

GUIDELINES FOR WEDDINGS The Presbyterian Church Danville, KY

INTRODUCTION:

Congratulations on your upcoming wedding! The congregation, Session and staff of The Presbyterian Church of Danville share your joy! Christian marriage is a covenant in which a couple pledges their love to each other in plenty and in want; in joy and in sorrow; in sickness and in health as long as they both shall live. The marriage covenant is based on God's covenant with us, and helps us celebrate it.

It is our desire that your wedding be a memorable occasion that is both beautiful and meaningful. We are pleased to offer our facilities and service to all church members and to others, in accordance with the policies and regulations as approved by the Session, the governing body of the local church.

A wedding service is a worship service in which we celebrate God's gift of marriage. Even the simplest weddings require forethought and preparation. Since many people are involved – the couple, family members, pastor, musicians, custodian, florist, wedding director, and attendants – we ask that you read thoroughly the material contained in these pages and follow with care all the instructions. To do so will enable us all to work well together in planning for your particular wedding.

OUR UNDERSTANDING OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

Christian marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family.

A wedding recognizes that marriage is not something we have created, but is rather a faithful response to the call of God to enter into the covenant of marriage. God has a plan for us in marriage, and just as we are always living into our baptism, so we are beginning a journey of living into our marriage commitments and discovering God's purpose for us in this life together.

Weddings are both solemn and joyous occasions in which God is worshipped and is present to hear vows exchanged. The focus is not on the couple, or the decorations, or the bridal party, but rather is on celebrating God's gift of marriage.

May God's Spirit of love bless us in our preparation.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF DANVILLE

The Presbyterian Church of Danville is an open and inclusive church. We are not, however, a wedding venue. Weddings are performed for members of the church, children of members of the church, occasionally for Centre students, faculty and staff or former students who wish to be married in Danville. Exceptions are made on a case by case basis by the pastors of the church. Exceptions include those who plan on joining the church or who have been attending the church.

If they meet the requirements of the civil jurisdiction in which they intend to marry, a couple may request that a service of Christian marriage be conducted by a teaching elder in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), who is authorized, though not required, to act as an agent of the civil jurisdiction in recording the marriage contract. A couple requesting a service of Christian marriage shall receive instruction from the teaching elder, who may agree to the couple's request only if, in the judgment of the teaching elder, the couple demonstrate sufficient understanding of the nature of the marriage covenant and commitment to living their lives together according to its values. In making this decision, the teaching elder may seek the counsel of the session, which has authority to permit or deny the use of church property for a marriage service.

FOCUSING YOUR WEDDING

The Presbyterian Church of Danville makes every effort to provide a context in which the vows of Christian marriage are spoken, heard, and celebrated within the framework of our Reformed tradition of Christian faith.

To that end:

- One of the pastors of The Presbyterian Church of Danville (or another approved Presbyterian minister) will have complete charge of the wedding. At the request of the couple, another minister may be invited to assist in the marriage liturgy.
- The Director of Music of The Presbyterian Church of Danville shall be the organist/pianist for all weddings in the church building (unless unavailable or unless the Director of Music has given permission for someone else to play) and shall be responsible for all music used in the wedding. All music shall be appropriate for a service of worship and consistent with the Reformed tradition of Christian worship. The couple shall schedule an appointment with the Director of Music to determine the specific needs for their wedding.
- The Facilities Manager is responsible for any arrangements related to the use of the church's Fellowship Hall and/or kitchen in the event a rehearsal dinner and/or reception is planned for that space. Because of his work schedule, visits with him to plan what is needed should be scheduled by appointment. The Facilities

Manager is also responsible for scheduling custodial service and any billing related thereto (see attached fee schedule).

