

# **YOUR WEDDING AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**



## **Welcome!**

Marriage is a gift God has given to us for the well being of all humankind. It is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out their lives together before God. As a service of Christian worship, marriage services held at First Presbyterian Church are under the direction of the pastor and the supervision of our Session, the governing board of the congregation.

We are pleased that you are considering beginning your new life together with a service at First Presbyterian Church. This booklet is designed to provide information that will be useful as you make your plans and decisions. The pastor and staff are eager to be as helpful as possible during your wedding and marriage. Thank you for your cooperation with our guidelines. By working closely together, we can ensure you will have a day full of beautiful memories to last a lifetime!

## Frequently Asked Questions

### ✦ **May we get married in the church if we are not members?**

Yes! We welcome non-members who wish to be married at First Presbyterian Church. In Christian theology and history, marriage has always been considered a relationship ordained by God. As such, it seeks to honor Jesus Christ, our Lord, and to found the home on Christian principles. In Christian marriage, two persons enter into a covenant relationship, not only with each other, but also with God. Therefore the wedding ceremony is a service of Christian worship and should be planned as such. If you are not currently members of another church, we will be happy to speak to you more about joining our fellowship as active members.

### ✦ **How many people does the sanctuary hold?**

The sanctuary comfortably seats 450 people. It is air-conditioned.

### ✦ **Are there fees for using church facilities?**

Yes, there are fees to help defray the cost of church operations and maintenance, as well as the services of church personnel. You will find a schedule of fees on page 12 of this booklet.

First Presbyterian honors the faithful commitment of our members by charging church families a reduced cost. However, we do charge minimal fees to offset the increased expenses of operating the church outside of normal worship and business hours. Every effort is made to keep these costs in line with those charged by other churches in the area.

### ✦ **How do we schedule church facilities for our wedding?**

Here is a checklist that will help you get started planning your wedding at First Presbyterian and that will help make your wedding flow smoothly and be as stress-free as possible.

- Since you are reading this Wedding Booklet, you have probably already called the church office to inquire about a wedding at First Presbyterian. Read through the booklet now. It will answer most of your questions about building use and costs.
- If you have not already done so, please contact our church secretary to request that your date be tentatively added to our church calendar. She will double-check the date with the Pastor, Director of Music and other church staff to ensure availability and that another bride has not already booked the same date.
- You will need to complete and return the Wedding Information and Financial Responsibility forms, found on pages 11&12, along with your initial deposit of \$150. Note that your wedding date is not considered “booked” until the Wedding Information Form and deposit is received in the church office.

- Please note that weddings cannot be scheduled on Christian or national holidays, as well as several dates adjacent to special worship services scheduled throughout the year in the sanctuary. In order to accommodate church member families, we do not schedule non-member weddings more than 10 months in advance.
- In addition to the sanctuary, the church also has a chapel which may be used for small weddings, which will accommodate 20-25 guests.

⌘ **Do we need to take classes in preparation for our marriage?**

The pastor of First Presbyterian Church is pleased to work with you as you prepare for your wedding and marriage. While we do not hold “classes” per se, the pastor will want to meet with you for marriage preparation. Usually three to four sessions are required. The number and time of these sessions will be agreed on in your initial visit.

Your first consultation will primarily deal with the dates and times of your wedding and arrangements for pre-marital counseling sessions. The Wedding Coordinator will also be present at your final meeting to discuss last minute changes and review final plans.

During your preparatory sessions, the pastor will discuss with you the nature of your Christian commitment, legal requirements of the state, the responsibilities of Christian marriage and the vows you will make, your wedding ceremony, and the resources of faith and the Christian community in fulfilling your marriage commitment.

⌘ **Can we invite a visiting minister perform the ceremony?**

We realize that you may wish to invite outside clergy to participate in your special day. This is permitted, but requires the approval of Session, the governing body of our congregation. With Session’s agreement, our pastor will extend the invitation to other clergy. However, the pastor of First Presbyterian Church must be involved in your wedding and will be in charge of the service.

## **Planning Your Wedding Ceremony**

⌘ **Wedding Coordinator**

First Presbyterian Church employs a wedding coordinator to assist with all ceremonies. **Diane McCrystal**, a member of our church, is knowledgeable about our policies and has coordinated numerous weddings. She also is able to provide assistance on matters of wedding etiquette as you plan your wedding. The fee for this service is included as part of your overall wedding fees. Diane can be reached at (937) 748-9993, or [tdianemc@yahoo.com](mailto:tdianemc@yahoo.com).

