

UNIVERSITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Wedding Guidelines



209 E. Franklin Street
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WEDDING GUIDELINES

University Presbyterian Church

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Christian marriage is a joyous and celebrative event in the life of the church. To assist in planning for the wedding ceremony and to ensure the sacredness of the service itself, the Session of University Presbyterian Church offers the following guidelines for couples planning a Christian marriage in this church.

I. Arrangements

The first step in planning a wedding at University Presbyterian Church is consulting with one of the **church wedding coordinators** about the date and hour at which you desire the wedding to take place, so that the church calendar can be consulted for potential conflicts. The wedding coordinator will provide an opportunity for you to consult with one of the ministers of the church for approval of the date and time, if that would be helpful. Normally, weddings are scheduled at 11 a.m., 2 p.m. or 5 p.m., so that more than one wedding can be scheduled on a given day. Weddings are also not scheduled on weekends when communion will be celebrated on Sunday. Generally, we are not able to accommodate a Sunday wedding service. Weddings are not scheduled on the weekends of UNC home football games.

Normally one of the church's **pastors** officiates at church weddings. However, should you desire to have another member of the clergy officiate or assist in the wedding, please furnish the person's name and address to one of the pastors, so that an appropriate invitation may be issued.

Music planning for the wedding must be coordinated with the **Minister of Music**. The Minister of Music plays for all weddings in the church, except under extraordinary circumstances. If for any reason the Minister of Music is unable to play for a wedding, he will assist in finding a suitable substitute.

II. The Wedding Coordinator

The Church arranges for a wedding coordinator to serve as the general liaison between University Church and the wedding party. The coordinator thus works with each couple in their planning and at their wedding to ensure that the needs of the bride, groom, and wedding party, as well as the needs of the church and its pastors and staff, are handled properly.

The coordinator meets the prospective bride and/or groom to conduct a review of the wedding guidelines and to assist in the completion of the wedding request form; books the dates and times for rehearsal and wedding on the church calendar; answers questions and inquiries from the wedding party during the planning process; assists the pastor in coordinating details at the rehearsal; coordinates arrangements with florists; assists the bride and groom, groomsmen and attendants with dressing arrangements; coordinates processional and recessional details at the wedding; and ensures that the marriage license and wedding certificate are properly signed and returned.

If an *outside wedding consultant* is employed, please make certain that he/she understands that the pastor and University Presbyterian Church wedding coordinator will handle all arrangements at the rehearsal and the wedding itself.

III. Meetings with the Minister

In preparation for the marriage service, the minister who will be officiating at the service will meet with the couple for pre-marriage conferences. Such conferences (normally one or two) should be scheduled a month or more prior to the wedding. These discussions provide an important time for discussing the wedding service as well as general conversation about the nature of marriage and how it relates to a faithful life.

IV. Pre-Marital Counseling

Before the meetings with the minister are scheduled, the couple will normally have completed a course of pre-marital counseling. University Presbyterian Church, at this printing, offers a spring weekend of pre-marital counseling co-sponsored by the UNC Marital Studies Group and University United Methodist Church, called BOOST (Building Our Own Story Together). We **strongly** encourage all couples planning a wedding at University Presbyterian Church to participate in this weekend. More information about the weekend will be provided with these guidelines.

If participating in the BOOST weekend is not possible, couples are encouraged to arrange for pre-marital counseling with a certified marriage and family therapist (normally two or three sessions). The pastoral staff of University Presbyterian Church can provide referral information at the request of the couple.

Participating in pre-marital counseling is an important investment in a couple's marriage; however, if neither of the aforementioned counseling situations are feasible, please consult with the minister officiating at the service as soon as possible so alternative arrangements can be made.

V. The Order of Service

The ministers of University Presbyterian Church use for their wedding services the order described in the Presbyterian Church's Book of Common Worship (1993). The service begins with scriptural sentences and a brief statement of purpose. After an opening prayer the man and woman are asked to declare their intention to enter into Christian marriage and to exchange vows of love and faithfulness. The service includes appropriate Scripture, which may be interpreted in various forms of proclamation. Prayers will be offered for the couple, for the communities which support them, and for all who seek to live in faithfulness. The minister will declare publicly that the woman and man are joined in marriage (not the same thing as "announcing" the couple, something which is normally done at the post-worship reception), and the service will conclude with a scriptural charge and benediction.

The ministers will consider special requests from the couple regarding the service itself, so long as the additions or alterations do not diminish the Christian understanding of marriage. If the couple desires that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper be served, prior consent of the Session of the church is required, and provision should be made for serving the elements to all baptized persons who wish to partake.

