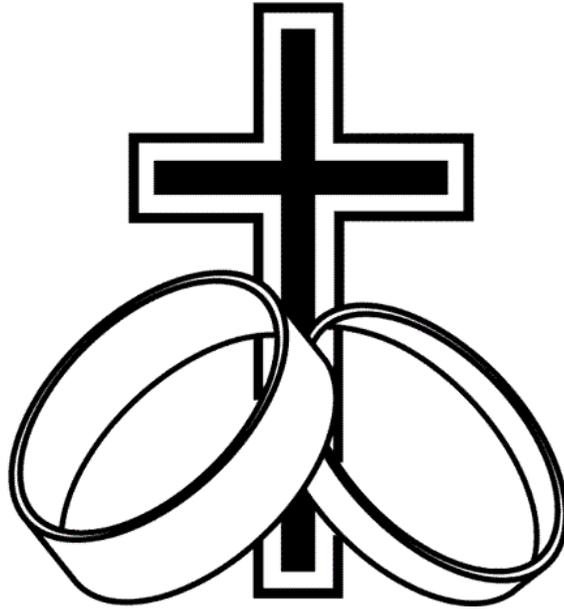


Your Wedding Guide



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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WELCOME

Congratulations on your desire to be married at First Presbyterian Church, Dunellen, New Jersey. We hope that this booklet will help you in your wedding preparations and answer many of the questions you may have at this time. If you have more questions, please contact the church office. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. through 1:00 p.m.

WHO MAY BE MARRIED

First Presbyterian Church of Dunellen is a member of ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians, and together we believe that marriage is a life-long covenant between one man, one woman, and God. Regardless of any civil laws to the contrary, and in accordance with this doctrine, only such weddings may be conducted in our facilities, or by our pastors, regardless of location.

Ordinarily, at least one member of any couple married at First Presbyterian Church be an active Covenant Partner (Member) of First Presbyterian Church. In all cases, both members of any couple shall be professing Christians, active in the work and worship of their own local church. For those who are not Covenant Partners of First Presbyterian Church a letter of reference will be requested from the pastor of their church affirming their active participation in the work and worship of the church. In the case of children of our church who have

moved away but wish to be married in their “home church,” letters of reference will be requested from the pastor of the church where each person is active.

WEDDING DATES AND TIMES

To help our pastoral staff, the Session (leadership board) must approve all weddings before a date can be confirmed. Knowing this, it is wise to make the necessary church arrangements as soon as your engagement is official and you have a date in mind. The Session meets on the third Monday of most months. A confirmation will be sent once the session has approved a wedding.

THE WEDDING SERVICE

At First Presbyterian Church, we believe that wedding services are corporate services of worship, not merely private family gatherings. This leads us to the conviction that the elements of the service, the music, the decorations and the floral arrangements should be tasteful and appropriate for services of Christian worship. The church staff makes the commitment to you to be helpful in this regard. The officiating Pastor has the final say in any and all matters regarding the wedding service.

PRE-MARITAL SESSIONS

We believe strongly that time should be spent in preparing for a life together as husband and wife during the engagement period. Because of this conviction, we consider it essential to hold a series of pre-marital counseling sessions with each couple prior to the wedding date. Our commitment is to celebrate the marriage of persons, not just names. We are committed to getting to know you. Pre-marital counseling, conducted by one of our pastors or our Biblical counselor, is one way to accomplish this. It is also a good way for us to encourage the building of strong marriages, in addition to planning beautiful weddings.

If, for reasons of distance, you are unable to meet with our pastoral staff for the necessary pre-marital sessions, we are willing to have another Christian professional in your area conduct your counseling. In these cases, we reserve the right to contact the Christian professional during or after the counseling sessions.

Once your wedding date has been confirmed, it is **your responsibility** to contact the officiating Pastor to set up the pre-marital sessions. It is helpful when the pre-marital sessions can begin at least six months prior to the wedding date.

WEDDING MUSIC

As in any worship service, the music should add to its Christian spirit and support its purpose. It is important that time be taken in selecting the music you will have played or sung. There is a wide variety of music appropriate for weddings, and our Director of Worship and Music is available to help you with all your music choices.

Our Director of Worship and Music is assumed to be your wedding organist, and has the right of first refusal in this capacity. Should he be unavailable, organist substitutes are to be arranged through him.

You may choose to have soloists during your service. The Director of Worship and Music can help you with some names. Should you have someone special in mind, the Director will need to know what his responsibilities are in accompaniment.

