



Wedding Booklet Information

First Presbyterian Church is pleased to share with you one of the sacred days of your life - your wedding. We shall endeavor to do our part in helping to make the wedding meaningful and happy for you. To help you in your planning, we offer this booklet regarding weddings in our church.

First Presbyterian Church
Rev. Dr. Peter W. Gregory, Pastor
31 N. Union Street
Lambertville, NJ 08530
609-397-0650
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Basic Guidelines

It is a special privilege and joy for the Pastor to serve you in this special time in your life. We rejoice with you in the love that brought you to this point in your commitment to each other. In order to be of the greatest assistance to you we have discovered certain principles which we hope you will accept as guidelines for the planning of your wedding.

The Foundation of Marriage

Marriage is instituted by God, is to be governed by God's ways, was affirmed by our Lord Jesus Christ, and is to be held in honor among all people. It is recognized by the state as the basis for family living and is governed by the laws of the state. It is not specifically a Christian institution. The marriage service is properly performed by anyone so ordained by the state and any proper ceremony is recognized as valid by the state, by the church, by the community and by the individuals who take the marriage vows. It is not necessarily to be performed by a Christian pastor.

The marriage service conducted by a Christian pastor is in the context of a Christian worship service. Only persons who in good conscience can profess a personal faith in Jesus Christ should consider a service in this church. If able, the couple should be attending worship services as an indication of their commitment to faith in their lives and homes.

The Vows Affirmed

The heart and soul of a wedding service is the taking of the vows by the couple. The faithful keeping of these vows is what insures a successful marriage. It is an absolute requirement that the couple enter into the marriage with an understanding of the vows and a whole-hearted willingness to affirm them.

Special Premarital Conditions

Marriage is always a new start, a new beginning, and the hope and prayer always is that we are at peace with our past, our present, and future. However, the issues of modern life and how we live impact the over-all quality of our lives, individually or with other people. Study after study in the area of marriage therapy and behavioral health points that many couples will eventually divorce not because of issues or matters that transpire between a couple, but due to latent issues, unresolved conflicts, pain and brokenness that people bring into the relationship. What is called in modern terms "baggage".

If there are additional needs to be addressed from a counseling perspective for one or both of the couple; such as past issues of abuse, family dysfunctions, financial issues, stress or depression issues that may impact the family please make that known to the pastor at the initial meeting or discussion. The pastor will determine the nature and severity of the issues on a case-by-case basis.

Services for Non-Members

As a service to the community, the pastor will at times agree to marry couples who have no church affiliation. This service can only be made available to those who can subscribe to the Basic Guidelines (p.2,3).

Officiating Pastor from another Church Requests the Use of our Facilities

If a pastor from another church requests the use of our facilities to officiate at a wedding, our pastor must be consulted first and early in the process.

The officiating pastor and the couple must agree with The Basic Guidelines for weddings (p.2,3)

The officiating pastor must request the use of the facilities in writing and the Session of the First Presbyterian Church must approve the use of the facilities. This request must be made at least three months before the proposed wedding date. Contact: Rev. Dr. Peter W. Gregory at 609-397-0650.

The Church may only be reserved for 2 hours for the wedding and for 2 hours for the rehearsal. Fees are based on these usage periods.

Planning Your Wedding At First Presbyterian Church

Initial Arrangements

All weddings are arranged only after initial consultation with the officiating pastor. No plans for the use of our church facilities are made until the pastor has met with the couple and has agreed to marry them. The Wedding Information Form is completed at that time, and the rehearsal and wedding dates and times are confirmed. Once your dates have been registered on the office church calendar and the officiating pastor's calendar, you may proceed to order wedding invitations and make arrangements for rehearsal dinners, etc.

Due to the use of our facilities for worship and the other commitments of our pastors, weddings will normally not be scheduled on Sundays. Any exceptions to this rule must be approved by the Session.

Pre-Marital Counseling

The primary function of the pastor of any church is to care for the parishioners. The marriage ceremony is part of that care. The pastor requires that each engaged couple takes part in a series of pre-marital counseling sessions.

License

The blood test, required by the state, is valid for 28 days and after the blood test the license takes 3 days to process through the township offices of the bride's residence. The license and blood test results are to be brought to the rehearsal.

