

Central Presbyterian Church

Wedding Policy

31 N. 7th Street
Lafayette, IN 47901
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INTRODUCTION

The wedding ceremony is one of the most sacred duties a pastor performs under the ordination and authority of the church. It is a service of worship which mirrors the Sunday morning worship service and thus requires thorough preparation, both spiritual and temporal. The marriage service is not a dramatic production. The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) says the following about marriage and weddings in the church:

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage involves a unique commitment between two people, traditionally a man and a woman, to love and support each other for the rest of their lives. The sacrificial love that unites the couple sustains them as faithful and responsible members of the church and the wider community. In civil law, marriage is a contract that recognizes the rights and obligations of the married couple in society. In the Reformed tradition, marriage is also a covenant in which God has an active part, and which the community of faith publicly witnesses and acknowledges.

...The marriage service shall be conducted in a manner appropriate to this covenant and to the forms of Reformed worship, under the direction of the teaching elder and the supervision of the session

The pastors and staff of Central Presbyterian Church are eager to help make your wedding a meaningful, faithful and joyous experience, and ask your careful attention to the following guidelines. Careful judgment and study have gone into the church's preparation of wedding policies and regulations. These policies were formulated by the staff and the Worship and Music SPT and approved by the Session.

RESERVING A WEDDING DATE

The wedding couple must personally confer with the pastor before the date can be confirmed and announced and the church reserved.

Weddings may not be scheduled when in conflict with use of any of the Church's facilities. Furthermore, weddings, wedding rehearsals and wedding receptions shall generally not be scheduled on Sundays, New Year's Day, Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday (or during the days of Holy Week), Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

Ordinarily, Weddings will only be performed for members of Central Presbyterian Church or persons with a close familial connection to members of Central Presbyterian Church (Children and Grandchildren). The facilities of Central Presbyterian Church shall be available to any couple who may legally marry in the State of Indiana and who meet the above criteria. Exceptions to this policy may be made by the Pastor/Head of Staff in consultation with the Pastor Advisory Committee on a case by case basis. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to compel or constrain the conscience of a Pastor of Central Presbyterian Church.

PASTOR

A pastor of Central Presbyterian Church will agree to perform a wedding only after a conference with the wedding couple. All couples are urged to make their appointments with the pastor a minimum of three months prior to the wedding. Session must be informed of all upcoming weddings.

The presiding pastor from Central Presbyterian Church has primary responsibility for the order and conduct of the wedding service. If you wish to include an assisting pastor who is not on the staff of Central Presbyterian Church, please make your request to the presiding pastor.

PRE-MARITAL CONVERSATIONS

Couples will participate with the presiding pastor in a series of conversations about marriage prior to the wedding service. It is the responsibility of the couple to initiate contact with the pastor to set up these meetings. If these conversations do not take place, the pastor has the right to withdraw from participating in your wedding, and remove the wedding date from Central Presbyterian Church's master calendar.

The pastor also has the right to withdraw from participating in the wedding and/or remove the wedding from Central Presbyterian Church if s/he, in her/his sole discretion, determines that the couple should not be married based on the pre-marital conversations and/or any other information that becomes known to her/him. In the event of such an occurrence, the deposit paid to hold the wedding date on the church calendar shall be refunded.

THE SERVICE

A wedding service at Central Presbyterian Church is an act of worship. Thus, the wedding service will be conducted according to the liturgy found in the Presbyterian Book of Common Worship and the guidelines established by the Session. It is appropriate for the service to include special music, hymns, Scripture readings, and a brief homily by the pastor. The officiating pastor will review the order of service and appropriate options with the couple.

MUSIC

Because the wedding service is an act of worship, music is provided by musicians of Central Presbyterian Church. Music included in the service must be appropriate for worship. At least two months prior to the service, the couple should contact the Central Presbyterian Church musician who will assist them in choosing appropriate music for their service. If desired, the Central Presbyterian musician will also make arrangements for special musicians such as vocal soloists and instrumentalists. An additional fee will be charged for soloists and instrumentalists. If you would like to include a guest musician in your service, please talk to the presiding pastor and the church musician. If the organ or piano in the Sanctuary is to be used for the service, the organist of CPC will have right of first refusal to play for the service and must approve any outside musician who will be using these instruments.

RECEPTION AT CHURCH

Members of Central Presbyterian Church can request holding a post-wedding reception at the church. The ability to have the church clean and set up for worship and other activities on Sunday morning is the primary factor in determining whether a reception can be held. A fee schedule covering room usage and custodial fees can be obtained through the presiding pastor.

