

Wedding Guide

1) Importance. Marriage is an institution of God, and the church rejoices with you in the approaching event. A Christian wedding service is governed by the traditions and teachings of the church as well as by state law.

2) Statement on the Gift of Marriage

Our congregation's understanding of marriage is expressed well in the following Statement on the Gift of Marriage from ***The Presbyterian Church (USA) Book of Common Worship (1993)***:

We gather in the presence of God to give thanks for the gift of marriage, to witness the joining together of [groom] and [bride], to surround them with our prayers, and to ask God's blessing upon them, so that they may be strengthened for their life together and nurtured in their love for God.

God created us male and female, and gave us marriage so that husband and wife may help and comfort each other, living faithfully together in plenty and in want, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, throughout all their days.

God gave us marriage for the full expression of the love between a man and a woman. In marriage a woman and a man belong to each other, and with affection and tenderness freely give themselves to each other.

God gave us marriage for the well-being of human society, for the ordering of family life, and for the birth and nurture of children.

God gave us marriage as a holy mystery in which a man and a woman are joined together, and become one, just as Christ is one with the church.

In marriage, husband and wife are called to a new way of life, created, ordered, and blessed by God. This way of life must not be entered into carelessly, or from selfish motives, but responsibly, and prayerfully.

We rejoice that marriage is given by God, blessed by our Lord Jesus Christ, and sustained by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, let marriage be held in honor by all.

- 3) **Act of Worship.** The wedding ceremony, when performed in a Sanctuary dedicated to the glory of God, is a sacred service, and its symbolism is among the most significant in human experience. Like all other services performed in the church, the entire wedding ceremony should be an act of worship in word, in spirit, and in music. In keeping with our Presbyterian tradition, couples *will be formally pronounced as husband and wife rather than being presented during the ceremony.*

- 4) **Church Pastor.** To prevent any confusion or misunderstandings, all preliminary arrangements should be made with the Pastor of our church. Please consult with our Pastor before you make any other arrangements as either the Pastor or Associate Pastor must be part of any weddings held at Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church.

- 5) **Other Pastors.** If you wish to include another pastor from another church (the groom's perhaps), please consult our Pastor first. The guest minister must be extended an invitation from our church in order to participate. This is a courtesy both to our minister and to the minister being invited. It also complies with church regulations as listed in the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church USA. The visiting minister should confer with our Pastor in order to become familiar with our policies.

6) **Wedding Director.** After speaking with the Pastor, you will be referred to the Wedding Director. While, the wedding ceremony and rehearsal are under the direction of the Minister our church requires, a Wedding Director to work with you in planning and to see that your wishes are carried out in keeping with the policies of the church and the desires of the officiating minister. The Wedding Director can provide you and the minister with all the assistance needed because of her training, experience, and knowledge of our facilities, traditions, and church policy. She will discuss with you the actual placement of the participants, timing, seating, ushers, etc., as well as suitable decorations for the Sanctuary. Please consult with our Minister for the name of the Wedding Director.

7) **Members Only.** Only church members and the immediate family of church members may be wed in the church.

8) **Wedding Date.** An application form must be filled out. Forms are attached hereto. No weddings will be scheduled on the weekends of Palm Sunday or Easter, nor the week of the Masters. Sunday weddings in the sanctuary are not encouraged because of the logistics and complications involved with a wedding and the regularly scheduled Sunday services. December weddings in the sanctuary are also not encouraged due to the logistics and challenges of the churches calendar during this busy season.

9) **Calendaring, Rehearsal, Organist, Sexton.** It is important that the date and hour of the wedding and rehearsal be discussed and confirmed with the Pastor before any public announcement is made to that effect. These should be entered on the church calendar as early as possible. Arrangements for the organist should be made directly with the organist. The Wedding Director will make arrangements with the Sexton and Sound Technician.

10)Cooperation. We ask for your patience and understanding in these matters. We must all be aware of the extra scheduling and time involved in adding these events to the numerous activities going on every day in the life of our church. We will do our utmost to help make this a carefree time in your life, and the Wedding Director assigned to your wedding and our custodial staff will greatly appreciate your cooperation.

11)Music. As soon as the date and time of your wedding have been set with the minister, you should make an appointment with the Organist to discuss music for the ceremony. The Organist of Reid Memorial is stated organist for all weddings. If the organist is unavailable, the Wedding Director will provide a list of approved organists.

A church wedding ceremony is a service of corporate worship and is an act of love between the bride, groom, and Jesus Christ. For this reason the choice of music should be guided by the same principles as those used in the selection of music for any service of worship. We suggest all weddings include one Hymn of Praise to encourage participation by the congregation. Our organist can guide you in selecting music and a hymn that reflects the worship theology and practice of Reid Memorial.

