

First Presbyterian Church

300 Market Street
Warren, PA 16365

Your Wedding



Minister: The Rev. Mary Eleanor Johns

Organist: Heather Dietsch

Wedding Hostess: Jane Strohmeier

Church Office Telephones:

Voice: (814) 723-9200

Fax: (814) 723-6049

Your Wedding at First Presbyterian Church

You have come to a momentous time in your life and we at First Presbyterian Church are most pleased for you. The church has always held marriage in high regard. Marriage is instituted of God, regulated by God's commands, blessed by our Lord Jesus Christ, and is to be held in honor among all people (Hebrews 13:14).

Weddings need not be elaborate affairs to be beautiful. The important things are the sincere commitment you bring to it, the affection which makes it rich, and the wealth of meaning which lies in the vows you will take.

In order to make the service both happy and worshipful, this booklet has been prepared to answer some of your questions and to provide guidance for your planning. Careful attention to the recommendations contained here will eliminate potential misunderstandings and sources of conflict. Please remember that photographers, florists, caterers, etc. do not necessarily know the expectations of this church. We ask your cooperation in passing the word to them.

We trust that the experience we will share together as you unite in Christian marriage will be most meaningful and one upon which you can look back with great satisfaction as the years go by.



SETTING THE DATE; RESERVING CHURCH FACILITIES

All weddings, even the simplest ones, require forethought and preparation. The matter of the date must be established and since there are many activities scheduled at the church, and since arrangements are necessary for the services of a minister, organist, etc., it is important that you make your request at the earliest moment possible.



Complete the WEDDING INFORMATION FORM found in the center of this booklet and return it to the church office. The church secretary, after consultation with the Wedding Hostess and the pastor, will inform you as to the availability of the date you have chosen. Contact should then be made with the pastor to schedule pre-marital conferences and the organist to schedule a consultation to select appropriate music for the service.

FACILITIES

The following church facilities are available for your wedding, rehearsal, and reception:

- Sanctuary (450 seating capacity)
- Chapel (30 seating capacity)
- Memorial Parlors (dishes & silver service for 100)
- Fellowship Hall (dishes & silver service for 300)
- Church Kitchens
- Dressing Rooms
- Various Candelabra
- Prie Dieu* (kneeling) Bench

DRESSING ROOMS

Rooms convenient to the sanctuary are available for the bride and her attendants to dress, if so desired. Dresses may be delivered to the church on the day of the wedding only. Every precaution will be taken to assure their safety, though the church cannot be responsible should any clothing or personal items belonging to the bridal party be lost, stolen, or damaged. All personal items should be removed immediately after the wedding to permit the building to be prepared for the next service. A room will also be made available to the groom and groomsmen if desired. Arrangements for use should be made in advance with the Wedding Hostess.

RECEPTIONS AND DINNERS

The Fellowship Hall and kitchen are available for the rehearsal dinner and/or wedding reception. They must be reserved on the WEDDING INFORMATION FORM. (FYI, if the minister is expected to participate in any of the social functions attendant to the wedding, such as rehearsal dinners or receptions, invitations should be extended in advance of the date.)



It should be remembered that Fellowship Hall is a part of the church. As such, conduct is expected to be appropriate for the church setting.

Food, beverages, etc. are to be provided by the wedding participants (generally the groom in the case of the rehearsal dinner; the bride, the reception). Limited supplies of cooking utensils are available provided they are cleaned and returned to the appropriate place. If church linens are used, it is the responsibility of the bridal party to pay for their cleaning following use.

If your reception and/or dinner is catered, the bridal party is responsible for seeing that persons supervising the catering are made aware of our regulations. (Please note: the name and telephone number of the caterer must be included on your WEDDING INFORMATION FORM.)

NO SMOKING is permitted in any of the church's facilities. NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES are permitted on the church premises.

FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS

The sanctuary is a place of dignified beauty with carefully planned and furnished symbols consistent with the Christian faith. They are designed for worship services, and a wedding is one of the services of the church. The bride and groom will be responsible to see that the persons supervising the decorations are made aware of the following regulations. (Please note: the name and telephone number of your florist/decorator must be included on your WEDDING INFORMATION FORM.):

- No flowers or decorations may be placed on the pulpit, lectern, organ, communion table, or pews in the chancel area.
- Candelabra or individual candles, if used, must have a protective surface covering. Decorations should be so placed to eliminate fire danger.
- If petals are to be strewn in the path of the bride during her entrance into the church, SILK FLOWER PETALS ONLY may be used.
- No pews or other furniture may be moved or removed.
- No nails, staples, thumb-tacks, glue, wire, or tape may be used on any surface.

- Excessive foliage is not permitted.
- The wedding party is responsible to see that decorations are removed and the sanctuary put in order immediately after the service. If flowers are to be left for Chancel decoration for worship on the Sunday following the wedding, arrangement must be made with the church office well in advance.

WORSHIP BULLETINS

The church office can provide pre-printed worship bulletins for guests if the bridal couple desires. Information to be included must be provided at least two weeks prior to the ceremony. (See Fee Schedule for charges.) Printing of bulletins by outside agencies is perfectly acceptable; the officiating minister can provide details concerning the Order of Service.

CLEAN-UP

The wedding party is responsible to see that buildings and grounds are left clean after the activities of the day. The First Presbyterian custodian is not responsible for such additional work unless you have made an individual arrangement beforehand.

The throwing of rice, confetti, or birdseed in or around the church is strictly forbidden. Those traditions have their origins in ancient fertility rites and have no place in Christian worship. Bubbles may be used outside the building.

DAMAGE OR LOSS

Should there be any damage to or loss of church property by those using the facilities, reimbursement is expected.



Although it has its social and legal aspects, the Christian marriage ceremony is primarily a service of worship, a fact which should be kept in mind as plans are made for your special day (see Guidelines). First Presbyterian Church is, as the name implies, a Presbyterian congregation. Therefore, we expect that wedding services in our sanctuary will be “Presbyterian” in form providing a sense of decorum, order, and tradition to the ceremony. The minister can answer any questions you may have concerning the appropriateness of elements to be included within the service.

The minister of this church is in charge of all weddings in the First Presbyterian sanctuary or chapel and is ultimately responsible for all decisions concerning elements of the service (music, prayers, vows, sanctuary/chapel appointments, etc.). If you desire another minister to assist in the ceremony, the request should be made to our pastor.

MUSIC

As soon as the date has been set and the first conference with the pastor has been held, the bride and groom should arrange an appointment with the organist to choose selections for the service prelude, the processional, the recessional, and any music which might be used if a soloist is to participate. (The soloist, if any, should be instructed to contact the organist.) If desired, the musical selections may be left to the discretion of the organist.



It is the responsibility of the soloist to have the music well prepared and ready for rehearsal with the organist. The rehearsal shall be by appointment with the organist made at least one month before the wedding date.

Secular songs are not appropriate to the wedding service. The wedding reception is the ideal time for secular songs, songs from Broadway shows, contemporary songs and personal favorite songs to be presented - it is the time when all members of the wedding party can enjoy this part of the musical offering.

Ordinarily, the First Presbyterian Church organist is given priority in providing music for the ceremony (see Guidelines); an outside organist is permitted through consultation with the organist.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND VIDEOTAPING

The Wedding Worship Service begins when the bride has taken her place in the chancel (the front of the sanctuary), and ends when the bridal party begins its exit. Photographers and videographers are asked to be as unobtrusive as possible so as not to disrupt the worship. Flash photographs may be taken during the processional but NONE are permitted during the wedding service itself. Any photographs taken during the ceremony must be taken from the rear of the sanctuary and with available light. Video taping of the ceremony is permitted provided that the camera(s) remain in a stationary position throughout the service. Please inform worshipers of these rules. The bridal party may have as many pictures as desired outside the ceremony.