Rehearsal

Planned in consultation with the officiating pastor, the rehearsal will take approximately one hour. Please encourage your wedding party to be prompt so we can begin on time. It is recommended that your wedding party assemble 15 minutes ahead of the scheduled rehearsal time. The license, blood test records, and any unpaid fees must be brought to the rehearsal.

Wedding Music

A wedding in our church is an act of worship. Couples are asked to select sacred music that reflects their love for each other and their faith in Christ. Musical selections shall be approved by the officiating pastor.

You must find your own organist to accompany the ceremony (on piano or organ) recommendations are noted at the back of the wedding booklet. The organist must be able to play our organ. We recommended that you schedule a meeting with the Director of Music (Mr. George Warner) to discuss all the musical segments of your ceremony.

If you would like a soloist, the Director of Music can recommend some individuals, or you may use your own soloist.

If taped music is to be used, a sound technician associated with our church is required. (Please contact our Music Director George Warner)

It is illegal to make photocopies of copyrighted music without written permission from the publisher. Please do not use nor ask our organist, soloist, etc., to use any photocopied music. Our church does have a special license with some publishers, so please consult with the officiating pastor.

Photography

Please inform your photographer of the following guidelines: If the photographs are taken before the wedding, there should be no photographic session in the 30 minutes directly preceding the wedding. This time is needed for final preparation for the ceremony itself.

Flash photography of the wedding party is acceptable during the Processional and Recessional. During the worship service itself, we request that flash not be used.

Video taping of the worship service is acceptable, and arrangements are the responsibility of the wedding couple. Check with your pastor about his requirements for location of the equipment so that there will be no interference with the orderly conduct of worship.

Care of the Facilities

It is necessary to prohibit the use of rice and confetti on the church premises. Bird seed may be used for showering, but it must be done outside of the church building to save on custodial burden and expenses.

Alcoholic beverages are prohibited on the premises, and smoking is prohibited within the buildings.

If decorations are used, the bride's family is responsible for these, usually through a florist. The bride must consult with the pastor, church secretary or sexton concerning what decorations are contemplated. Care must be taken not to damage permanent structures. The arrangement of Sanctuary furnishings is not to be changed to make room for decorations.

Reception

It is never assumed that the pastor is invited to your reception unless you send an invitation as with any other guest.

Sometimes a couple wishes to schedule a reception at the church. Please consult with the officiating pastor for space and time availability on the church calendar. As there is no food service obtainable through the church, the couple is expected to have their reception catered and to use their own supplies.

After your ceremony, please assign someone to be responsible for gathering all property which belongs to you and your wedding party. We make every effort to take lost items to the church office; however, the primary responsibility of protecting your property is left with you.

On the Day of the Wedding

Our Library is designated as a dressing room for the bride and her attendants and can be used for that purpose. Please do not leave valuables in the Library during the wedding; the doors do not lock.

The groomsmen and/or ushers should plan to arrive 40 minutes before the ceremony so that ushers can seat early arrivers. The groom and best man should arrive 15 minutes prior to the service and should go directly to the pastor's office. If the bride dresses at home, she should arrive 15 minutes prior to the service; otherwise, an hour should be allotted for dressing at the church.

For the sake of your guests, it is very important that the service begin on time so please adhere strictly to these times.

Wedding Fees

When making your initial contact with our church, and upon receiving this booklet, you should note the charges for services and items you will need for your wedding as listed below. These are to be paid to the church **10 days** before the wedding.

Service	Member	Non-Member	Non-Member Outside Pastor Officiating
Use of Sanctuary	\$0	\$500	\$500
Pastor	\$200	\$400	N/A
Organist	Fee Negotiable	Fee Negotiable	Fee Negotiable
Sexton – must have	\$100	\$200	\$200
Trumpeter	Fee Negotiable	Fee Negotiable	Fee Negotiable
Bulletin (you must provide the paper)	\$30	\$30	\$30
Ten Center aisle candle standards (candles provided by the church)	\$40	\$40	\$40
Unity candle	\$5	\$5	\$5

(This is not an all-inclusive listing of services/items you may want for your wedding.)

You must contact the organist and negotiate your fee with the individual organist.

Mrs. Pat Masterson 609-397-0977 (fee negotiable)
Mr. Eric Plutz 609-258-3016 (fee negotiable)
Mr. George Warner 215-794-0160 (fee negotiable)

Trumpeter
Mr. George Warner 215-794-0160 (fee negotiable)

Sound Technician
Mr. George Warner 215-794-0160 (fee negotiable)