If you wish to have a bulletin for the service, the wording below is recommended. Specifics in terms of the scripture and music selections may also be included.

A Service of Christian Marriage for _____ and _____
Prelude
Processional
Call to Worship
Statement on the Gift of Marriage
Prayer
Declarations of Intent
Affirmation of the Families and the Congregation
Prayer for Illumination
Readings from Scripture
*[Meditation]**
Exchange of Vows
Exchange of Rings
Prayer and Lord's Prayer
Announcement of Marriage
Charge and Benediction
Recessional

*To be discussed with the presiding pastor.

VI. Music

In preparation for the wedding service, the Minister of Music will meet with the couple to discuss and choose appropriate music for the service. Such musical consultation should be scheduled at least a month or more prior to the wedding, and in most circumstances should take place after the couple has met with the minister asked to lead the service.

Music suitable for the marriage service directs attention to God and expresses the faith of the church. As such, wedding music needs to be drawn from the sacred repertoire, be appropriate to the Christian understanding of marriage, and be intended to enhance the service rather than draw undue attention to itself. *While suggestions for appropriate music are welcome, the Minister of Music will make final determination regarding the use of music in the service.*

All music at University Presbyterian Church is acoustical and performed 'live,' that is, without the use of pre-recorded accompaniments or amplification. The use of microphones to amplify soloists' voices is not permitted.

If the wedding ceremony involves special music (i.e. soloists or instrumentalists other than the church organist), the sanctuary is reserved for their rehearsal with the organist 1 ½ hours before the ceremony. Please take this into consideration when planning any photography before the wedding ceremony.

THE ORGAN PRELUDE: Preludial music will be chosen by the Minister of Music from the standard organ literature.

THE PROCESSION AND RECESSIONAL: Effective music for the procession and recessional is that which enhances the mood of the occasion and movement of the bridal party. It is therefore necessary that the music be such that it can be immediately adaptable to the unpredictable tempo of the procession during the wedding. Such music includes Marches and Trumpet Tunes by Jeremiah Clarke, Henry Purcell and others, which the Minister of Music will demonstrate and recommend to the couple at the musical consultation.

MUSIC WITHIN THE SERVICE: The congregation may join in hymns and other musical expressions of praise and prayer. A list of suitable hymns, which may be found in *The Presbyterian Hymnal*, follows at the end of this section. Vocal or instrumental soloists may offer appropriate musical selections; please note that vocal solos must employ sacred texts. Any solo or ensemble music for the wedding will need to be approved in advance by the Minister of Music. Hymns and other congregational musical expressions must be accompanied by the organ.

Suggested Hymns (Hymn numbers refer to *The Presbyterian Hymnal*):

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee (611) Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty (35)
Now Thank We All Our God (643) Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven (620)
Let Us with a Gladsome Mind (31)

VII. Flowers and Decorations

Because of the beauty of the sanctuary, excessive decorations and floral displays are not necessary. Consultations with florists should always center on simplicity, so as to avoid needless additional expense.

In addition, there are a few restrictions which should be shared with the florist or person(s) in charge of decorations:

Aisle cloths are not to be used in the sanctuary.

Chancel furniture may not be moved.

Flowers shall be limited to two arrangements to be placed on the existing flower stands on either side of the chancel, and may not be placed in the windows, on the sconces, on pews, or on either the Lord's Table or the retable behind it.

Ribbons or floral arrangements may be used only to designate pews reserved for family members, but no nails, tacks, wire, gummed or scotch tape may be used on any furniture or accoutrements of the building.

The Sabbath candles on the retable with the cross are lit for all services throughout the year. These candles are not to be moved. If a candelabrum is used, they must be obtained from a florist and can be used in the sanctuary, provided that the candles are dripless and a protective floor cover is in place. No greenery may be attached to the candelabrum.

All personal or rented equipment is the responsibility of the bridal party and must be removed immediately after the wedding.

If it is desired that flowers be left in the sanctuary for use in Sunday services, appropriate notation should be made in the wedding application form. *For Saturday weddings beginning 2 p.m. or after, it is necessary that flowers be left in the sanctuary.* No additional flowers will be permitted when the church is decorated at Easter with Easter lilies and at Christmas with poinsettias.

VIII. Children in the Wedding

Children are a welcome part of a wedding. However, if the couple wishes to ask children under five years of age to serve as attendants, ring bearers, or flower girls, they must have the permission of the officiating pastor.

IX. Photography

Photographs and videotapes can be important keepsakes of your wedding and are not discouraged. However, in order to preserve the sacredness of the service, certain guidelines are maintained:

There will be no flash photography during the wedding prelude and service, with the exception of the official wedding photographer's photographs of the bride as the procession forms in the narthex.

