

Planning Your Wedding

Our view of Christian marriage is reflected in the statement of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States: Marriage is a union between one man and one woman designed of God to last so long as they both shall live. Marriage is designed for the mutual help of husband and wife, for the safeguarding, undergirding, and development of their moral and spiritual character, for the propagation of children and the rearing of them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Thus it is our desire to join with you in your planning so that your wedding may be a worship experience that will always live in your memory.

A wedding, the door by which a couple enters into this meaningful relationship, should be one of the most sacred and happiest moments in all of life. At this time, the entire Christian congregation should rejoice with the couple and should cooperate with them to make this a service of deep sacred meaning. *This is a service of worship and dedication and not a ceremony.* It is a time when a couple comes to pledge themselves not only to each other, but also together to Christ. To this end, we are privileged to offer the services and facilities of this church in accordance with the policies and regulations outlined in this booklet and approved by the Session, the governing court of our church.

Even the simplest weddings require forethought and preparation. Many weddings are held at First Presbyterian Church of Orlando and a number of people are involved. It is important that a date is set and facilities confirmed as early as possible. The following are procedures, authorized by the Session, for the guidance of the Ministers, Wedding Director, wedding coordinators and couples in planning for the wedding service.

Any request for deviation or exception regarding these policies and the published fee schedule must be submitted to the Wedding Director in writing to the Worship and Culture Committee for consideration. A decision will be provided in a timely manner and will be binding.

Getting Started

Facilities:

Regulations Regarding Use of Worship Facilities:

Our greatest desire is to work with you to make your wedding a worship experience you will always cherish. The principles in this booklet have been established to help assure and preserve the beauty, dignity, and the atmosphere of reverence you will want to surround this sacred service.

Depending on the size of the wedding, two places are available and recommended as suitable for weddings: the Sanctuary or the Reformation Chapel. The Lee Fellowship Hall and King Parlor are available for receptions from 10am until 6pm. All facilities are to be utilized in accordance with the established rules and procedures outlined in the booklet.

Dates Excluded:

Weddings are not scheduled on Sundays, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Holy Week, or any other holidays. In the event an exception is made the fees will be doubled.

Minister Arrangements:

Initial contact of the bride and groom will first be made through the Wedding Director. The couple is at liberty to request the services of any of the pastors on staff they may choose to conduct the service. All arrangements for securing the Minister and all details of the wedding are made through the Wedding Director.

In the event of a minister other than one on the church staff is desired, the request should be made in writing to the Session of the church and should be made prior to the booking and payment of the facility fee. If the request is approved, and if it is in order that the visiting Minister should be officiating, he or she must be present for the rehearsal. Requests for visiting Ministers that are not approved will receive a letter of explanation. It is also understood that an FPC wedding coordinator shall be in attendance at the rehearsal and service. Communion may be offered to all in attendance, though approval of the Session is required. An elder must be present and a PCUSA Minister must serve communion. (Communion may not be offered at rehearsals). The bride and groom are responsible for providing the elements and chalice.

Premarital Counseling:

Counseling is required to be married at First Presbyterian Church of Orlando. Counseling sessions should be arranged through the Wedding Director and must be completed 90 days prior to the date of the wedding. Fees for these sessions are separate from any wedding fees at FPC.

Following the completion of the counseling sessions, the couple should contact the officiating minister to schedule an appointment. The appointment should be well in advance of the wedding date.

Music:

The music in a wedding service should in every way be a contribution toward making it a service of dedication to God. Ordinarily, any hymn from the hymnal or vocal solos with text from the scriptures may be sung. Songs which have no sacred reference, context, or implication are not allowed. All music selections must be approved three months in advance by Worship and Arts for the service.

Organist/Pianist:

The Session has ruled that priority for playing the organ and piano at weddings will be given to the church organist or his substitute. The couple is responsible for contacting the Organist to make the music selections for the service.

Soloists:

The church has many talented musicians who assist the Chancel Choir. The Worship and Arts department can provide information concerning specific soloists. Visiting soloists are welcome and will need to be approved by the Organist. Practices must take place at least two days prior to the wedding.

The Worship Service:

The services of worship for the wedding shall be conducted in harmony with Presbyterian standards and resources for worship. Communion may be offered to all in attendance, though approval of the Session is required. An elder must be present and a PCUSA minister must serve communion. (Communion may not be offered at rehearsals.) The bride and groom are responsible for providing the elements and chalice. (Wine is not permitted during service).