MARRIAGE LICENSE

The State of Indiana requires that all couples married in the state have a valid marriage license. The couple is responsible for obtaining the license prior to the wedding date, and shall bring it to the pastor no later than the time of the wedding rehearsal. The pastor will not perform the wedding ceremony without a valid marriage license.

COUPLE'S RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of the Wedding Couple to read this wedding policy carefully and to see that its provisions are kept by all members of the wedding party. The couple will also need to sign and return the statement page at the back of the policy confirming that it has been read and understood. This is to ensure that there will be no misunderstanding or deviation from the established guidelines and policies.

SUMMARY

These guidelines and procedures are an effort on the part of the church to strengthen the witness of a Christian marriage and to make it a more meaningful experience for the couple concerned. All members of the wedding party are expected to assist the church in preserving the dignity and sanctity of the occasion.

General Information for Wedding Couples

Like you, the members and staff of Central Presbyterian Church want to ensure that your wedding day is as memorable as possible. The promises you will be making to each other and the environment of the service of worship that surrounds them should be the focus of the wedding. This is best accomplished through good

planning. For that reason, we want to be sure you have necessary information about church policies and practices so that you can incorporate this information into your planning well in advance.

A representative or two of the Wedding Assistance Ministry Team will be assigned to assist the pastor at your ceremony. They will act in a coordinating role to ensure that assigned responsibilities are carried out and that the worship ceremony goes as planned. These persons will attend both the rehearsal and ceremony. Members of the Wedding Assistance Team have been appointed by Central's leadership to ensure your ceremony conforms to the policies and customs of the church and to serve you and your family. They offer their time and expertise as their gift to you.

Alcohol and Tobacco Products

Because we care about you and your health, Central Presbyterian Church is a smoke-free facility. Smoking is permitted only in the alley parking area. In addition, **no alcohol is allowed on church premises.** All members of your wedding party are expected to comply with this policy. Please ask them to do so.

Candles

During the ceremony, special candles may be used to signify the joining of families into a new one. These family candles are yours to provide, and yours to keep after the ceremony. If you plan to use family and unity candles, please bring them with you to the rehearsal.

Dressing at the Church

There are areas available for the wedding party to dress at the church. The women's dressing area, which is on the second floor of the church, includes a restroom, hanging clothes rack, and full-length mirrors. The men's dressing area is small, but private; with easy access to a restroom. If you plan to dress at the church, we recommend that you designate a friend to be responsible for getting personal items such as purses, electronic equipment and clothes of everyone to your cars prior to the ceremony. You probably will not have an opportunity to return to the dressing area after the ceremony. If for any reason you need first floor dressing facilities, please let the pastor know well in advance.

Guest Books

The West Vestibule (at the corner of 7th & Columbia) is used for guest entry, and it is where guest books are best located. There are two guest book podiums that may be used. (Other entries are reserved for waiting areas for the bride and her attendants, and the groom and groomsmen).

Guest book attendants should plan to be in place 45 minutes prior to the time of the ceremony, and should close their books when notified by a Wedding Assistant. Please provide your guest book attendants with this information.

Photography

The wedding ceremony is a worship service and, as with other worship, there are some restrictions on photography. They will not prevent your photographer from obtaining excellent pictures of your wedding, but these restrictions will ensure that the mood of the worship ceremony, and your own pleasure and concentration on each other is not compromised.

Please inform your photographer of these restrictions in advance. If your photographer has not worked at Central in the past, please ask that they call the Church office for information, and talk to the pastor prior to the service. The restrictions:

1) Flash may not be used *at any time* between the Call to Worship and the benediction.

2) All filming and photographs during the ceremony must be done from the balcony using available light. An exception will be made only for a professional photographer using a silent camera from the back of the sanctuary. Because of the excellent acoustics of the sanctuary, a camera click and the whir of a self-winding professional camera are very distracting. Either sound draws attention from the worshipfulness of the ceremony. In addition, camera sounds are recorded on the tape of the ceremony.

In addition, please discourage guests from bringing cameras to the ceremony. It is advised that a note be included in the ceremony bulletin advising guests that photography during the ceremony is restricted to the balcony and no flash may be used at any time. If you wish, this note can state that no photography is allowed (except for your official photographer).

Video Equipment

You are welcome to employ a videographer for your service. There are, however, several conditions which the videographer must meet. Please speak to the pastor about this well in advance of the wedding. No videographer or remotely controlled equipment is permitted in the front of the church *at any time*.