Non-flash photographs and videotapes may be made only from the balcony once the processional has begun.

It is helpful to include these instructions for your guests in your wedding bulletin.

The wedding party may reassemble for photographs and taping at the conclusion of the postlude. As a courtesy to wedding guests and to the church staff, couples are encouraged to complete such photography within 30 minutes.

X. The Rehearsal

Plans for the wedding service are made during the pre-marriage conferences. The rehearsal is a time during which the logistics, or mechanics, of the wedding (where to stand, how to process, duties of participants) are discussed and rehearsed. Rehearsals will last no more than one hour.

The rehearsal will be conducted by one of the ministers, assisted by the wedding coordinator. In the event that an outside pastor is officiating, the wedding coordinator will assist him/her. Because the ministers and organist are responsible for a number of weddings and rehearsals, it is important to them that the rehearsals begin and end at the agreed time. Please ask participants to be prompt and attentive. The attire for rehearsals is less formal than weddings, but should reflect respect for the sanctuary environment.

It has been our experience that it is helpful for both the bride and groom to participate in the rehearsal, and we request that there not be a "stand-in" designated for the bride.

XI. Financial Arrangements

Since weddings require special services on the part of the church staff, it is necessary to indicate the financial responsibilities involved.

The following fees apply for weddings in the church, and are to be paid **at least two weeks** in advance, with checks for facilities made payable to University Presbyterian Church, and checks for individuals (minister, organist, wedding coordinator, and custodian) made payable directly to them.

The Minister of Music's fee is charged for all weddings, including those at which other organists play. There may also be additional fees for the Minister of Music if other musicians who participate in the service require additional rehearsal.

Couples wishing to use another organist for the ceremony may do so only with the permission of the Minister of Music. In such cases, the Minister of Music's standard wedding fee will still be charged as a compensatory bench fee. Organ rehearsal time for guest organists is available by appointment with the Minister of Music.

Please note that although there is not a charge for the use of the Fellowship Hall, there is a refundable room use deposit of \$100. This will be refunded as long as your reception begins and ends on time. The room must also be left in satisfactory condition.

Sanctuary	no charge
Minister	no charge
Fellowship Hall/Terrace Room (Reception)	no charge
Minister of Music (Rehearsal and Wedding)	\$350.00
Wedding coordinator	\$325.00+
Custodial fee for wedding only	\$250.00+
Additional custodial fee for reception	\$125.00
Custodial fee for reception only.....	\$200.00

Note: The Session policy for weddings states that the sanctuary shall be used only for weddings of active members, family of active members, and students who have been active in the Presbyterian Campus Ministry. In extraordinary circumstances the pastor is granted limited discretion to accommodate applicants who do not meet these requirements. In such cases the following fees apply:

Sanctuary	\$300.00
Minister	\$300.00
Fellowship Hall/Terrace Room (Reception)	\$150.00
Minister of Music (Rehearsal and Wedding).....	\$700.00
Wedding coordinator	\$650.00+
Custodial fee for wedding only.....	\$500.00+
Additional custodial fee for reception.....	\$250.00
Custodial fee for reception only.....	\$400.00

+The church will be open one and a half hours before the ceremony begins. There is an additional fee for each additional one-half hour, only by prior arrangement and agreement with custodian and wedding coordinator. For each added one-half hour, an additional \$30 fee will be paid to the wedding coordinator and an additional \$30 fee will be paid to the custodian. The church will open no earlier than 3 hours before the start of the ceremony. Additional fees may apply if a wedding is planned for a holiday weekend requiring an additional time commitment for those involved.

XII. The Marriage License

The wedding is a service of worship, but it also confirms the legal requirements for a marriage. Toward that end, the couple must obtain a marriage license prior to the service; the license must be signed by the couple and brought to the rehearsal.

The license may be obtained from the Orange County Register of Deeds, 228 South Churton Street, in Hillsborough. The office issues marriage licenses from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. At this printing the license fee is \$60.00.

XIII. Miscellaneous

If you wish to use the church facilities for dressing prior to the service, such rooms are available one-and-one-half hours prior to the wedding service. While all care will be exercised for protection, the church will not be responsible for personal property prior to, during, or following the wedding. The family of the bride, or other applicant for the use of the church facilities for a wedding, assumes responsibility for any damage done to the property.

The throwing of rice, birdseed or confetti is not permitted on church property. In addition, wedding bubbles, petals (real or artificial) are not permitted.

Smoking is not permitted in any of the church buildings. Alcoholic beverages are normally not permitted at University Presbyterian Church, with the exception of rehearsal dinners and wedding receptions, at which wine and sparkling wine may be served, upon written permission of the Session.