Even if you are using the services of a professional wedding planner, our wedding coordinator will work with you and your family to:

- ❖ ensure all necessary decisions and plans are made;
- ❖ guide you through the planning stages;
- ❖ answer questions regarding church policy and procedure;
- ❖ coordinate plans with church personnel assisting with your wedding;
- ❖ supervise the rehearsal in concert with the officiating minister;
- ❖ supervise the flow of the ceremony.

### ⌘ **Wedding Music**

Music plays an important part in the marriage service. We believe that music should be meaningful to you and reflect the joy of your special day, with lyrics befitting the religious nature of the occasion.

Plan to meet with our Director of Music at least one month prior to the ceremony. She will assist you in choosing music to ensure that it is joyous, beautiful, dignified, and spiritual. Because of the nature and complexity of our valuable pipe organ, only the organist from First Presbyterian Church may be retained to play the organ for your rehearsal and ceremony. In the event that our organist is not available, she will secure an organist for you. Any exception to this policy must be approved in advance by the Session.

You may choose to use an ensemble or soloist(s) in addition to, or in place of, our church's organist. It is the couple's responsibility to ensure that any soloist(s) or ensemble work in conjunction with the Director of Music.

### ⌘ **Marriage License**

The marriage license and marriage certificate must be given to the officiating minister before the ceremony, preferably no later than the rehearsal. The bride and groom should complete, in its entirety the portion of the marriage certificate titled "Record of Marriage." The license must be obtained from the State of Ohio, Office of the Clerk in the county of residence of the bride and/or groom. The license will be signed after the ceremony. The pastor is responsible for returning the required information to the county clerk.

### ⌘ **Sound Technician**

If needed, one of the church's sound technicians will be scheduled early in your planning process to operate the sound system for your wedding. The wedding coordinator will contact the technician for you.

## ⌘ Rehearsal

The rehearsal is usually planned for the evening before the wedding, at a time which will allow out of town participants to arrive on time. The rehearsal date and time should be recorded on the church calendar when the wedding date is confirmed.

The pastor presides at the rehearsal, with the assistance of the wedding coordinator. They will discuss details of the service with you at the final counseling session, prior to the rehearsal. All participants, including the wedding party, ushers and the parents of the couple should attend the rehearsal. The organist and other musicians also participate. The rehearsal will not begin until all are present. The average rehearsal takes about one hour, but we allow two hours for the rehearsal if needed. **Please bring the following items with you to the rehearsal: your marriage license; unity candle(s) and 4 copies of your program.**

## On The Big Day!

### ⌘ Schedule

The church rooms you'll need for your wedding day will be reserved for a period of six hours; up to four hours before the start of the wedding and two hours after the ceremony ends. We appreciate you and your guests observing the beginning and end times of your rehearsal, ceremony, and reception. This will help us accommodate other events scheduled for that day.

### ⌘ Bride's Room

Our church's Memorial Room serves as the bride's room. It is on the main level across from the women's restroom. There is a full-length mirror and a hook on the inside of the closet door. An iron and ironing board are available. Please do not hang anything from the room's chandelier. Curling irons are to be used only in the women's restroom.

### ⌘ Groom's Room

The groom, best man, and ushers may use the Youth Room on the upper level. Restroom facilities are available across the hall.

### ⌘ Photography

A church wedding is a service of worship. For this reason, no flash photographs may be taken once the ceremony begins. This applies to both professional and amateur photographers, so please make this clear to your guests. Your ushers should be instructed to pleasantly ask people with cameras to avoid taking flash photos during the ceremony, or you could print these instructions in your wedding program. Flash pictures may be taken during the processional and recessional, but not during the service itself.

Of course, photographs may be shot during the service if no flash is used. However, both professionals and amateurs should be discrete to avoid distracting your wedding party, family, and other guests. Photographers should remain as inconspicuous as possible, preferably in the rear of the sanctuary, during the ceremony.

The photographer should be ready to take pictures no earlier than three hours prior to the wedding.

Be sure to tell your wedding party when pictures will start and ask them to be prompt and ready to begin at the appropriate time.

- If you plan to take photos before the wedding, plan to be out of the sanctuary about one hour before the ceremony begins. This will reduce your own stress while it makes arriving guests more comfortable.
- If you plan to take pictures after the wedding, let your photographer know he/she has about an hour to complete the task.
- If you would like a photograph with the pastor, please tell him or her ahead of time and ask that the photographer take it first.
- If you plan to shoot videotape, please discuss arrangements with the pastor at the rehearsal. Your videographer will find it best to place a fixed position camera in the balcony, behind the congregation on the main floor, in the chancel or in the west transept.

