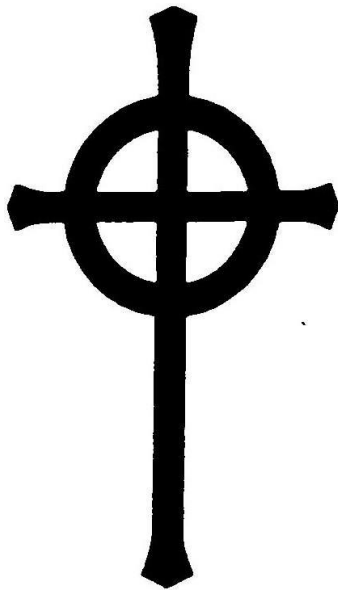


*Wedding Policies
and
Guidelines*



*Second Presbyterian Church
Little Rock, Arkansas*

(Revised May 2023)

YOUR WEDDING
at
SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage involves a unique commitment between two people, to love and support each other for the rest of their lives. The sacrificial love that unites the couple sustains them as faithful and responsible members of the church and the wider community.

The Book of Order, W-4.9000

We are glad you have chosen to be married at Second Presbyterian Church. It is a fitting and beautiful place for such a joyous occasion. Celebrating a wedding in God's house reminds us of God's steadfast love for us, and allows us to express our love and thanksgiving to God in worship.

The Pastors and Session of Second Presbyterian Church have prepared this Wedding Booklet as an aid to you in planning your wedding. If you have any specific questions or concerns which are not addressed in this Booklet, please feel free to call any of our Pastors. They will be happy to discuss them with you.

WHO CAN BE MARRIED AT SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH?

The sanctuary, chapel and prayer garden are available for weddings of Second Presbyterian Church members, their children and grandchildren.

WHAT WILL THE OFFICIATING PASTOR EXPECT OF US?

Pastors in the Presbyterian Church (USA) are required to provide counsel and education in preparation for a Christian marriage. The Officiating Pastor will want to confer with you as soon as you begin making plans for your wedding. In two to three sessions, he or she will discuss the following matters with you:

- the nature of Christian commitment, assuring that at least one of the prospective marriage partners is a professing Christian,
- the legal requirements of the State of Arkansas,
- the privileges and responsibilities of Christian marriage,
- the nature and form of the marriage service,
- the vows and commitments you will be asked to make,
- the relationship of these commitments to your lives as disciples of Christ,
- the resources of the faith and the Christian community to assist you in fulfilling your marriage commitments.

If one of you is not a member of Second Presbyterian Church, you are invited to consider the

Pastors as your Pastors and friends, and to feel free to call upon them any time they can be of service to you.

If you would like a Pastor other than one of the Pastors of this church to assist in performing your wedding service, the other Pastor must be invited to assist by both the Pastor and the Session of this church.

WHAT ABOUT THE SERVICE ITSELF?

Christian marriage should be celebrated in the place where the community gathers for worship. As a service of Christian worship, the marriage service is under the direction of the Pastor and the supervision of the Session. The marriage ordinarily takes place in a special service which focuses upon marriage as a gift of God and as an expression of the Christian life.

The Book of Order, W-4.9003

The Christian marriage service is a service of worship, ordinarily conducted in the Sanctuary of the church, where the Congregation worships, but it may be held in the Chapel or the Prayer Garden. Reverence is expected on the part of all present. As a service of worship, the marriage service is under the sole direction of the Officiating Pastor.

The marriage service begins with a Call to Worship, followed by a statement on the nature of marriage as a gift of God. It includes prayers for the couple as they enter marriage. The couple, their families, and the assembled congregation are asked to make affirmations concerning the union being celebrated in the service. Scripture appropriate to the occasion is read, and the Pastor delivers a brief sermon. There is an exchange of vows and rings, and a prayer asking God's blessing on the couple and all the gathered people. At the conclusion of the service, the Pastor declares publicly that the marriage is accomplished, and closes with a benediction. The Officiating Pastor is happy to discuss with you any special elements you would like included in the marriage service, so long as they are appropriate for a service of worship.

*Music suitable for the marriage service **directs attention to God and expresses the faith of the Church.** The congregation may join in hymns and other musical forms of praise and prayer. Flowers, decorations, and other appointments should be appropriate to the place of worship, enhance the worshipers' consciousness of the reality of God, and reflect the integrity and simplicity of Christian life.*

The Book of Order, W-4.9005

Because the marriage ceremony is essentially a religious service of deep spiritual significance, special care must be taken in the choice of musical selections which will be in keeping with this Christian character.

- Sentimental ballads, popular songs and selections from musicals are not consistent with a church ceremony. (Secular music may be used at a reception.)
- Music selections for your wedding service must be reviewed with and approved by the

Church Organist well in advance of the wedding date. Call the Church Organist when the date is set to begin these arrangements.