In recent years it has become customary for photographs to be taken prior to the ceremony out of courtesy to your guests. This is a perfectly acceptable practice. (Please note that the organist and/or soloist may be using the sanctuary for rehearsal prior to the service.)

THE REHEARSAL

In order to preserve the orderliness of the wedding service, a rehearsal should be held prior to the ceremony. Rehearsals are usually held on the evening prior to the wedding. Reservations should also be made for this date on the WEDDING INFORMATION FORM. Prior arrangements should be made if the services of a soloist are required.

It is the responsibility of the bridal couple to insure that **all** wedding party members are present for rehearsal 15 minutes before the time stated. The parents of the bride and groom are encouraged to be present as well. The members of the wedding party should be present one hour before the appointed time for the wedding service. **No member of the wedding party under the influence of alcohol or narcotics shall be permitted to participate in any rehearsal or the service itself.**

WEDDING HOSTESS

First Presbyterian Church's Wedding Hostess can direct your wedding. She will assist you as you make preparations, be a liaison with the church office, answer questions concerning facilities, provide instruction concerning ceremony details, assist the bridal party and the minister with the rehearsal, and will arrange with the custodial staff for opening, closing and clean-up of church facilities. The Wedding Hostess is not responsible for decorating the church.

The procession of the wedding party is under the direction of the Hostess. On the day of the wedding the Hostess will assist the party with flowers and dressing arrangements. She will also supervise the ushers.

The Wedding Hostess is your primary contact for details concerning your wedding once the date has been set and facilities reserved.



GUIDELINES TO THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY IN A PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Book of Order - Presbyterian Church (USA)
Directory for Worship (W-4.9000)

"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 a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed, and acknowledged by the community of faith.

"In preparation for the marriage service, the minister asked to lead the service shall provide for a discussion with the man and the woman concerning

- the nature of their Christian commitment, assuring that at least one is a professing Christian,
- the legal requirements of the state,
- the privileges and responsibilities of Christian marriage,
- the nature and form of the marriage service,
- the vows and commitments they will be asked to make,
- the relationship of these commitments to their lives of discipleship,
- 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.

“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.

“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...



“The service begins with scriptural sentences and a brief statement of purpose. The man and the woman shall declare their intention to enter into Christian marriage and shall exchange vows of love and faithfulness. The service includes appropriate passages of scripture, which may be interpreted in various forms of proclamation. Prayers shall be offered for the couple, for the communities which support them in this new dimension of discipleship, and for all who seek to live in faithfulness. In the name of the triune God the minister shall declare publicly that the woman and the man are now joined in marriage. A charge may be given. Other actions common to the community and its cultures may appropriately be observed when these actions do not diminish the Christian understanding of marriage. The service concludes with a benediction.

“Music suitable for the marriage service directs attention to God and expresses the faith of the church. The congregation may join in hymns and other musical forms of praise and prayer. 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.”

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Professional Guidelines The American Guild of Organists

"The music for weddings (especially texts) should express a Scriptural view of love and marriage. The organist/director can be of help by suggesting appropriate music.

"Since a wedding is a service of worship, the resident organist/director should have the prerogative of playing for all weddings.

"If the wedding couple has special music they wish to request, copies of the music (in proper keys, if involving a soloist) should be given to the organist a month before the date of the wedding."



WEDDINGS AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FEE SCHEDULE

First Presbyterian Church is not responsible for payment for professional services (ministers, musicians, photographers, catering, nursery care, clean up, etc.).

The following schedule is submitted for the convenience of brides and grooms and their parents in planning the wedding. One half the total amount due is payable at the time of initial arrangements with any remaining balance due no later than seven (7) days prior to the wedding. Make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church. The initial check should be submitted with the completed WEDDING INFORMATION FORM.