## ✦ **Flowers & Decorations**

The sanctuary of First Presbyterian Church is beautiful, dignified, and requires a minimum of decoration. If you would like to add decorations, please contact a florist for assistance. Please be sure to give a copy of your decoration plans to the Wedding Coordinator and tell her when the florist will deliver flowers to the church. Be sure to share First Presbyterian's guidelines with your florist in advance!

## ✦ **Building Use Guidelines**

- Do not move any chancel furniture, piano, or other musical instruments. Church maintenance personnel are the only ones permitted to move furnishings or instruments.
- No decorations are to be placed on the piano, organ, or any other musical instruments.
- The use of pins, glue, nails, tacks, screws, or tape to attach decorations to pews, walls or windows is not permitted. Only elastic may be used.
- If you plan to have a flower girl, only silk flower petals may be used. Live pedals may not be tossed onto any church carpet, as stains are difficult and costly to remove.
- The use of rice, birdseed or confetti in or around church property is prohibited. Instead, you may use bubbles, but only outside the building.

- If you plan on a “unity candle”, please bring it with you to the rehearsal. It will be placed on a separate table in the chancel.
- You may use the church’s kneeling bench, wedding banners, candelabras and/or hurricane aisle lamps at no additional charge.
- The shutters on the Sanctuary windows are very fragile and are not to be adjusted.
- Remove any decorations you want to save (bows, flowers, etc.) immediately following your wedding. Anything not removed will be thrown away when the Sanctuary is cleaned.
- Contact the church office at least one month before your wedding if you would like to leave your flowers for Sunday worship. If you would like, we will be happy to place a brief statement in the church bulletin indicating your gift.
- No smoking is permitted anywhere in the church building. No alcohol is permitted on church property, including in cars in the parking lot.
- Please be sure to pick up items in the dressing rooms, restrooms and Sanctuary.
- Please observe scheduled times for marriage preparation sessions, rehearsal, wedding ceremony and reception.
- If you wish to use the nursery, please discuss this in advance with the Wedding Coordinator.

As you work with our Wedding Coordinator to plan your wedding, some of the questions she'll need answered are listed below. She will be happy to give you a full tour of the church and show you items that are available for your use.

Would you like the paraments changed to white? [yes] [no]

Will you be using a unity candle? [yes] [no]

Will you be using our kneeling bench? [yes] [no]

Will you be using our candelabras? [yes] [no]

Will you be using our hurricane aisle lamps? [yes] [no]

Will you be using our wedding banners? [yes] [no]

Will you be using a white runner? [yes] [no]

If yes, who is providing it? \_\_\_\_\_

Will you be decorating the sanctuary with other than altar flowers? [yes] [no]

If yes, you need to make arrangements with our custodian or your ushers to remove them following the ceremony.

When will flowers be delivered, and by whom? \_\_\_\_\_

Name and phone number of your photographer:  
\_\_\_\_\_

When will pictures be taken? [before] [after] [both]

Have you arranged with someone to take care of gifts brought to the church? [yes] [no]

If yes, what is that person's name?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have you arranged with someone to be stationed at a guest book table\*? [yes] [no]

If so, what is that person's name?  
\_\_\_\_\_

\*The church has a stand for the guest book.

Total number of attendants \_\_\_\_\_

Will you have a flower girl? [yes] [no] Will you have a ring bearer? [yes] [no]

About how many guests will be in attendance? \_\_\_\_\_

Will your rehearsal dinner be at the church?\* [yes] [no]

Will your reception be at the church?\* [yes] [no]

\* If yes, please refer to the following pages and contact our Reception Coordinator.

**Wedding Information Form**

Wedding date & time: \_\_\_\_\_

Rehearsal date & time: \_\_\_\_\_

Bride's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phones: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Names and address(es) of bride's parents:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Groom's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phones: Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Names and address(es) of groom's parents:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Couple's anticipated address after the wedding:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Location of Ceremony:            \_\_\_Sanctuary            \_\_\_Chapel

Name and phone number of:

Minister (if other than a pastor of First Presbyterian)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Soloist or other musicians (if any)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Maid/Matron of Honor \_\_\_\_\_

Best Man \_\_\_\_\_

Names of bridesmaids (first names are sufficient) \_\_\_\_\_

Names of groomsmen (first names are sufficient) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

