

# The Wedding Policy



First Presbyterian Church  
Clinton, South Carolina

## THE WEDDING

Your wedding is an occasion for joy. A Christian wedding is an act of public worship by the couple and the church. In a Christian wedding ceremony, the worship of God is central. **Nothing** in a service should distract the couple or congregation from giving God the place of honor. The Wedding Committee is here to ensure that the service is carried out in a reverent, dignified manner for the intent of God's institution of marriage.

## THE DATE

***"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 teaching elder (pastor) and the supervision of the session."*** [Book of Order, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) W-4.9003]

Therefore, the bride will complete the Wedding Date Request Form and leave it for the Pastor. The Pastor, after meeting with the bride, will make the decision whether to forward the wedding request to the Session for approval. After approval of the Session, the bride will meet with a member of the Wedding Committee (hereafter referred to as the Wedding Coordinator) to go over fees and guidelines.

## THE WEDDING COORDINATOR

The Wedding Committee of First Presbyterian Church performs the task of coordinating weddings. First Presbyterian requires that the pastor, along with the Wedding Committee, supervise the rehearsal and the wedding service and be consulted concerning all wedding ceremony arrangements. The members of this committee have been trained to work with the minister, organist, custodian, florist, photographer/videographer, and audio technician, coordinating all wedding activities in accordance with the Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Outside consultants, while not necessary, will be allowed to assist the bride, but final plans for the wedding ceremony activities taking place at First Presbyterian Church will be under the complete supervision and coordination of the pastor and the Wedding Committee.

## PASTORAL PRE-MARRIAGE COUNSELING

Because the Presbyterian Church recognizes the unique gifts it has to give a couple seeking Holy Matrimony, all pastors are required to conduct Pre-Marriage Counseling. The counseling fee represents 12-14 hours of counseling, which is often held at night and on weekends to accommodate the couple's schedule. The counseling fee is in lieu of the traditional honorarium or other compensation for a pastor. The purpose of the fee is to impress upon the couple the importance of the counseling and

to honor the time commitment for such counseling. It also makes it clear that the church is not charging a fee for the pastor to conduct a service of worship. The pastor always has the right to waive the fee if there is a concern with the couple's financial situation. Such a decision will remain a confidential matter between the couple and the pastor.

## MUSIC

Having established that a wedding is a service of worship, it follows that **"Music suitable for the marriage service directs attention to God and expresses the faith of the church."** [Book of Order, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) W-4.9005] In keeping with this, only appropriate sacred music may be played for weddings here. Your musical selections will be submitted to First Presbyterian's music staff for approval. Our music staff welcomes your suggestions and input, but the final decision rests with them. First Presbyterian does not permit accompaniment by tape, CD, or digital sources.

The Wedding Coordinator assigned to your wedding will help you make arrangement to meet with a member or the music staff to go over music selections.

The organist/pianist of First Presbyterian has the right of first refusal for any and all wedding services. If another organist/pianist is desired or necessary, the Wedding Coordinator will work with the bride to find a substitute approved by First Presbyterian's music staff. A refundable deposit is required for use of the organ by a guest organist.

Arrangements will need to be made for the guest organist to use the organ so as not to conflict with regularly scheduled programs and organ rehearsal.

Accomplished vocalists or instrumentalists may be invited to perform. The guest musicians must confirm all music with First Presbyterian's music staff and rehearse at a mutually agreed upon date.

The standard expectation of time commitment for First Presbyterian's organist/pianist would be one meeting with the bride to choose the music, the wedding rehearsal, and the wedding ceremony.

## FLOWERS AND GREENS

The sanctuary of First Presbyterian Church, having a rich heritage, is a place of dignified beauty and reverence; it does not require extravagant decoration. **"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."** [Book of Order, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) W-4.9005]

It is preferred that only fresh flowers and greenery be used. Although flowers and greenery are lovely, please remember their use is optional.

All seasonal decorations in the sanctuary are designed to give glory to God. No removal of these decorations is allowed.

## PHOTOGRAPHERS & VIDEOGRAPHERS

A responsible professional should be used and should be notified of our guidelines. **No pictures or videos are to be taken by relatives or guests in the sanctuary during the wedding ceremony.**

## AUDIO/STREAMING TECHNICIANS

The audio/streaming system of First Presbyterian is operated by only a select few members of the church. If you wish to use the system, the Wedding Coordinator (along with the head of the Sound System Committee) will assign someone to operate the system. This person will be in attendance at both the rehearsal and the wedding.

## REHEARSAL

The rehearsal should begin and proceed on time. The members of the wedding party should remember that they are in a holy place, dedicated to the worship of God. The Wedding Coordinator assigned to assist you will meet you at the appointed time. The organist should be available to play music for the seating of the mothers, the processional, and recessional. Any last minute questions or concerns should be addressed at the rehearsal.