NECESSARY GUIDELINES

We have a rich liturgical history and considerable experience in setting Christian weddings in the context of worship. In order to help assure and preserve the dignity, beauty, and reverence which should surround a wedding within the context of worship the following guidelines are to be followed:

- Reservation of wedding date and space will be made only upon return of Form A (Wedding Reservation and Information Form) to the church Administrative Assistant and the agreement of one of the pastors to be engaged in the pre-marital counseling and preside at the wedding. The couple may wish to speak with one of the pastors before completing and returning Form A.
- The pastors will require premarital meetings with each couple. During each of these meetings some time will be given to discussion of the details of the wedding. Couples should come prepared with the questions they need to ask for clarification and decision.
- If the couple desires to have printed an order of worship for the wedding, the pastor will be glad to provide samples and the necessary order of worship information. Responsibility for the preparation and printing of the worship bulletin lies with the couple.
- It is usually helpful and desirable to engage a person who will serve as a wedding director, providing assistance with details on wedding day, helping with dressing the bridal party, attaching boutonnieres, assisting the ushers in their responsibilities of seating parents and grandparents, having the wedding party enter at proper intervals, etc. Should the couple wish to hire a wedding director, that person needs to meet with the officiating pastor prior to the rehearsal.
- On the day of the wedding, the church building may be open for up to four hours prior to the stated time of the wedding. This allows time for dressing, placement of floral arrangements in the sanctuary, pre-wedding photography, etc. Exact time for opening the building by the custodian will be determined by the pastor in consultation with the couple.
- Rooms are available in which the wedding party may dress.

- Although every precaution will be taken to assure safety, the church cannot be responsible should any clothing or personal items be lost, stolen or damaged. All personal items should be removed immediately after the service.
- No rice or confetti may be thrown in or near church buildings. The risk is very high for someone slipping and falling. Bird seed or bubbles are good options, and may be used outside the church.
- Because of our hardwood floors in the sanctuary, aisle cloth runners are not permitted – again because of safety concerns.
- Alcoholic beverages or any illegal drug may not be consumed on the church premises at any time, and no one under the influence of the same may take part in a wedding rehearsal or a wedding. Smoking is not permitted in the church buildings.
- Two pedestal stands are available for floral arrangements and a pair of standing candelabra may be furnished upon request. Any candles used must be of the dripleless variety.
- The custodian will begin removal of all decorations as soon after the wedding as possible in order to prepare the room for the next day (usually Sunday). The florist, or other responsible party, should remove from the sanctuary immediately following the wedding any items to be saved. Couples often leave flowers to be used again in worship on Sunday as a way of announcing their wedding. On Form A is a space to indicate your intention in that regard.
- Regulations for the florist chosen by the wedding couple are on Form C (attached) and need to be read, signed by florist and couple and returned to the church office at least two weeks prior to the wedding.
- Wedding pictures are an important part of this occasion, and the church and presiding pastor want to cooperate in every way possible. Please remember that this is the most time consuming part of a wedding and requires careful planning on the part of the *couple*. The more pictures which can be taken prior to the wedding the better, and the less time you will inconvenience your wedding guests with after-the-wedding photos. In order that the wedding itself may proceed as an act of worship without interruption or disturbance by a photographer or videographer, a few restrictions apply. These are listed on Form D ("Policy for Photographers and Videographers") to be read and signed by the *couple* and by any professional photographer or videographer employed for that

purpose, and returned to the church office no later than two weeks prior to the wedding date. Photography during the wedding is allowed by no one, except the professional photographer or videographer, and then only from the balcony with available light (no flashes or other artificial lighting).

- Details of the wedding liturgy will be discussed in conference with the pastor, but the order will be that indicated in the Book of Common Worship of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
- It is important that the couple schedule an appointment with the Director of Music to discuss the music which is such a vital part of the service. The Director of Music will be glad to assist the couple in making appropriate selections. If the couple desire additional instrumental music, for example stringed or brass instruments, or vocalists, the Director of Music will assist the couple in securing musicians and rehearsing with them.
- If a rehearsal dinner or reception is planned for the church's Fellowship Hall, scheduling is through the Facilities Manager. Form E must be read, completed, and signed by the couple and by the caterer, and returned to the church office no later than two weeks prior to the wedding.

We recognize the importance of this time in the life of a couple. Our desire is to help you make this a special moment by careful and thoughtful planning. May God's love and care be with you as you enter this significant and joyful time in your lives.