- Vocal music, if any, is usually presented before the processional begins.
- Soloists are to contact the Organist well in advance of the wedding to arrange for rehearsal.
- Usually, the Lord's Prayer is not sung but is a part of the marriage service and is prayed by the congregation during the wedding.
- The Officiating Pastor and the Church Organist have final authority over the order of worship; and the selection of all music used in the service, both instrumental and vocal, must be approved by the Church Organist.
- Music for weddings at Second Presbyterian Church will be performed by the Church Organist. Arrangements are to be made directly with the Organist by the couple. Any deviation from this policy must be approved by the Church Organist; and the Code of Ethics of the American Guild of Organists regarding guest organists will apply.
- No electronically enhanced instruments shall be permitted, and nothing shall be attached to the church audio system. Taped or recorded music is not permitted.

HOW MAY WE DECORATE FOR OUR WEDDING?

Flowers and other decorations should not be unnecessarily elaborate and should be appropriate to the place of worship. Excessive ostentation and expense are to be avoided. The decorations should be placed so as not to obscure the great symbols of the faith -- the Cross, Table, Font, and Pulpit. Candles should be of the drip-less type, and protective sheets will be used to protect the flooring and furniture from wax. If candles are to be used at the ends of the pews, hurricane lamps owned by the church are available for your use for a small fee and candles for the lamps will be provided by the church at cost. They will be put up and taken down by the Church Sexton. Those in the front of the Sanctuary must remain where they are. All are antiques, and may not be decorated in any way. All designs and decorations shall be reviewed with the Wedding Coordinator.

Flowers may be placed on a pedestal behind the Communion Table, which may be pushed back, but no arrangements are allowed on the Table. Floral arrangements may be placed on the railing going to the pulpit, but no candles are allowed in this area because of potential fire hazard. Florists shall place flooring and/or furniture protectors under all candelabra. Nails, glue, or similar fastenings shall not be used on walls, railings, or furniture. Light-colored flower petals may be strewn in the aisle. Dark-colored petals are not permitted.

No decorations or objects, including tacks, nails, or tape, may be attached to the organ cases or the organ pipes in the Sanctuary or Chapel. Neither decorations nor floral arrangements may be placed on the organ consoles or the pianos.

A copy of the "Floral and Decorating Guidelines" shall be picked up in the Church Office and given to the florist.

A kneeling bench is available, as is a unity candle stand. Candles for the unity candle are to be provided by the wedding party. If children are to play a role in the ceremony, such as flower girl or ring bearer, the children should be no younger than five years of age. If children are involved in the wedding, an adult should be designated to supervise and guide them in cooperation with the Wedding Coordinator.

SHOULD WE HAVE A REHEARSAL?

Rehearsals are normally held on the evening preceding the day of the wedding. The Officiating Pastor will be in charge of the rehearsal, after thorough consultation with the wedding couple. It is most beneficial if all members of the wedding party are present and on time for the rehearsal. Introductions among the wedding party should be made before the rehearsal begins.

IS THERE A WEDDING COORDINATOR TO HELP US?

Second Presbyterian Church provides a Wedding Coordinator who must be used at all weddings (except informal weddings), whether they are held in the Sanctuary, Chapel, or Prayer Garden. *One of the first responsibilities of the wedding couple is to choose one of the Wedding Coordinators listed on the Wedding Information Sheet and to arrange for their service.* The task of the Wedding Coordinator is (1) to interpret the wedding policies of the church, (2) to be available for consultation with those responsible for planning the ceremony, (3) to arrange for necessary rooms and additional equipment and its placement as needed, (4) to direct members of the wedding party and those involved in the ceremony (florist, photographer, videographer, etc.) during applicable times of the wedding day, (5) to coordinate proper seating of the guests, and direct ushers in the seating of guests and in the seating of parents and grandparents, and (6) to ensure that all involved parties have concluded their business. The Wedding Coordinator also works closely with the Church Sextons. A Sexton is to be hired to ensure that all church facilities are restored for their regular worship and educational uses following the ceremony. The Wedding Coordinator shall be in communication with the Officiating Pastor.

The Wedding Coordinator serves as the primary church staff liaison and is the one to whom questions regarding church facilities and wedding policies should be directed. The use of the church's Wedding Coordinator eliminates the need for a professional bridal consultant for the rehearsal or ceremony.

WHAT IF WE WANT AN INFORMAL WEDDING?

An informal wedding may be conducted by one of the Pastors of Second Presbyterian Church. An informal wedding is defined as a wedding with a small number of guests, without music, decorations, or a church reception. Arrangements must be made with the Officiating Pastor.

WHAT ABOUT SCHEDULING?

The scheduling of a wedding involves both the schedule of the Officiating Pastor and the church activities calendar. A tentative date and hour for a wedding service and/or reception may be reserved on the Church Calendar by making initial arrangements with the Program Coordinator in the church office. The date and hour will be confirmed only when one of the Pastors of Second Presbyterian Church has approved and agreed to officiate at the wedding. A letter of confirmation will be sent after the signed wedding data form and all fees have been received in the church office. As soon as possible after receiving the confirmation letter, the couple will contact the Wedding Coordinator and Church Organist (who will also receive a copy of the confirmation letter).