	<u>Active Members</u>	<u>Inactive/Non-Members</u>
Sanctuary	No Charge	\$200.00
Chapel	No Charge	75.00
Memorial Parlor	No Charge	75.00
Fellowship Hall	No Charge	75.00
Minister*	No Charge	150.00
Organist**	100.00	150.00
Wedding Hostess	100.00	150.00
Custodian (5 Hr. Min.)	\$20. /hr	22. /hr
Nursery Care (If Needed) (2 Hr. Min.)	\$12. /hr	\$20./hr
Printed Bulletins/100	20.00	30.00
Candles – Tapers	1.40/ea	1.60/ea
Pedestal	20.00	25.00

*An honorarium is appropriate from the groom.

**If music outside the organist's repertoire is desired, there may be an additional negotiable fee.

FEES INCLUDE: Preparation of the Sanctuary, Chapel, Fellowship Hall/ Memorial Parlors (if used) and any other rooms needed. Incidental fees will be charged for equipment preparation if needed. The Wedding Hostess is available to assist in arrangements.

CANCELLATION: Written cancellation must be received at the First Presbyterian Church office thirty (30) days prior to the date reserved. Cancellation received less than thirty (30) days prior to the wedding will result in forfeiture of deposit.

For the Bride & Groom ---

- Important Phone Numbers:
Church (Voice): 723-9200; (Fax): 723-6049
The Rev. Johns at manse: 814-313-1706
Ms. Dietsch: 716-662-3713
Ms. Strohmeyer: 723-4708

 - Pennsylvania law requires that the license application be completed by the applicants in person at any county courthouse. Applicants under age 18 and over age 16 must have a consent form signed by a parent or guardian. There is a three day waiting period after the application before the license is issued. No blood test is required. The license is good for 60 days from the date of issue. For additional information, call the Warren County Courthouse at (814) 728-3430.
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For the FLORIST --- First Presbyterian Church, Warren, PA

Wedding of _____ Date _____

1. No flowers or decorations may be placed on the pulpit, lectern, organ, baptismal font, or pews in the chancel area.
2. Candelabra or individual candles, if used, must have protective surface covering. Decorations should be so placed to eliminate fire danger.
3. If petals are to be strewn in the path of the bride during her entrance into the church, SILK FLOWER PETALS ONLY may be used.
4. No pews or other furniture may be moved or removed.
5. No nails, staples, thumb-tacks, glue, wire, or tape may be used on any surface.
6. Excessive foliage is not permitted.
7. Decorations should be removed and the Sanctuary put in order immediately after the service. If flowers are to be left for Chancel decoration for worship on the Sunday following the wedding, arrangement should be made with the church office well in advance.

For the PHOTOGRAPHER

First Presbyterian Church, Warren, PA

Wedding of _____ Date _____

1. No flash photographs are permitted during the wedding service itself; any such photographs must be taken with available light and from the rear of the sanctuary.
2. Video taping of the ceremony is permitted provided that the camera (s) remain in a stationary position throughout the service and out of the direct line of sight of the worshippers.
3. The Bridal party may have as many pictures as desired outside the ceremony. In recent years it has become customary for photographs to be taken prior to the ceremony out of courtesy to your guests, a perfectly acceptable practice. (Please note that the organist and/or soloist may be using the sanctuary for rehearsal prior to the service.

For the CATERER

First Presbyterian Church, Warren, PA

Wedding of _____ Date _____

The Fellowship Hall or Memorial Parlors and kitchens are available for the rehearsal dinner and/or wedding reception. They must be reserved on the WEDDING INFORMATION FORM. These facilities are a part of the church and, as such, conduct will be expected to be appropriate for the church setting (no smoking, no alcoholic beverages). Food, beverages, decorations, etc. are to be provided by the wedding participants. A limited supply of cooking utensils is available provided they are cleaned and returned to the appropriate place. (Check with the Wedding Hostess regarding availability.)

The wedding party is responsible to see that buildings and grounds are left clean after the various activities. The First Presbyterian custodians are not responsible for such additional work unless individual arrangements have been made in advance.