## BRIDE'S ROOM & GROOM'S ROOM

First Presbyterian has a room available for the bride and her attendants to use for dressing and waiting prior to the ceremony. The church's library may be used by the groom and groomsmen. These rooms should be cleared of all personal belongings before the wedding party leaves for the reception. **The church is not responsible for your personal belongings.**

## WEDDING DAY

Arrangements must be made to have all personal belongings cleaned up and removed from the sanctuary before the wedding party leaves for the reception. The custodial staff is not responsible for any items left following the wedding. Any items left behind may be disposed of as the sanctuary is returned to its usual state.

## FOR WEDDING COORDINATORS

1. The pastor will notify the Wedding Committee of a wedding request. The Pastor, in consultation with the bride, will assign a member of the Wedding Committee to serve as the Coordinator for the wedding.
2. The Wedding Coordinator will contact the bride and/or her designee as quickly as possible after the date of the wedding has been approved by the Session to go over fees and guidelines.
3. At least six weeks prior to the wedding, the Wedding Coordinator should set up a personal meeting with the bride and/or her mother to discuss arrangements for the ceremony.
4. The bride will give the Wedding Coordinator the names and contact information of the florist, photographer/videographer, and caterer (if any one of these is being used.) The Wedding Coordinator will see to it that the Church guidelines are given to the professionals listed.
5. No alcoholic beverages will be consumed on Church property. If participants are found to be in violation of this policy, the offending individuals may be asked to leave and/or the wedding may be subject to cancellation. No smoking will take place inside Church buildings.
6. No cameras are allowed in the sanctuary during the wedding ceremony except those of the professional photographer.
7. There will be no rice or confetti thrown in the Church or around the grounds.
8. It is the Wedding Coordinator's responsibility to see to the unlocking and locking of the Church for both the rehearsal and ceremony.
9. The Wedding Coordinator will need to contact the church custodian about the dates for the wedding and when church furniture is to be moved.
10. If a guest organist is used, the Wedding Coordinator will contact the church organist following the ceremony to ensure that no damage to the organ has occurred before the \$250.00 deposit is returned to the bride's family.

Weddings at First Presbyterian Church  
Clinton, South Carolina

FOR THE FLORIST:

1. Fresh flowers and greens are preferred.
2. The Communion Table and Baptismal Font are not to be removed from the sanctuary.
3. All decorations should be in place at least two hours before the wedding.
4. All arrangements on doors must be hung on the nails already in place.
5. It is preferred that only chase candles be used; fillers are supplied by the florist. If the church's chase candles are used, the florist must clean them after the wedding. Requests to use any other type of candle must be approved by the Wedding Coordinator.
6. Nails, tacks, tape, etc., are not to be used to secure any arrangements. No floral clay may be used.
7. The seasonal decorations of the church are **not** to be removed, rearranged, or altered.
8. Aisle cloths are not permitted.
9. Rice or confetti may not be thrown in or around the church.
10. Immediately after the ceremony and pictures, the florist is responsible for taking down all arrangements, except those which are being left for Sunday services. This should be completed within one hour after the pictures are made and the wedding party has departed for the reception.

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The Bride

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Date

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Florist

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Date

*[To be filled out in triplicate: One copy, each, for the Bride, the florist, and the Wedding Coordinator.]*

Weddings at First Presbyterian Church  
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FOR THE PHOTOGRAPHERS AND VIDEOGRAPHERS:

1. **Professional photographers and videographers are preferred.**
2. Wedding portraits made at the church must be arranged in advance with the bride's assigned Wedding Coordinator.
3. On the day of wedding, the Church will be open approximately three hours before the wedding for pictures of the bride and the wedding party.
4. **No pictures or videos are to be taken by relatives or guests during the ceremony.**
5. **No flash may be used during the ceremony. Any cameras used during the service must be muted or have a silenced shutter.**
6. As the bride and groom exit, you may enter as far as the second to last pew as permitted by the Wedding Coordinator.
7. Pictures should be completed 30 minutes after the ceremony. (This will allow the wedding party to move to the reception.)
8. You must have your equipment set up in the balcony of the Sanctuary and/or the Narthex at least one hour before the wedding.

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The Bride

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Date

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Photographer/Videographer

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Date

*[To be filled out in triplicate: One copy, each, for the Bride, the photographer/videographer, and the Wedding Coordinator]*

Weddings at First Presbyterian Church  
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FOR THE CATERER:

1. **Professional caterers are preferred.** Federal guidelines demand the utmost safety precautions be taken when serving food to the public.
2. Must provide linens, hollowware, flatware, china, etc.
3. Must set up, stay for the duration of the reception, break down, and clean areas used.
4. **No alcoholic beverages will be allowed on church property, and no smoking will be allowed in church buildings.**
5. Rice or confetti may not be thrown in or around the church.