Rice, Birdseed, Flower Petals, Confetti, etc.

We ask your courtesy in helping to keep the church buildings and grounds clean and litter-free. No rice, birdseed, flower petals or confetti may be thrown in or around church premises – including the Memorial Garden – as these items are difficult for us to clean off carpets and sidewalks (and they will likely be trapped in your dresses, veils, cummerbunds, only to appear for the rest of the day or evening!). The release of balloons is prohibited.

Bubbles make for a lovely send-off at the church, or you may contact the location of your reception for their policies, and have the “throwing” done as you leave the reception for your honeymoon.

Sanctuary Set-Up

You are welcome to add to the beauty of our sanctuary with flowers in the chancel and decorations on the end of the pews (to be attached in a way that doesn't damage the finish – please see a Wedding Assistant for help). Chancel furniture (the pulpit and communion table) are intentionally placed in the sanctuary and may not be moved.

Security

The church is a public building, and requires the same attention to personal safety, the care of children, and safeguarding of possessions that you would exercise in any public space – like at a shopping mall. Therefore, you must keep any valuables with you at all times, or put them in possession of a responsible person with your family or wedding party.

Ushering

If you plan to have guests, parents, grandparents, etc. ushered to their seats, please instruct your ushers to be ready to begin ushering 45 minutes prior to the start of the ceremony. They will light the candles/candelabra (other than family/unity candles) prior to the start of guest seating, seat guests, lay the aisle runner and do

any necessary ushering after the ceremony. The Wedding Assistants assigned to your wedding will help the ushers learn their duties at the rehearsal.

Wedding Consultants

Preferences and circumstances sometimes make the services of a wedding consultant desirable for a couple. Once you enter the church, the consultant becomes a guest and the pastor and Central's wedding assistants are in charge. (Consultants may assist in the dressing room, if desired)

Questions?

If you have questions not answered by this information sheet, please direct them to the pastor who will officiate at your wedding through the church office at 742-8481, or via email.

Wedding Fee Schedule – Church Members

The Session of Central Presbyterian Church in consultation with the professional staff has established the following fees. If there are any questions concerning any part of this information, you may consult with the pastor who will be officiating at your wedding. These fees are subject to change and have been established for church members, who are active participants in the life of the congregation.

All fees are due and payable by personal check or cash at the wedding rehearsal or the day prior to the wedding. In the event of additional charges (such as more than five hours of work by the wedding custodian or unusual cleanup needs) a billing will be sent to the wedding couple following the wedding.

Fee schedule:

Church Staff (fee payable directly to the individual at rehearsal or by day prior to wedding)

Pastor (honorarium) \$250.00

Church Musician \$150.00

(If you have a soloist, the fee may be higher. Please discuss this with the organist.)

Wedding Custodian \$150.00

(The custodian fee is for five hours. Any time over five hours is \$30.00 per hour)

Wedding Fee Schedule – Inactive and Non-Members

The Session of Central Presbyterian Church in consultation with the professional staff has established the following fees. If there are any questions concerning any part of this information, you may consult with the pastor who will be officiating at your wedding. These fees are subject to change and have been established for inactive members and constituents – those who are not on the active roll of the church or who are attending non-members or who are not members of the congregation.

Church fees are due and payable by personal check or cash when reservations for the church are approved by our Session, and the pastor and organist fees are due at the wedding rehearsal or the day prior to the wedding. In the event of additional charges, a billing will be sent to the wedding couple following the wedding.

Fee schedule:

Church Staff (fee payable directly to the individual at rehearsal or by day prior to wedding)

Pastor (honorarium) \$350.00

Church Musician \$200.00

(If you have a soloist, the fee may be higher. Please discuss this with the musician.)

Church Fee (Sanctuary) \$250.00

(one half of this amount, \$125.00, is to be paid to the church as a non-refundable deposit, in order to reserve your wedding date on the church calendar.)

Wedding Custodian \$150.00

(The custodian fee is for five hours. Any time over five hours is \$30.00 per hour)

Approved by Pastor: _____

Approved by Session: _____

CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Wedding Policy
Declaration Of Understanding

The undersigned hereby acknowledge that they have read and understand the terms of the foregoing wedding policy.

Betrothed

date

Betrothed

date

Please return this signed declaration to the church with your deposit check securing your wedding date. Your request for a specific date is considered incomplete without this declaration.