

POLICY FOR MARRIAGE SERVICES

SWARTHMORE PRESBYTERIAN 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 to love and support each other for the rest of their lives. 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 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 forms of Reformed worship, under the direction of the officiating pastor. [Book of Order, Directory for Worship]

A Service of Christian marriage is an act of worship. The couple gathers with the community of faith to praise God, to hear the wisdom and counsel of the Scriptures, to exchange mutual promises, to be upheld by prayer, and to receive God's blessing upon their union. The community of faith witnesses all of these things, and thereby pledges to support the couple in upholding their covenant promises.

SCHEDULING THE SERVICE FOR ON-SITE WEDDING

- ✦ All services are conducted by a member of the clergy of Swarthmore Presbyterian Church, and are services of worship for the community of faith. At the request of the family, and with the approval of the officiating pastor, visiting clergy may be invited by the officiating pastor to participate in specific ways in the service.
- ✦ Dates and times for weddings and rehearsals must be cleared with the Church Office and the officiating pastor before they are announced publicly. The officiating pastor will work with the couple to determine a date and time suitable for both the pastor and the couple.
- ✦ Rehearsals are to be scheduled at the time your wedding date is confirmed. Wedding rehearsals are normally scheduled in consultation with the officiating pastor and the Wedding Coordinator. For your planning, please be aware that the rehearsal takes approximately one hour. The couple, parents, attendants, ushers, readers, and any others participating directly in the service should plan to be in attendance at the rehearsal. Rehearsals will begin promptly at the time scheduled.
- ✦ The couple should obtain the marriage license in advance and bring it to the wedding rehearsal to give to the officiating minister.

PLANNING THE SERVICE

- ✦ The officiating clergy and the couple will arrange to meet at least two and as much as three times to consult for pre-marital counseling and to plan the service.
- ✦ The Presbyterian order of service for weddings will be used as the basis. The church will provide service bulletins, unless the couple chooses to provide these themselves. In any case, the officiating pastor provides the order of service and must be given opportunity to proof the bulletin before printing.
- ✦ The Scriptures are a rich source to which we turn for guidance as we begin new covenant relationships. The pastor will guide the selection of appropriate scripture passages, and will welcome suggestions of those with particular meaning for the engaged couple.

Scripture passages will be drawn from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) of the Bible. Typically 2 Scripture passages are appropriate for the length of the service.

- ✦ The Director of Music is responsible for all musical elements in the wedding service, and will meet with the couple to plan the music for the service. It is the responsibility of the couple to contact the Director Music/Organist, Jeff DeVault, well in advance. Hymns will be drawn from the *Glory to God* Presbyterian hymnal.
- ✦ Additional instrumentalists and vocalists may be employed on the approval and by invitation of the Director of Music. The family is expected to cover the cost of any additional musicians (fees which are set by each individual musician). Music to accompany soloists must be given to the Director of Music in sufficient time to prepare. Practice with the vocalist(s) customarily occurs approximately an hour before the service.
- ✦ All music must be sacred music. Specific requests can be made in consultation with the Director of Music. Any secular music is recommended for the reception. Recorded music is prohibited in the service. It is illegal to make photocopies of copyrighted music without permission from the publisher. Please do not use or ask our organist, soloist, pianist, etc. to use any photocopied music unless prior written permission has been obtained from the publisher.
- ✦ A wedding coordinator is available to assist with service logistics. It is the couple's responsibility to contact the coordinator well in advance of the wedding date. Currently serving as wedding coordinator is Kathy Gerner (610-328-0239).

