



*Faith Presbyterian Church
PO Box 2668
Blue Ridge GA 30513*

WEDDING POLICY

*“Love is patient and kind;
love is not jealous or boastful;
it is not arrogant or rude.
Love does not insist on its own way;
it is not irritable or resentful;
it does not rejoice at wrong but rejoices in the right.
Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things,
endures all things. Love never ends . . .”
1 Corinthians 13:4-8*

We are pleased that you are considering having your Christian wedding service at Faith Presbyterian Church. This policy is a means of insuring that your wedding ceremony will be one that reflects the best of our Christian tradition. Please carefully read the policy, so that you may know from the beginning what is expected of you and what you can expect from our staff. Each church has their own traditions, customs and guidelines concerning weddings, and we are no exception. We hope you will find the following information helpful in understanding our traditions and customs so that your wedding will be a wonderful expression of your love for one another and your faith in God. It is a privilege to be a part of this important chapter in your life.

FROM OUR PASTOR - A LETTER TO THE WEDDING COUPLE

Congratulations on your upcoming marriage. There is no doubt that a blessed marriage of two mature and committed people is truly a gift from God. Thus, the main concern that we have for you is that you have a blessed marriage, a marriage that will be spiritually and personally fulfilling, one that will be able to stand the test of time and circumstances. The desire of all of us at Faith Presbyterian Church is to celebrate this God-given gift in a service of worship that is appropriate for this life-shaping step of commitment. This policy that we have prepared has this clearly in mind. It reflects both the Christian meaning of the occasion and the experience that we have had in working with many couples with the important dynamics of the marriage event.

Jim Simpson, Pastor

AN OPEN LETTER TO THOSE PLANNING A WEDDING

Dear Friends,

Faith Presbyterian Church is pleased to offer its facilities and staff to members (and their family members) and friends of Faith who wish to make their marriage Christian in word and in deed.

Your wedding should be one of the highest and most cherished moments in your life. For that reason, we hope that its planning and conduct will always be a beautiful and meaningful experience that will, for all time, enrich your life together.

The most important thing to remember is that a Service of Christian Marriage is essentially a worship experience in which sacred vows are exchanged by two people who are making a lifetime commitment to each other. It is both a joyous and a serious occasion and has both social and civil implications. Because a wedding in the Church is an act of worship, the rules governing the conduct of worship always take precedence over varied social considerations.

During the time of preparation, we welcome and encourage you to make a special effort to attend Sunday worship services with us. One of the best ways to assure the health of your relationship is to worship weekly, becoming one in a life of faith through prayer, worship and service. If you are not yet a member of the congregation, but would like to consider becoming a member, we would be happy to talk with you about that as well.

The Pastor of Faith Presbyterian Church will officiate at your service. The Pastor will plan the service in consultation with the wedding couple, FPC Music Director and a Wedding Consultant of Faith Presbyterian Church. Pre-marriage conference(s) will be scheduled with the officiating Pastor.

We look forward to working with you in making plans for your wedding. This guideline of suggestions and church policies has been developed to assist you in your preparation, and we hope you will find it helpful.

Spiritual Development Planning Team of the Faith Session

WEDDING ARRANGEMENTS

Members and friends of Faith Presbyterian Church (FPC) interested in being married at FPC are invited to contact the church and make the following arrangements:

1. Contact the Pastor to meet as a couple and discuss your desire for a wedding at FPC. In the course of that consultation, this policy will be reviewed, and the wedding application discussed. The application will help determine the availability of the time requested for both the wedding and one rehearsal. Due to church commitments, holidays, major Christian festivals, and Sundays are generally unavailable.
 - a. The Sanctuary is open and available one hour for the Rehearsal. The wedding party is asked to remember that the rehearsal is in preparation for a sacred service and is being held in a place of worship. Please make sure that members of the wedding party are on time and attentive.
 - b. For the Wedding Service, access to the Sanctuary and the Church will be provided no earlier than Three Hours prior to the time of the Ceremony and for no longer than One Hour after the conclusion of the Wedding Service. (For "Receptions" see #10)
 - c. The sanctuary seats comfortably 180 people.
 - d. Only the Faith Presbyterian Church Pastor can invite any other Pastor to participate in the Wedding Service.
2. This guideline and policy apply to family and friends of Faith Presbyterian Church. Session approval is required for any wedding of any couple not connected to Faith Presbyterian Church.
3. As part of the application, the marriage license must be given to the Pastor at the scheduled wedding rehearsal.
4. Music Guidelines -the following recognizes that a marriage ceremony is a service of worship
 - a. ALL Music proposed to be played for the wedding must be approved as early as possible in the planning process by the Music Director and Pastor.
 - b. Normally the Church Music Director plays for the wedding. The wedding party is responsible for making arrangements, including reimbursement, of the Music Director of Faith Presbyterian Church.
 - c. Use of outside musicians, musical equipment, and soloists requires approval by the Pastor and Music Director.