Dressing Rooms:

Rooms convenient to the Sanctuary and Reformation Chapel are available for the wedding party to dress. These rooms are available an hour and a half prior to the wedding. The church is not responsible should any clothing or personal items belonging to the bridal party be lost, stolen, or damaged. All personal items should be removed from the dressing room 30 minutes prior to the wedding.

Alcoholic Beverages:

No alcoholic beverages will be used on church premises at any time. No one obviously under the influence of alcohol will be allowed to take part in the wedding or rehearsal. Persons attempting to do this will be asked to leave, and the wedding coordinator or Minister is authorized to cancel the service. The couple should notify all attendants, participants, and family of this policy.

Smoking:

No smoking is permitted inside any buildings or any other enclosed areas of the premises.

Conduct:

Boisterous conduct or actions unbecoming a service of Christian worship is not allowed. The Minister and/or wedding coordinator is authorized to stop the service if necessary.

Capturing the Moment

Photographs, Videos, and Recordings:

It is the responsibility of the couple to inform the photographer of all FPC policies.

No pictures can be taken in the Sanctuary or Reformation Chapel during the service, which begins at the prelude and ends at the close of the recessional. The Sanctuary or Reformation chapel is available for pre-wedding photographs an hour and a half prior to the wedding. Pictures are permissible in the Narthex of either facility before the procession starts, and during the service provided the doors are closed. Photographs of the wedding party may be taken in the Sanctuary or Reformation Chapel after the congregation has left. Thirty minutes are allowed for post wedding pictures.

Video taping is allowed with very specific guidelines. Video taping must be approved by the Wedding Director.

If audio recordings are to be made, all instruments, including microphone, recorder, etc. and also the person making the recording must be thoroughly obscured from the sight of the congregation. The Wedding Director must be contacted if audio recordings are to be made.

Setting the Mood

Flowers and Decorations:

Couples have the responsibility of informing their suppliers of the following policies:

- Decorations that cause damage to floors, rugs, or furniture are not allowed.
- Wedding flowers may be dedicated for worship on Sunday. Your wedding coordinator can help you with this.
- Decorations may not be hung or suspended from light fixtures, ventilators, or grills.
- Only chase candles or candles under a glass globe may be used. FPC can provide these candles for you.
- Tape, wire, nails, or screws are not to be used.
- Florist and/or decorator will have one hour after the service to remove items and vacate the Sanctuary or Reformation Chapel.
- Birdseed or bubbles may be used outside the building. Please notify all guests regarding this policy. No substance will be thrown within the Sanctuary or Chapel.
- All requests for services are final two weeks prior to the service.

Setting the Mood

FPC can provide exceptional facilities and services for your reception. To make sure nothing is overlooked, there are several major items that must be arranged well in advance of the reception. A conference should be set up with the Wedding Director and Special Services Coordinator no later than 60 days prior to the date of the reception.

Musical entertainment and decorations are the responsibility of the party making the arrangements. The Special Services Coordinator, Wedding Director or wedding coordinator can provide advice on their placement.

The church has a variety of facilities in which receptions may be held. Lee Fellowship Hall will accommodate 230 persons, King Parlor and Grand Hall will hold 50, and the Angel Wing is a lovely site for an outdoor reception. Receptions are scheduled for three hours following the wedding. Arrangements for extended time at an additional cost can be requested. If a reception is desired at FPC the Wedding Director should be contacted for arrangements. The Special Services Coordinator is responsible for all receptions. Outside catering services are not permissible.

Cost and Gratuities

The fee schedule for members and nonmembers is subject to occasional revision and is therefore published separately.

First Presbyterian Church of Orlando makes all facilities available to both members and non members. Member is interpreted as bride or groom, parents, grandparents or either, and one who has been an active, contributing and participating individual in the life of the church.

A private service (without any music and no more than 20 guests) may be arranged with the Wedding Director. This type of service is simple and beautiful, and is available to members. The total costs of the services shall be remitted to the Wedding Director 60 days prior to the wedding date. Checks are to be payable to First Presbyterian Church. A partial refund will be made upon cancellation, provided that at least one month's notice is given.

The couple signs a Certificate of Agreement once arrangements are confirmed with the Wedding Director. The agreement confirms compliance with procedures and policy set by the Session as outlined in this booklet. Weddings will be considered booked one week after the Certificate of Agreement has been received by the Wedding Director.

Key Contact Numbers

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