b. Videotape machines may be used only from stationary places located in the rear of the sanctuary. A sign will be placed in the vestibule indicating that the bride and groom request that pictures not be taken during worship. The same policy will be placed in the bulletin.

## **7. Florists**

Please forward the attached guidelines to the florist of your choice, and notify the wedding coordinator of your choice of florist. Flowers may not be placed on the communion table. Tape, tacks or other mechanical devices are not allowed for securing decorations to the pews.

## **8. Candles and Paraments**

Only stationary candles are used in the sanctuary. Wax candles may only be placed on the communion table. Wax candles (ex. unity candle, mothers candles) you are to provide – the church does not supply. You may make use of the church's two seven-branch candelabras. (You are responsible for all expenses incurred for cleaning, repairing, or replacing carpet or furnishings because of wax drippings). White paraments and vestments will be used at weddings during all liturgical seasons. You may request that the clergy robe and wear vestments, or not.

## **9. Reception & Wedding Ceremony**

Use of the church facility for a wedding and/or reception is an honor, and we expect our church's facility to be treated with respect. A pastor will work with you on your needs including sanctuary, rehearsal and/or reception spaces. Should you use facilities for a rehearsal or reception, you are responsible for all set up and clean up, as well as for costs and custodial costs. Smoking, alcohol, profanity and raffles/gambling are NOT permitted on church property.

## **10. Fee Schedule**

First Presbyterian Church, through its staff, goes to great lengths to provide a positive event with high integrity. **The church office must receive full fees one week before the wedding service; please make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church.**

The following is the fee schedule for staff participants:

Pastor: \$175.00 this includes counseling, preparation, rehearsal and wedding.

Organist: \$150.00 this includes one planning session, one rehearsal and wedding.

Coordinator: \$125.00 this includes one planning session, one rehearsal, work with florist and wedding service.

Custodian: \$100.00 this is to open and close building, set-up, clean up.

Summary of Fees: \$550.00 total for all staff positions being utilized.

\**Outside Fee* for Church Sanctuary rental is \$125.00.

\*\*There are additional fees to rent extra areas in the church such as Fellowship Hall, Commons area, etc. Please contact the church office and ask to speak to the Building Coordinator for further details.

## WEDDING MUSIC SELECTION

The following repertoire list is approved for use as processional or recessional in weddings at First Presbyterian Church, Beaver. Many of the selections may serve as either a processional or recessional, others are most appropriate for one or the other. The organist can assist you in that regard. The hymns may serve as congregational hymns during the wedding or as processionals. Other music requested will be evaluated according to the guidelines stated in the approved Wedding Policies of our church.

In keeping with the Book of Order the Wedding Policies of First Presbyterian Church, and our understanding of what music is appropriate for a service of worship we find the "Bridal Chorus" from Lohengrin, by Wagner, and the "Wedding March" from A Mid-Summer Night's Dream, by Mendelsohn, inappropriate and, therefore, unacceptable for use during weddings at First Presbyterian Church. (See Book of Order S-5.0400 "... assure that it is suitable and reverent.")

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### Processionals and Recessionals

1. Trumpet Voluntary*	Clarke (Purcell)
2. Trumpet Tune	Clarke (Purcell)
3. Canon in D	Pachelbel
4. Psalm XIX	Marcello
5. Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*	J. S. Bach
6. Toccata in Seven	Rutter
7. Rondeau & Fanfares*	Mouret
8. Toccata and Fugue in F Major	Buxtehude
9. Prelude in Classic Style	Young
10. Festival Prelude	M. L. Williams
11. Allegro Maestoso	G. F. Handel
12. Air	J. S. Bach
13. Prelude and Fugue in C	J. S. Bach

### Hymns (from Trinity Hymnal)

1. Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven	#76
2. Great Is Thy Faithfulness	#32
3. Praise to the Lord, the Almighty	#53
4. Love Divine, All Loves Excelling	#529
5. All Creatures of Our God and King	#115
6. All People That on Earth do Dwell	#1
7. Be Thou My Vision	#642
8. Holy God, We Praise Thy Name	#103
9. For the Beauty of the Earth	#116

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Please make an appointment to meet with the organist at least 4 to 6 weeks before the wedding to discuss music selection.

\*Indicates selections for organ and trumpet

## ***Wedding Policies for Florists***

First Presbyterian Church 252 College Avenue Beaver, PA 15009

1. Tape, tacks, or other mechanical devices are not allowed for securing decorations to pews.
2. If the florist is not acquainted with the sanctuary, they should make arrangements to stop in and speak with the wedding coordinator regarding appropriate floral arrangements, aisle runners, etc.
3. Only stationary candles are permitted in the sanctuary. Wax candles may only be placed on the communion table.

## ***Wedding Policies for Photographers***

First Presbyterian Church 252 College Avenue Beaver, PA 15009

1. Pictures during the service may be taken by placed stationary video cameras and by a photographer in the back row.
2. Pictures of the family and bridal processional may be taken from the front upon entry, at which point the photographer(s) will move to the back row during the service.
3. At no time are photographers to enter the aisle or place themselves where they will conspicuously interfere with worship.
4. We will be happy to pose for any difficult-to-get pictures, after the service.

## ***Reception Guidelines***

To be given to all bands, disc jockeys, or anyone acting as Master of Ceremonies

Unlike other churches and reception halls, First Presbyterian Church does not make money on hall rentals. The fees charged pay for setup, cleanup, utilities, and upkeep.

We ask in return that those who use this facility respect our desire that anything that happens in the facility or on the church grounds is God-honoring and appropriate for a church building.

By making an agreement to provide services (either paid or unpaid) with the renter of the facility, in conjunction with First Presbyterian Church, you agree:

- \* that you will not use vulgar, suggestive, or inappropriate language while in our facility
- \* that any music played or video clips used will not be vulgar, suggestive, or make use of inappropriate language
- \* that you will not encourage vulgar, suggestive, or inappropriate activity from attendees
- \* that you will not use alcohol or drugs while on our property and should you see such behavior you will bring this to the attention of the renter or person who hired you

I have read and understand the above policy and to the best of my ability intend to follow it fully.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_