

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2A North Hanover Street, Carlisle, Pennsylvania 17013
717.249.4612 • www.firstprescarlisle.com • fpcarl@pa.net

WEDDING GUIDELINES

See also: *Facilities Use Policy and Facilities Use Request Form*

INTRODUCTION

“Christian marriage is an institution ordained of God, blessed by our Lord Jesus Christ, established and sanctified for the happiness of mankind, into which spiritual and physical union one man and one woman enter, cherishing a mutual esteem and love, bearing with each other’s infirmities and weaknesses, and comforting each other in trouble, providing in honesty and industry for each other and for their household, praying for each other, and living together the length of their days as heirs of the grace of life.” (*The Book of Confessions* 6.131)

One does not have to be a member for First Presbyterian Church (FPC) to be married at FPC. While first priority will be given to members of FPC, that pastor is available to talk with non-members about the possibility of being married at FPC. In all situations, at least one member of the couple shall be a professing Christian, actively living the faith as a member of a congregation.

SCHEDULING

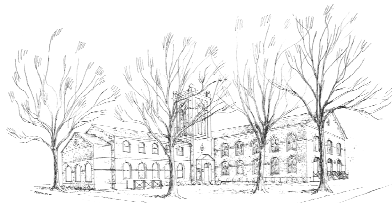
“The marriage service shall be conducted in a manner appropriate to this covenant and to the forms of Reformed worship, under the direction of the teaching elder and the supervision of the session (*Book of Order* W-1.4004–4.006). In a service of marriage, the couple marry each other by exchanging mutual promises. The teaching elder witnesses the couple’s promises and pronounces God’s blessing upon their union. The community of faith pledges to support the couple in upholding their promises; prayers may be offered for the couple, for the communities that support them, and for all who seek to live in faithfulness.” (W-4.9004)

Since a wedding is a service of worship, the Session must approve the service if held at the church, thereby assuring the use of the facility for a given date and time. All church activities, however, have first priority. Sufficient time needs to be provided before the proposed date so that appropriate action can be taken by the Session, staff, and musicians can be contracted, and counseling sessions established.

THE WEDDING AS WORSHIP

In preparation for the marriage service, the minister shall provide for a discussion with the man and woman concerning:

- 1) The nature of their Christian commitment, assuring that at least one is a professing Christian,
- 2) The legal requirements of the state,
- 3) The privileges and responsibilities of Christian marriage,
- 4) The nature and form of the marriage service,
- 5) The vows and commitments they will be asked to make,
- 6) The relationship of these commitments to their lives of discipleship,
- 7) The resources of the faith and Christian community to assist them in fulfilling their marriage commitments.



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2A North Hanover Street, Carlisle, Pennsylvania 17013
717.249.4612 • www.firstprescarlisle.com • fpcarl@pa.net

“A couple requesting a service of Christian marriage shall receive instruction from the teaching elder, who may agree to the couple’s request only if, in the judgment of the teaching elder, the couple demonstrate sufficient understanding of the nature of the marriage covenant and commitment to living their lives together according to its values. In making this decision, the teaching elder may seek the counsel of the session, which has authority to permit or deny the use of church property for a marriage service.” (W-4.9003)

In order to honor these standards, a couple shall ordinarily meet with the pastor five to seven times for premarital counseling. At one meeting, appropriate details for the style and content of the service, in accord with the church’s *Directory for Worship*, will be discussed. The pastor has exclusive oversight and authority over the rehearsal and service.

OFFICIANT

The current pastor of FPC shall officiate at all weddings held in First Presbyterian Church. Clergy from other churches may participate in the service only at the invitation of the pastor of FPC.

MUSIC FOR THE CEREMONY

Music suitable for the marriage service directs attention to God and expresses the faith of the church. 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.

Once a date for the wedding is approved, initial contact with FPC’s organist will establish opportunity to consult in regard to appropriate music. If another organist is desired, arrangements will also need to be approved. Other musicians are welcome at the invitation of FPC’s organist.

DECORATIONS

Candles, bulletins, and flowers are supplied by the couple. Flowers may be left in the sanctuary for display on the following Sunday, with information placed in the bulleting to announce the wedding. Candelabra and silver vases are available for use. In deference to the sexton, all items should be removed as soon as possible after the service. Throwing rice, confetti, or other materials or the use of birds during or after the service is not permitted for safety and clean-up concerns.

PHOTOGRAPHERS AND VIDEOTAPING

Flash photography during the wedding is not permitted. Photographers will need to consult with the pastor before the service in regard to appropriate places in which to stand. Pictures can also be taken before and/or after the service.

RECEPTIONS AT THE CHURCH



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2A North Hanover Street, Carlisle, Pennsylvania 17013
717.249.4612 • www.firstprescarlisle.com • fpcarl@pa.net

When you reserve the church for your wedding, you may also make arrangements to use areas for changing rooms, child care, and your reception, if desired. See the "Fee Schedule." Tobacco products are not permitted on church property. Alcoholic beverages may be permitted at the discretion of the Session.

CAPACITY

The sanctuary's maximum seating capacity is 509. The fellowship hall's capacity is 251.

FEES

Non-members are required to provide a \$250 non-refundable security deposit with the completed reservation form in order to place the wedding on the church calendar (see attachment).

A departure from the recommended fees may be approved by the Worship Committee based on extenuating circumstances and/or at its discretion.

The balance of the building use fee and all other fees must be paid in full at the time of the wedding rehearsal. If payment is not received as required, the Worship Committee reserves the right to cancel the event and retain any security deposit.

Fees will be refunded if the wedding is cancelled by the applicant at least five days prior to scheduled usage. If FPC needs to cancel an approved wedding event through no fault of the applicant, any monies previously received will be returned to the applicant.