

Riverside Presbyterian Church

Weddings Celebrated at the Church

Christian Marriage

"Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between two people, traditionally between a man and a woman. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which two people are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by two people to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith." (W-4.9001, Directory for Worship, Presbyterian Church (USA))

Marriage and family life are held together by the mutual care and loyalty of those involved. God gives life and creates us either male or female. God prepares two people to live life in marriage covenant. Thus, a Christian service of marriage is a worship service where two people come together with friends and loved ones to give thanks, to praise God, and to ask God's blessing upon their lives.

Initial Arrangements

When a couple wishes to be married at Riverside Presbyterian Church or plans to ask the Pastor of Riverside Presbyterian Church to officiate at their wedding at another location, they should contact the church office as early as possible to coordinate their choice of wedding date with the availability of the Pastor, organist and/or building. At that time, the couple should set up an appointment for pre-marital counseling with the Pastor.

Pre-marital Counseling

"In preparation for the marriage service, the minister asked to lead the service shall provide for a discussion with the couple concerning:

1. the nature of their Christian commitment, assuring that at least one is a professing Christian,
2. the legal requirements of the state,
3. the privileges and responsibilities of Christian marriage,
4. the nature and form of the marriage service,
5. the vows and commitments they will be asked to make,
6. the relationship of these commitments to their lives of discipleship,
7. the resources of the faith and the Christian community to assist them in fulfilling their marriage commitments.

This discussion is equally important in the case of a first marriage, a marriage after the death of a spouse, and a marriage following divorce." (W-4.9002 Dir. for Worship)

Pre-marital counseling provides an opportunity for the wedding couple to explore and discuss the significance and meaning of their life-long commitment. Areas such as the marriage service, communication and conflict in marriage, as well as financial, budget, medical, and legal matters are addressed. Three one and one half hour sessions are normally scheduled to

cover this range of topics, but may be adjusted to suit personal schedules. The Pastor will not perform a marriage service without pre-marital counseling with the couple.

"If the minister is convinced after discussion with the couple that commitment, responsibility, maturity, or Christian understanding are so lacking that the marriage is unwise, the minister shall assure the couple of the Church's continuing concern for them and not conduct the ceremony. In making this decision, the minister may seek the counsel of the Session."

(W-4.9002 Dir. for Worship)

The Wedding Service

"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 minister 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. Celebration of the Lord's Supper at the marriage service requires the approval of the Session, and care shall be taken that the invitation to the Table is extended to all baptized present."

(W-4.9003 Dir. for Worship)

The content, actions, and music of the entire wedding service should be in keeping with the worship of God. During the wedding service two people pledge their life, love, and faithfulness to one another before God and a gathering of family and friends. Under the guidance and approval of the Pastor, a couple is encouraged to include elements within the service which will make it special to them, and every attempt will be made to accommodate their particular wishes. Any wedding bulletin must be approved by the Pastor.

Photography

All photography associated with the wedding service, both still and video, should be conducted in a manner appropriate to a worship service. Since this can be a sensitive area, a couple should plan on discussing with the Pastor, in advance, the appropriate time and place for pictures. Attached to this paper is a separate set of guidelines for photographers.

Music During the Wedding Service

"Music suitable for the marriage service directs attention to God and expresses the faith of the church." (W-4.9005 Dir. for Worship) Music is an important part of a marriage service and the couple should feel free to discuss their choice of music with the Pastor and the Organist and every effort will be made to accommodate the couple's selections. However, the final decision regarding the appropriateness of the music and its place within the service will be made by the Pastor, in consultation with the Organist. Normally, The Organist of Riverside Presbyterian Church provides the music for weddings at the church and any other arrangements should be discussed with the Pastor. The Organist will begin playing 30 minutes prior to the service.

Any vocal or instrumental soloists should make advance arrangements with the Organist for practice time, and original copies of any music to be performed by soloists must be provided to the Organist by the wedding couple, and will be returned after the service.

The Organist receives a fee for providing the music at a wedding. This fee has been set

by the Session and appears on the fee schedule. Any additional music beyond the basic service may result in an adjusted fee.

Flowers

"Flowers, decorations, and other appointments should be appropriate to the place of worship, enhance the worshipper's consciousness of the reality of God, and reflect the integrity and simplicity of Christian life." (W-4.9005 Dir. for Worship) In order to facilitate planning for other worship services to be held in the church, the wedding couple should advise the church office of their plan for floral arrangements to be used in the wedding service. In the case of flowers left for later use by the church in other services, the church will assume responsibility for their care and display.

Use of the Church Building (Seating Capacity: 230)

The wedding party will find the church building, including the sanctuary and fellowship hall, cleaned and ready prior to the wedding service. If desired, the fellowship hall is available for wedding receptions, but no food or paper products are provided by Riverside Presbyterian Church for this purpose. **For members:** the fellowship hall is available for your use, and you may use a caterer. **For Non-members:** the fellowship hall is available for your use for a rental fee of \$250.00. You may use a caterer, however, a damage deposit of \$500.00 will be required. A member of the church will also need to be present.

The church office will make arrangements for all custodial services to clean the church after the wedding and/or reception. Members and non-members alike are expected to reimburse the church for this service.

Guidelines for the use of the church buildings include:

1. NO alcoholic beverages may be consumed on church grounds
2. NO smoking within church buildings
3. NO rice or confetti or birdseed may be used.

Fee Schedule for Weddings

Modest fees are charged for the use of the building or to recover direct costs for services.

Some fees may be waived at the discretion of the Pastor.

Fees for a Member of Riverside Presbyterian Church

Use of the Building

There are no building use fees for members of Riverside Presbyterian Church.

Wedding Coordinator

The fee for Wedding Coordinator is \$75.00.

Church Organist

The minimum fee is \$100.00, paid to the organist. This includes the rehearsal. Additional fees may be required based upon the complexity of the service.

Pastoral Services

Pastoral Honorarium: no honorarium is expected.

Fees for a Non-member of Riverside Presbyterian Church

Use of the Building

Building use Sanctuary only:	\$200.00
Use of Fellowship Hall for reception:	\$250.00

Please make check payable to: "Riverside Presbyterian Church"

Wedding Coordinator

The fee for the Wedding Coordinator is \$75.00. Checks are made payable to the Wedding Coordinator. There are additional custodial charges if a reception is held in the church.

Church Organist

The minimum fee is \$125.00, paid to the organist. This includes the rehearsal. Additional fees may be required based upon the complexity of the service.

Pastoral Services

Pastoral Honorarium: The fee for non-member weddings is \$250.00.

ALL FEES ARE DUE TO THE PASTOR AT THE TIME OF THE REHEARSAL

Riverside Presbyterian Church
PHOTOGRAPHER'S GUIDELINES FOR WEDDINGS

1. The photographer may take flash pictures from any angle during the bridal processional, as long as he/she does not create a delay in the procession.
2. No flash pictures may be taken at any time during the wedding service.
3. The photographer may take only **TWO** pictures from the rear of the sanctuary during the service and only then with available light - no flash.
4. The photographer may take flash pictures during the recessional as long as he/she does not delay the recessional.
5. After the wedding service is over and the wedding guests have left the narthex, the photographer may repose and take pictures in the sanctuary.
6. No wedding guests may take pictures during the wedding service. They may take pictures during any reposing after the photographer has completed his/her picture-taking.

VIDEO-PHOTOGRAPHY

1. Video-taping is permitted from the back of the church only.
2. Video-taping must not interfere with any still photography.

If you have any questions regarding these guidelines, please consult with the Pastor.

Revised 10-20-2010