

# First Presbyterian Church

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**Weddings at First**  
First Presbyterian Church  
Berwick, Pennsylvania

Thank you for considering First Presbyterian Church for your wedding. A marriage ceremony is a joyous event, one that will live on in your memories for years to come. We want to help you to not only plan your wedding, but to get a good start in your marriage.

To help make this possible, we ask that you carefully look over this booklet and begin planning for that special day. The pastor, organist, and wedding coordinator are here to assist you in any way possible.

### **The Christian Wedding Ceremony**

The Christian marriage ceremony is a service of worship before God, normally conducted within the house of God. Reverence shall be expected on the part of all present, and the service shall be under the sole direction of the minister.

Such music accompanies the ceremony should direct attention to God, who sanctifies marriage, and special care should be taken to assure that it is suitable and reverent.

The marriage service shall begin with a brief statement of the meaning of Christian marriage. At appropriate times during the ceremony, there shall be prayers for the couple as they enter their new estate. There shall be an exchange of vows between the man and woman, and if so desired, a ring or rings may be given, Scripture appropriate for the occasion should be read and the minister should deliver a charge to the couple laying before them the privileges and obligations which they are about to receive and undertake. Before the conclusion of the service, the minister shall conclude with a benediction. If desired, the congregation may be invited to join in the singing of hymn at the beginning and conclusion of the service.

(Taken from the Presbyterian Book of Order).

### **Fees**

All fees, except the organist and pastor (**who is to be paid directly**), should be paid to the church prior to the rehearsal.

### **Marriage License**

**The marriage license must be in the minister's hands no later than the rehearsal. Please do not wait until the day of the wedding!**

### **Wedding Bulletins**

If the bride and groom choose, a wedding bulletin may be prepared by the church office. Special wedding bulletins may be viewed at <https://www.concordiasupply.com/Church-Bulletins/Wedding-Bulletins-11>. A fee will be charged for typing and copying the bulletin. The bulletin will be prepared the week prior to the wedding and the couple is asked to proofread the bulletin before printing.

### **Traditions of Weddings**

Members of the wedding (their duties for the ceremony)

*Maid or Matron of Honor* – Precedes bride in processional, holds bridal bouquet and ring for the groom in a double ring ceremony. May remove veil.

*Best Man* – Supervises the ushers, holds ring for the bride, enters with and stands beside the groom.

*Bridal Attendants (or Bridesmaids)* – Precede honored attendants in processional and follow her in receiving line.

*Ushers* – should arrive at the church an hour before the wedding. Assist in seating family and guests, and in other arrangements as required. Ushers escort the mother of the bride and groom from the sanctuary, then return and stand by the pews to empty one row at a time up the aisle until all guests have left.

*Flower girl and Ring bearer* – these junior members of the wedding party precede the bride. **They must be five years old!**

## **Wedding Music**

A wedding is in a very true sense a religious service. If guest soloists or organists are invited to participate in the wedding, they will be expected to honor the practices of this church in this regard. Wedding music should be appropriate to the dignity of the occasion. The organist will be helpful in suggesting vocal and instrumental selections, and has the final decision as to what music is suitable for the wedding.

## **Soloists**

The organist will gladly recommend to you several experienced and trained soloists for your wedding. If a friend of the family or a person from outside the church is asked to sing, he or she is expected to follow the practice for this church in selecting appropriate music, and the organist may wish to practice with him/her in advance.

## **Premarital Counseling**

The session and pastor of First Presbyterian Church believe wedding plans are not nearly as important as insight and understanding of the Christian view of marriage and being prepared to make this important commitment. Consequently, couples will have counseling with the pastor who will conduct the ceremony. These should be arranged as soon as the wedding date is chosen. Counseling material will be used and will be part of the wedding fee.

## **Photographs**

If any pictures of the wedding party are desired, they may be taken before the service or following the service in the sanctuary. **Pictures are NOT to be taken anytime during the service, except by a professional photographer standing stationary and not using a flash!** Due to the acoustics of the sanctuary, we ask that no unnecessary noise be made by the photographer during the ceremony. **It is also the couple's responsibility to inform your ushers of our wishes so they can advise all those attending your wedding service. The sanctuary will only be available for one hour after your ceremony ends! Please take this detail into consideration before leaving the church premises for off location photos.**

## **Video**

**A video camera may be used during the ceremony as long as the camera is stationary, the operator is silent, the placement is unobtrusive, and a piece of tape is placed over the recording light.**

There is no air conditioning in the sanctuary. This detail should be taken in to account when preparing and planning the wedding.