\_\_\_\_\_  
The Bride

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Caterer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*[To be filled out in triplicate: One copy, each, for the Bride, the caterer, and the Wedding Coordinator]*

## WEDDING INFORMATION FORM

WEDDING DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

REHEARSAL DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Bride's full name: \_\_\_\_\_

Present Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Bride's present Church Membership : \_\_\_\_\_

Bride's parents' names: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents' Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Groom's full name: \_\_\_\_\_

Present Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Groom's present Church Membership : \_\_\_\_\_

Groom's parents' names: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents' Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Bride and Groom's future address and phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

RECEPTION: \_\_\_\_\_ Fellowship Hall/Parlor \_\_\_\_\_ Christian Life Center

PASTOR: \_\_\_\_\_

GUEST PASTOR: \_\_\_\_\_

FPC WEDDING COORDINATOR: \_\_\_\_\_

ORGANIST: \_\_\_\_\_

GUEST MUSICIANS: \_\_\_\_\_

FLORIST: \_\_\_\_\_

PHOTOGRAPHER: \_\_\_\_\_

VIDEOGRAPHER: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTENDANCE EXPECTED: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Honor or Memory Flowers

If you would like to leave your wedding flower arrangement(s) in the Sanctuary/Narthex for Sunday morning services in memory or honor of a loved one, please complete this sheet and give it to the Wedding Coordinator. This should be done at least three months before the wedding.

Flowers are to be given:

in honor ☐

or in memory ☐

or to the Glory of God ☐

Name(s):

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Information for families reserving First Presbyterian Church for weddings:

Congratulations on your upcoming wedding. In order to provide order and dignity to the wedding worship service, the Session has instituted First Presbyterian Church's Wedding Policy to provide guidance in all aspects of planning and carrying out your wedding. It is important that participants and families read and understand the policy; however, ultimately the responsibility for communication of and adherence to the policy resides with the party reserving the church for the wedding date. Certain important points are highlighted here:

- As a service of Christian worship, the marriage service is under the direction the pastor and the supervision of the session [Book of Order, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) W-4.9003]
- Ordinarily, a member of the First Presbyterian pastoral staff will officiate wedding services at First Presbyterian Church. The Pastor will decide whether to invite others (clergy, family members, or friends) to assist in participating in the wedding ceremony.
- The Wedding Coordinator will be a member of the First Presbyterian Church Wedding Committee and will be responsible for ensuring the Wedding Policy is upheld and coordinating the use of church facilities for the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony.
- The organist/pianist of First Presbyterian will have the right of first refusal for all weddings at FPC. Only appropriate sacred music will be played.
- A professional florist is preferred and "flowers, decorations, and other appointments should be appropriate to the place of worship" as directed by the Book of Order.
- A responsible professional photographer and/or videographer is preferred. No pictures or videos are to be taken by relatives or guests in the sanctuary during the wedding ceremony. No flash photography may be used during the ceremony.
- No alcoholic beverages, opened or unopened, are to be present on church premises at any time. This includes the rehearsal, wedding day, and reception. If participants are found to be in violation of this policy, the offending individuals will be asked to leave and not return.
- No smoking is allowed in church buildings.
- The wedding fees and pertinent information concerning them are available separately.

The Wedding Information Form should be completed within two weeks of the Session's approval of the wedding date and returned to the Wedding Coordinator (along with the appropriate deposit of fees) to finalize the date of your wedding. **All** dates are tentative until this is complete.

The above points are understood and accepted:

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Signature of reserving party

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Date

WEDDING DATE REQUEST FORM

Bride's full name: \_\_\_\_\_

Present Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Wedding Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate Wedding Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

## WEDDING FEE SCHEDULE

for First Presbyterian Church, Clinton

### Non-Members

#### **Pastoral Pre-Marriage Counseling**

**\$600.00**

Fee based on six or seven, two-hour sessions with the pastor

#### **Wedding**

**\$700.00 / \*\*\$950.00**

Fee includes utilities (\$100.00), custodian (\$200.00), audio/streaming technician (\$50.00), Wedding Coordinator (\$100.00), Organist (\$250.00 – Standard. Fee may increase if musical requests exceed standard).

\*\* \$250.00 refundable deposit for use of organ by guest organist (deposit waived if guest organist is a current substitute organist for First Presbyterian Church)

#### **Reception**

##### **Christian Life Center**

**\$150.00**

Fee includes lights/HVAC, custodian.

##### **Fellowship Hall**

**\$50.00**

Fee includes lights/HVAC, custodian.

Fees should be paid in **two** checks (made payable to "First Presbyterian Church") and given to the Wedding Coordinator as follows:  
*One-half is payable at the completion of the information form, and the balance is due two weeks prior to the wedding.*

## WEDDING FEE SCHEDULE

for First Presbyterian Church, Clinton

### Members

#### **Pastoral Pre-Marriage Counseling**

**\$400.00**

Fee based on six or seven, two-hour sessions with the pastor

#### **Wedding**

**\$550.00 / \*\*\$800.00**

Fee includes custodian (\$150.00), audio/streaming technician (\$50.00), Wedding Coordinator (\$100.00), Organist (\$250.00 – Standard. Fee may increase if musical requests exceed standard).

\*\* \$250.00 refundable deposit for use of organ by guest organist (deposit waived if guest organist is a current substitute organist for First Presbyterian Church)

#### **Reception**

##### **Christian Life Center**

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Fee includes lights/HVAC, custodian.

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Fees should be paid in **two** checks (made payable to "First Presbyterian Church") and given to the Wedding Coordinator as follows:  
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and the balance is due two weeks prior to the wedding.*