There are three facilities available for weddings of members: the Sanctuary, which seats approximately 600; the Chapel, which seats approximately 100; and the Prayer Garden. Weddings may be scheduled at any times which do not conflict with other church events, with the following exceptions:

- (1) Ordinarily, Weddings may not be scheduled on holidays designated on the church calendar, or on the evening before those holidays.
- (2) Only informal weddings are permitted on Sundays.
- (3) Saturday evening weddings may not be scheduled to begin later than 7:00 P.M.
- (4) Only one wedding will be scheduled at the church per day.
- (5) Receptions held at the church must immediately follow the service.
- (6) When a wedding is scheduled, no other major event will be scheduled at the Church which would conflict with the wedding.

CAN WE TAKE PICTURES?

Flash photographs or videotapes with lights, by professionals or friends, are not permitted during the Service of Worship. Pictures of the wedding party may be taken as they enter or leave the Sanctuary, from behind the last row where worshippers are seated. Time exposures and pictures without lights or flash may be taken from the Narthex or Choir Loft. Videotaping without lights may be done only from the Choir Loft in the Sanctuary or from the rear of the chapel.

Responsibility for informing both paid professional photographers and wedding guests of these limitations shall rest with the wedding couple.

CAN WE HAVE OUR RECEPTION AT THE CHURCH?

The Second Hall and the Great Hall are all available for receptions, when prior reservations have been made. The capacity of the Second Hall is approximately 150; and the Great Hall, approximately 300-400. Please remember that smoking is **not** permitted in any part of the

building. Second Presbyterian Church is a smoke-free facility.

The wedding party is responsible for arranging for a caterer, including provision for linens, silver, serving pieces, and dishes. Champagne or champagne punch may be served if non-alcoholic beverages are also served. However, no other alcoholic beverages are permitted to be served or consumed on the church property. Beverages containing red coloring may not be served. Confetti, birdseed, or rice may not be thrown within the church building. Birdseed or potpourri may be thrown outside the building as the wedding couple leaves.

If kitchen areas are used, arrangements for equipment needed are to be made prior to the wedding day. Reasonable clean-up is expected. A breakage and damage deposit is required, and will be refunded if it is not needed.

WHAT ELSE NEEDS TO BE DONE?

You will need to obtain a marriage license. If you are a resident of the State of Arkansas, you can obtain a marriage license in the court house of any county. If you are from outside the state, it is best for you to obtain your license here in Pulaski County. Give the license to the Officiating Pastor at the time of your rehearsal. The Pastor will attest it and send it to the proper authorities for recording. At this time, a blood test is not required by the State of Arkansas.

Since most marriages take place on the weekend, it is important that the policies outlined in this Wedding Booklet be carried out, so that the church building may be prepared for Sunday worship. Flowers and property of florist and/or caterer must be removed following the wedding or reception at the church.

Since both rehearsal and wedding service are Christian services in buildings dedicated to the glory of God, the presence of any person in the wedding party under the influence of alcohol or drugs will constitute grounds for immediate cancellation of the rehearsal or wedding ceremony.

The wedding couple will be held responsible for enforcing the policies of this church.

WHAT IF ONE OR BOTH OF US IS DIVORCED?

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has no "rules" forbidding remarriage after divorce. We do believe that, in all cases where remarriage after divorce is sought, the Officiating Pastor's approach to the couple should depend not so much on what the individuals might have done, as on what each person by God's grace has now become, and what, with God's help, each person honestly hopes and intends to do in the future.

WHAT FEES DO WE NEED TO PAY?

No fees are charged for the use of the building. Facilities are provided by the congregation as a gift to the wedding couple and their families.

The following fees are payable to Second Presbyterian Church:

Wedding Coordinator	\$200	
Organist	\$300	
Sexton	\$100 (wedding)	
Sexton	\$150 (reception)	
Hurricane Lamps(12)(optional)	\$100	
Candles for Lamps (optional)		\$2.50 each
Refundable Damage Fee (if using the kitchen)	\$50	

Additional fees may be required, as stated on the wedding form. Regarding exceptionally large weddings, the use of two Wedding Coordinators and two Sextons may be required. This will be determined by the Officiating Pastor and a Wedding Coordinator.

The Pastors have no set fee for their services to church members. Any "gift" or honorarium given to the Officiating Pastor is solely at the discretion of the wedding couple.

In all matters regarding interpretation of this Wedding Policy, the Worship Ministry of Second Presbyterian Church has the final authority.

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CHECK LIST

Date & Time have been confirmed by the wedding couple with:

- Program Coordinator
- Officiating Pastor
- Church Organist
- Wedding Coordinator

The Officiating Pastor is _____ Phone _____

The Organist is _____ Phone _____

The Wedding Coordinator is _____ Phone _____

The Florist is _____ Phone _____

The Caterer is _____ Phone _____

The Photographer is _____ Phone _____

I will use:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kneeling Bench | <input type="checkbox"/> Unity Candle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pew Marker Hurricane Lamps | <input type="checkbox"/> Candelabra |

THE WEEK BEFORE THE WEDDING

Have the florist and/or caterer contact the Wedding Coordinator to arrange times to decorate and to schedule delivery and pick-up of their items.

Remember to bring the marriage license to the rehearsal and give it to the Officiating Pastor.