## **Decorations**

Flowers, decorations, and other appointments should not be unduly elaborate. In all the activities surrounding the ceremony, excessive ostentation should be avoided. All decorations must be removed following the ceremony!

## **Flowers**

The florists should finish in the sanctuary one hour before the ceremony is to begin. All supplies are to be removed one hour following the ceremony.

If flowers from the ceremony are to be left for Sunday, the couple should notify the church office in advance and leave an announcement for the bulletin.

## **Candles**

We do have candle arrangements available. Please consult with the wedding coordinator if you would like to use them so they can be ready and placed prior to your wedding day.

The following is a list of various details which are important for you to read and observe:

1. Nails, tacks, staples, pins or anything which can mar the woodwork, furnishings, or walls, must not be used.
2. No furnishing shall be moved without permission of the pastor.
3. Wedding party is expected to see that all decorations and equipment are removed following the ceremony.
4. The church properties dressing rooms, assembly room sanctuary and kitchen must be left in the condition in which they were found.

## **Rehearsal**

The rehearsal should be scheduled for the evening before the wedding. All those who are participating in the wedding should be present at the rehearsal.

It is preferable to schedule the dinner following the rehearsal which will take approximately one hour.

Small, informal weddings are often conducted without rehearsals. The minister will be happy to meet with the wedding party in advance to answer any questions.

The minister and wedding coordinator will be in charge of the rehearsals. **Please be prompt for your rehearsal.** It is your responsibility to communicate to members in your party that they need to be on time.

## **Dressing Rooms**

First Church will provide dressing rooms. The bridal party often uses the lounge. The groomsmen often use one of our classrooms.

## **Personal Belongings**

The church will not be responsible for personal items such as wedding dresses, wraps, purses, silver and glassware brought to the church for use in the wedding or in the wedding reception. Please be responsible with your belongings.

## Reception

The fellowship Hall may be scheduled for the reception.

## Other

**Neither rice nor birdseed may be thrown in the sanctuary or on the grounds.**

**Absolutely no alcoholic beverages are permitted on the church property. (This includes the parking lot)!**

Our audio system is available at all times. Additional microphones and recording devices may be available pending availability of our Audio-Video team.

## Setting the Date

When you have decided where you will be married, it is important to set the date and time for the wedding and reception and to clear this on the church calendar with the church secretary. The use of the facilities for the wedding is scheduled on a first-come first-serve basis.

## Sanctuary

The sanctuary will seat approximately 350.

## Who participates?

The minister of First Presbyterian will be happy to assist you with wedding arrangements and to officiate at your wedding. The wedding coordinator will also assist during the rehearsal and the wedding day and will ensure the wedding day runs on a timely and orderly manner. All members of the bridal party are to follow the direction of the wedding coordinator the day of the wedding. Arrangements to meet with the wedding coordinator can be made by the bride or the wedding coordinator.

Occasionally, the couple to be married desires a minister from outside the church to share in or conduct the service. Such arrangements must be made in advance with the minister and are subject to approval of the Session.

## Music

### Organist

The organist of this church is often available for weddings. (If he is not, or of some other organist is desired, permission for use of the organ must first be obtained from the organist of this church. **Arrangements with the organist are made by the families, not the pastor. Unless specified, the organist will not be at the rehearsal and music must be decided prior to the wedding date. The organist's fee should be paid directly to the organist by separate check prior to the wedding.** If an outside organist is used there is a fee for use of the organ.

## Receiving line

Can be held either at the church or the reception. The wedding coordinator will help in this aspect to keep the flow of guests comfortable for the conditions of the day.

## Wedding Fees

Sanctuary .....	\$250
October-March.....	\$300
Fellowship hall & Kitchen.....	\$250
Minister.....	\$150
Organist .....	TBD
Fee for rehearsal & any add'l Practices <b>To be paid directly to organist</b> .....	TBD
Organ (if organist isn't playing) .....	TBD
Dressing Rooms (2).....	\$30
Counseling materials (2) .....	\$10
Bulletin production.....	\$30
Bulletin cost .....	\$30 per 100 \$20/100 addit.

If you desire a unity candle and candles, the candles **MUST** be drip less!