



## Guidelines for Weddings

*Congratulations on your engagement! We are thrilled that you are considering Central Presbyterian Church and/or its clergy to be part of your special day. Enclosed are guidelines for weddings here at Central. We hope they are helpful to you as you plan and make decisions for your ceremony and celebration. An excerpt from the PC(USA) Book of Order (part of our constitution) is provided at the end of the packet for you to understand our church and denomination's theology, understanding of marriage and weddings, and the church's role in them. Thank you!*

### **Scheduling**

Before a date for the wedding is set or other plans made, the couple must first arrange for a meeting with the pastor. If the pastor agrees to officiate, at that time information will be obtained from the couple and a date saved on the calendar. Please note that all use of the sanctuary is approved by our Session (governing board) and no wedding is officially scheduled until Session gives their approval. Couples are encouraged to call the church office to check on the availability of a specific date for a wedding before meeting with the pastor.

### **Officiating Pastor**

Pastors of Central Presbyterian Church officiate over weddings held in the sanctuary. She/ he will likely require the couple participate in several sessions of pre-marital conversations/ counseling as a contingency to officiating the service. This is to both help the pastor get to know the couple, and to do our due diligence in helping the couple start this new part of their journey together well.

In certain circumstances a couple can request a minister (relative or close friend) who is a member of a denomination in correspondence with the PC(USA) to officiate the ceremony. These invitations shall be made by one of Central's pastors to the guest officiant, with the approval of the Session.

### **Liturgical Place**

As Presbyterians we believe that services of Christian Marriage should be celebrated where our community gathers for worship—at Central that is in our sanctuary (capacity 425 people). In some cases the service may be conducted in another location, subject to the discretion of the officiating pastor. In these instances the pastor is still bound to the Book of Order requirements, while the Session does not have jurisdiction.

### **Use of the Central Presbyterian Church Building beyond the Sanctuary**

The church facilities and certain rooms are available for the wedding party prior to the service and can be scheduled with our Wedding Coordinator. The Fellowship Hall (capacity 200 people) is available for receptions; please indicate interest on a building use form. Outside caterers can be used and arrangements must be made for catering on your own. Central must receive copies of food handler certification for caterers or those using the kitchen. Any group using the kitchen must strictly adhere to CPC's Rules for Use of our Food Service Facilities which will be provided. We do charge separate fees for use of Fellowship Hall, the kitchen, and the custodial services required for the use of those spaces. Please be aware that alcoholic beverages are not permitted at Central.

**Wedding Coordinator**

Central provides a Wedding Coordinator to oversee the use of the building and work with couples choosing to use our space. Please note that is not an optional service. The Wedding Coordinator shall be present for the rehearsal and on the wedding day, and will assist the wedding party acting as the point person, answering questions, and assuring the wedding runs smoothly. This individual acts as the wedding coordinator for the church, and does not provides services for the reception and other needs the couple may want assistance coordinating.

**Custodial Service**

Custodial services are provided by Central's custodian. There is a fee for these services calculated based on space used and time present. The custodian will make sure the building is open at the appropriate times, locked up at the conclusion of events, cleaned, set-up, and ready for the service. The custodian is not responsible for decorating the Sanctuary or Fellowship hall. If families choose to bring in outside decorations that set up and take down should be coordinated well before the ceremony.

**Marriage License and Registration Information**

It is the couple's responsibility to secure the marriage license before the wedding in the county the marriage will be taking place (Central is located in Chester County). The license should be given to the pastor at the rehearsal and will be signed by him/ her immediately following the ceremony. Under no circumstances will a marriage be conducted without a valid wedding license.

**Service music, organists, and soloists**

Music is often an integral part of our worship, and so is often a part of weddings. Central's organ is a true pipe organ—beautiful in sound, but delicate and expensive to maintain. Only Central's organist or someone invited by the church is permitted to play the organ. If organ is desired for a service it is the responsibility of the couple to contact the organist with contact information Central will provide. We can also provide information for a pianist if this is the couple's preference. Other musicians and soloists can be coordinated through the couple, but plans must be communicated to the church. All music for services must be approved by the pastor as this is a service of Christian worship.

**Flowers and Decorations**

Flowers and other decorations may be used, and should be chosen to reflect and enhance the worship service. The pastor shall get final say on any decoration used in the sanctuary. Contact information for the florist should be provided to the church, and delivery scheduled through the office. Flowers are not to be placed on the communion table, baptismal font, or pulpit. If the couple prefers to leave flowers from the wedding on the chancel at the conclusion of the service, that should be indicated to the church office in advance. If a couple decides to purchase runners for the aisles, please be cautious as inexpensive runners can be punctured by heeled shoes and cause one to trip. Each aisle is 75' from the entrance of the sanctuary to the chancel steps.

**Photography**

Flash photography is generally not permitted during a service of worship. With the pastor's permission flash may be used during the processional and recessional. Professional photographers must consult with the pastor prior to the service. Posed photos can be arranged after the service. Please contact the pastor prior to booking videographer or other recording services.

### Service Bulletins

Couples may wish to use worship bulletins for the wedding. These can be provided by the Central Presbyterian Church office for a fee. Bulletins must be finalized at least two week prior to the service. If the couple chooses to print bulletins outside of the church, a draft should be submitted to the pastor in advance of printing.

**Fees:** *should list member, non-member, less than 90 days to service*

#### Use of Building

	CPC Member	Non-member
Security Deposit	\$150	\$500
Sanctuary		\$300
Bride's Room/ Prayer Room		\$50/ room
Fellowship Hall		\$300 up to 4 hrs, \$500 over 4hr
Kitchen (for staging and heating)		\$150
Kitchen (for cooking)		\$300

#### Personnel

Pastor	CPC Member, Honorarium accepted Non-Member, \$350, plus pre-marital session fees Non-Member (less than 90 days notice), \$500 plus pre-marital fees
Wedding Coordinator	\$25/ hour, \$100 minimum
Custodian	\$25/ hour, \$100 minimum, \$150 min. with reception
Soundboard	\$25/ hour, \$100 minimum (required w/ use of Sanctuary)
Organist/ Pianist	\$150 wedding service and rehearsal only \$200 wedding, rehearsal, and rehearsal with soloist or other accompanying musicians

#### Other

Wedding Bulletins	\$50 for 100, additional \$15 for every 100 more
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Statement on Christian Marriage from the PC(USA) Book of Order (2015-2017), Directory For Worship  
W-4.9 Marriage

W-4.9001

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.

W-4.9002

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.

W-4.9003

If they meet the requirements of the civil jurisdiction in which they intend to marry, a couple may request that a service of Christian marriage be conducted by a teaching elder (pastor) in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), who is authorized, though not required, to act as an agent of the civil jurisdiction in recording the marriage contract. 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-4.9004

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. 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-4.9005

A service of worship recognizing a civil marriage and confirming it in the community of faith may be appropriate when requested by the couple. The service will be similar to the marriage service except that the statements made shall reflect the fact that the couple is already married to one another according to the laws of the civil jurisdiction.

W-4.9006 Nothing herein shall compel a teaching elder to perform nor compel a session to authorize the use of church property for a marriage service that the teaching elder or the session believes is contrary to the teaching elder's or the session's discernment of the Holy Spirit and their understanding of the Word of God

*All those seeking to be married within a Presbyterian Church and/or by clergy ordained in the PC(USA) should understand these beliefs, requirements, and distinctions before scheduling a wedding with us.*