SETTING FOR THE SERVICE

- ✦ All decorations should be kept simple in order to preserve the beauty and dignity of the worship space.
- ✦ Floral arrangements in the Sanctuary and Chapel should be in keeping with the reverent spirit of worship. All details for delivery and coordination are to be arranged directly with the Parish Administrator, Dorrie McGrath (610-543-4712). It is important that all decorating of the Sanctuary be accomplished at least three hours before the service. The following optional furnishings are available from the church:
 - Aisle candelabra: there are 23 altogether. The couple is expected to provide their own candles. 10-inch white or ivory Colonial candles work best. They are available locally at Hoffman Candle Corner, 12th & Lincoln Ave, Prospect Park (610-532-0822) or online at <http://www.colonialcandle.com/c-2-candles.aspx>.
 - Kneeling bench: wood with wine velvet cushion.
- ✦ In order to preserve the reverent spirit of worship, the official photographer and guests are not allowed to take flash photos between the processional and the recessional of the service. If taking photographs during the service, the official photographer must stay in the area designated by the Wedding Coordinator. All photographs taken before the ceremony must be completed by 30 minutes prior to the beginning of the service. An in-house recording may be arranged according to the fee schedule below, and in consultation with the Parish Administrator.

FEES:

<u>Service</u>	<u>SPC Members</u>	<u>Others</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Church Use (Sanctuary)	\$150	\$300	
Church Use (Chapel)	\$115	\$230	
Pastor's Honorarium	\$300	\$300	
Organist	\$250	\$250	<i>If SPC organist is not available, guest organist's fee will apply.</i>
Other Musicians			<i>As arranged by Director of Music and wedding party</i>
Sexton	\$150	\$150	
Wedding Coordinator	\$100	\$200	
Recording	\$125	\$125	

All payments should be made payable directly to the recipients.

All fees must be paid either in cash or by check. The business office will prepare an invoice indicating to whom each check should be payable. All fees should be paid by the time of the service. *In circumstances of financial hardship, please consult with the officiating pastor.*

WEDDING RECEPTION

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If a couple so desires to have a reception following the service, a reservation must be made with the Church Office. Fellowship Hall is available for this use, noting that the space can accommodate up to 120 people comfortably. A kitchen is available for caterers to use for setting up. The caterer must bring all food items prepared in appropriate self-contained equipment, as the kitchen is not available for food preparation. The caterer or wedding party must supply all serving utensils, dishes and equipment. The caterer is responsible for all kitchen clean-up.

- ⌘ This is handled as a rental; an application and copy of the building use guidelines (including SPC's Alcohol Policy) are available through the church office.



WEDDING COORDINATOR

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A Wedding Coordinator is provided by the church to attend to certain logistics during the wedding rehearsal and service. It is the couple's responsibility to call the Wedding Coordinator well in advance of the wedding date. The name and contact information will be given once wedding date is confirmed. The Wedding Coordinator's role is as follows:

In Advance:

- ✦ Upon initial contact from the couple, have a telephone conversation, conversations or face-to-face meeting(s) to:
 - Explain the role of the Wedding Coordinator.
 - Answer any questions the couple might have at that time.
 - Make suggestions (if requested), set expectations about SPC practices.
 - Verify dates and times of the wedding and wedding rehearsal.

At the Rehearsal:

- ✦ Attend the rehearsal and become acquainted with the wedding participants
- ✦ Assist the officiating pastor as she/he instructs the wedding participants in the order of the ceremony.
- ✦ Be responsible for directing the processional, recessional and activities at the rear of the sanctuary.
- ✦ Be proactive in coordinating with the participants to consider issues which might arise the day of the wedding (seating arrangements, use of ushers, receiving line, photography plans, dressing plans, programs etc.).
- ✦ Work with the paid, professional wedding coordinator if one is used.
- ✦ Practice until the participants are comfortable with the process.

On the Day of the Wedding:

- ✦ Arrive at the church one hour before the ceremony is scheduled to begin.
- ✦ See that the couple and their attendants have what they need in their designated locations.
- ✦ Determine if members of the wedding party need anything at the time and make available the contents of the wedding kit (items such as tissues, band aids, smelling salts, needle and thread, mints, etc.).
- ✦ Meet with ushers (if being used) 30 minutes prior to the ceremony to review their role and answer questions.
- ✦ Secure boutonnieres if needed.
- ✦ Check in periodically with wedding party as needed.
- ✦ Provide guests with directions to rest rooms and the church office.
- ✦ Gather the bride and her attendants before the ceremony to assist with last-minute details. When it is time for the service to start, helps the pastor gather the wedding party in the narthex and makes sure all participants are lined up to proceed in order.

Currently serving as wedding coordinator is Kathy Gerner (610 328-0239).