5. Wedding Decorations and Personal Items-

- a. Decorations may include flowers in vases and candles provided by the wedding party. Because of the variety of “dripless” candles available, candles must be purchased from Faith Presbyterian Church.
- b. Any decoration beyond flowers and candles require Spiritual Development Planning Team approval.
 - i. No aisle runners or flower/silk petals are allowed.
 - ii. No nails, tacks, or wire may be used on chairs, tables, walls, furnishings, etc.
- c. Items belonging to the wedding couple/guests are sole responsibility of the parties and not FPC; arrangements must be made by the wedding party to have all items removed in time to accommodate the scheduled functions of the church.

6. The Faith Presbyterian Church Sanctuary is also utilized as the Fellowship Hall.

- a. Symbols of worship in a Presbyterian worship service are the Pulpit, Baptismal Font, and Communion Table. Each of these represent the Proclamation of God’s Word through Scripture and Sacraments, thus must remain in the Sanctuary.
- b. Any changes to the location of the chairs and furniture to accommodate the wedding must be approved by the Spiritual Development Planning Team.

7. FPC will arrange for a Faith Presbyterian Church Wedding Consultant. Following the meeting with the Pastor this Wedding Consultant will contact the couple preparing for their Marriage at Faith Presbyterian Church. The Wedding Consultant will serve as an Initial Contact person and will function as the liaison between the wedding party and the church, performing the following activities

- a. Arrange for access to the building for the rehearsal and ceremony,
- b. Provide guidance to the wedding party related to the church facility
- c. Be available to attend both the rehearsal and wedding to provide support. The consultant will be identified with an FPC badge.
- d. Develop a plan to make certain the sanctuary is arranged for the next scheduled church function after the wedding service

Note: Recognizing the time and support this wedding consultant will have been to you, we strongly suggest you consider offering that person an honorarium

8. Photography

- a. Pictures of the wedding couple should be taken before or after the ceremony. Please ask your photographer to discuss arranging for specific photos with the Wedding Consultant
- b. Videotaping is allowed with one camera located in one location.
- c. The photographer must remain stationary until the service is concluded.
- d. Guests are asked to refrain from taking photos once the ceremony begins.

9. Also, of importance:

- a. The wedding couple is responsible for making arrangements to provide wedding programs, approved in advance by the Pastor and Wedding Consultant. If a Printed Program is to be prepared for the Ceremony, it is recommended that a phrase be added: "Please no photographs during the Ceremony."
- b. Out of respect for the wedding party, guests are asked to silence and turn off their mobile phones when entering the sanctuary except for emergency responders.
- c. There is limited space for the wedding couple to dress for the wedding. Valuables should be placed as guided by the Wedding Consultant. The church cannot be responsible for valuables.
- d. In the interest of ecology, only birdseed can be thrown outside the Church building.
- e. Contingency plans for cancellations due to illness, inclement weather or other reasons for unavailability of the church facility are the responsibility of the wedding party
- f. The need and arrangement for parking attendants are the responsibility of the wedding party.
- g. Wedding signage in and outside church and on church property requires Spiritual Development Planning Team approval
- h. Any military or other protocol requires Session approval.

10. Receptions

- a. Since Faith Presbyterian Church is in a unique position of its Sanctuary also serving as the Fellowship Hall, private receptions in the Faith Sanctuary following a wedding will only be allowed with special permission from the Session
- b. Points to consider when thinking of asking for special permission for a private reception following your wedding
 - i. Dancing, alcohol, and smoking are prohibited in the church and on church property
 - ii. Movement of furniture within the Sanctuary requires special permission
 - iii. Throwing rice/birdseed are prohibited in the church

11. Anything not specifically stated in this policy is subject to review by the Pastor or Session of Faith Presbyterian Church

12. Wedding Fees:

- a. There is no fee for the use of the facility for weddings of members and friends of Faith Presbyterian Church although donations to the building fund are accepted.
- b. There is no set fee for the Pastor for weddings of members and friends of Faith Presbyterian Church. However, remember the time involved with pre-nuptial counseling, plus the time involved for a rehearsal and the wedding. Contributions should be made directly to the Pastor.
- c. The fee(s) and method of paying should be discussed with the Music Director or other approved musicians and is the responsibility of the wedding party

Policy approved by the Session of Faith Presbyterian Church October 15, 2019