12)Wedding Order of Worship. If you wish, you may have a order of worship printed for your wedding. They must be of commercial quality, and they must be printed at your expense. You should consult with the minister as to the order of ceremony. Even though the bride is responsible for the preparation of bulletins, these programs are a reflection of Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church. Therefore, *all*

printed Orders of Worship must be proofread by the Minister and Wedding Director before they are approved for final printing.

13)Bride and Wedding Party Rooms. Our Mary Reid Sunday School Room is available for the **FINAL** dressing of the female members of the wedding party.

a)There will be no eating or drinking in the Mary Reid Room.

b)Nail polish, makeup and other grooming should be accomplished before arrival at the church.

c) The groom, best man and groomsmen can use the conference room as a waiting area.

d)All personal items should be removed from these rooms immediately after the service.

e) Reid Memorial will not assume any responsibility for any items left by the wedding party.

14)Alcoholic Beverages. The bride and groom are requested to advise members of the wedding party that they should refrain from the use of alcoholic beverages both before the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony. ***No alcoholic beverages of any kind are to be consumed anywhere on church property!!***

15)Decorations. Certain rules and regulations have been formulated and are in place to ensure that the setting for all wedding services in our church endues a feeling of worship and reverence. The bride is expected to acquaint her florist with the following information in that regard:

- The Sanctuary will be prepared for the wedding by the Sexton.

- o Nothing is to be removed or relocated from the Sanctuary or Narthex.
 - o No, nails, tacks, scotch tape, or adhesive tape are to be placed on any pews or chancel furniture.
 - o Candles, with hurricane shades and limited greenery outside the shades, may be used in the windows.
 - o No objects, including flowers, vases or objects of any kind, are to be placed on the organ console.
 - o Immediately after the wedding, the church must be cleared of all decorations of any kind by the parties who placed them there. If you plan to leave a flower arrangement for the Sunday service, you must have made arrangements with the person on the Worship Committee who is in charge of flowers. Please contact the front office for the name of that person.
 - o In case of any damage, the parties decorating the church will be held responsible. The church will have the damage repaired, and the bill be sent to the bride or the person responsible.
- If the chapel is used for a small wedding service, only one flower arrangement is permitted.

16) Wedding Photography. Weddings held in a church are of a religious nature and are not to be a photographic production. Any photographic record-making of the event should be dignified, professional and in an unobtrusive manner.

- The taking of flash pictures will not be permitted in the Sanctuary during the prelude music, processional, the ceremony, or the recessional. If pictures of the wedding party are desired before the ceremony they must be concluded 45 minutes before the ceremony.

Afterwards, a maximum of 20 minutes is sufficient so that the bride and groom can arrive at the reception promptly. Prepare a list for the photographer of desired photos.

- Either a professional videographer or a person appointed by the family may videotape the ceremony. Videotaping can only be done from the balcony. No additional lights are permitted, and the photographer is not allowed to adjust church lighting to suit personal tastes.
- It is the responsibility of the wedding party to see that no photographs or videos are made by wedding guests during the ceremony. The use of flashes and the noise and confusion involved in picture-taking of any kind are very distracting, both to the Minister and to the other guests. We recommend including the following in your printed order of worship:
 - "Please refrain from taking photographs or videos during the wedding service."
- Instructions for the photographer are included. Please acquaint yourself with these instructions and discuss them with your photographer in plenty of time prior to the wedding.

17)**Expenses.** Certain costs are the responsibility of the bride and groom. We list them in order that there may be no misunderstanding. See the current Church Fee Schedule. All fees should be paid prior to the day of use. Checks for the Organist, Sexton, Sound Technician and Minister should be made payable to the individuals providing the service and given to the Wedding Director for distribution on the day of the wedding.

- **Pastor.** It is customary for the couple to provide an honorarium to the Pastor but it is not required. A suggested honorarium is on the Fee Schedule.

- **Organist.** The organist's fee is based on guidelines outlined by The American Guild of Organists.
- **Sexton.** The Sexton's fee is based on the hours required by him/her to prepare the facilities. The Sexton will be available for the rehearsal (one hour) and wedding (three hours before the ceremony and one hour after the ceremony). They will prepare the same facilities for any regularly scheduled church service later. Any additional time required of the Sexton will be the responsibility of the bride.
- **Sound Technician.** Given the size and acoustics of the church sanctuary, a sound technician is necessary for services when one hundred (100) or more guests are invited. The Wedding Director will contact the Sound Technician but the fee is the responsibility of the bride.
- **Building Use.** There are no fees for use of the building.

18)**Forms.** There are several forms to be filled out and returned to the church. Please complete these forms, in consultation with the Wedding Director and return them to the church as soon as possible.

19)**Seating Limit.** The Sanctuary will comfortably seat a maximum of 400 people.

20)**Questions.** Please feel free to consult with the minister if you have any questions. He and other members of the staff will do all they can to help you plan and carry out any arrangements for your wedding.

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Reid Memorial Presbyterian Church

Fee Schedule for Weddings

Pastor	\$350
Organist	\$300
Sexton	\$150
Sound Technician	\$50