Again, it is **your responsibility** to contact the Director of Worship and Music as soon as soon as it's practical before making any musical selections.

WEDDING REHEARSAL

Normally, a wedding rehearsal is held the evening before the wedding. The rehearsal should be held before any rehearsal dinner. It is expected that all the members of the wedding party plus parents (*if they are taking part in the ceremony*) will be present. On average it will take about one hour for the

rehearsal. The Director of Worship and Music is typically present at the rehearsal, but additional rehearsal time may be required if there are special musical elements in the ceremony (*particularly with outside soloists*). In this case, the Director of Worship and Music should receive additional compensation for the extra service provided.

FLORAL ARRANGEMENTS

Many local florists are familiar with our sanctuary set up. Some of the flowers from a Saturday wedding are often left in the sanctuary for Sunday service. You can arrange a time for decorating the sanctuary either the evening before or the day of the wedding. **Please keep in mind that we have a Friday evening service!**

We strongly discourage the use of aisle runners during the ceremony. While popular with florists, they cannot be rehearsed and present a tripping hazard for the wedding party and guests.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Both still photography and videography are allowed during the service. It is helpful for the officiating Pastor to be introduced to the photographer or videographer as soon as they arrive so that guidelines can be communicated clearly to avoid difficulties.

Simply stated, your photographer may take flash pictures during the processional and recessional. During the wedding service, available light photography may be taken from the balcony or from the Narthex. Often certain wedding scenes are re-created following the service. For the sake of the pastor, we ask that the re-staged pictures are taken immediately after the receiving line is concluded.

Video cameras may be set at fixed positions in the sanctuary. The videographer may use a hand-held camera to record the processional and recessional.

In neither case may the professional roam freely during the service.

RECEPTIONS

Voorhees Hall can be reserved for receptions. It is limited in size and often used for Church functions so early reservations are advised. It is Church policy that **NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES** may be served and **NO SMOKING** is observed throughout the church buildings.

OTHER DETAILS

Many couples include the lighting of a Wedding (*or Unity*) Candle into their service. We do not own holders for these candles, so the holders and candles must be purchased by the

couple should they want this ceremony in their service. Please bring them to the rehearsal.

Wedding bulletins, if used, are the responsibility of the couple. Local Bible Book Stores are a good source for the bulletins themselves. Printing can be done at any number of local printers. The Pastor will be happy to provide you with an order of worship for the service.

We regret to say that we do not allow rice to be thrown after the service. It is unsafe for birds and extremely difficult to clean up. Birdseed is permitted, but only outside the building. Many couples find that providing their guests with bubble-blowers provides a festive exit from the sanctuary.

MARRIAGE LICENSE REQUIREMENTS IN NEW JERSEY

Marriage Licenses are obtained through the City Hall Office of the bride or groom's residence. It is best to contact them directly and as soon as possible so that all requirements can be fulfilled in advance of the wedding date. **The wedding license *must* be presented to the officiating pastor at the rehearsal.**

ON THE DAY OF THE WEDDING

On the day of the wedding, the groom and his attendants should arrive at the church forty-five minutes prior to the

ceremony. The bride and her attendants should arrive no later than thirty minutes prior to the ceremony.

FEES AND HONORARIUMS

All fees should be given to the officiating Pastor at the rehearsal, along with the wedding license. When paying the fees by check, payment to the Pastor, Organist, Custodian and Soloists should be made out directly to them, not to the church.

The following are the fees and suggested honorariums for a wedding service at First Presbyterian Church:

Director of Worship & Music – Karl Geiger

\$200 This includes consulting with the couple regarding music choices, the rehearsal, and wedding. Additional rehearsal time with soloists should be negotiated with the Director of Worship and Music.

Soloists

\$100.00 - \$150.00

Custodian – Maria Aldana

Sanctuary set-up \$75 There is an additional fee of \$100.00 if Voorhees Hall is used.

Audio Recording

\$75 If desired, and when one of our audio technicians is

available, we are pleased to provide an audio recording of your wedding. This fee includes use of the church recording facilities and an operator.

Pastor – Jeffrey Wildrick or Silvio DelCampo

\$300 *This includes wedding planning, rehearsal and wedding service.*

If any of these fees present a legitimate financial hardship, please bring this to the attention of the Pastor as early as possible in the planning process (and at least one full month before the wedding) so that appropriate arrangements may be made.

TIMELINE

6 Months or more

- ✓ Initial meeting with Pastor
- ✓ Request to session for approval of wedding and dates for wedding and rehearsal
- ✓ Contact Director of Worship & Music to confirm availability

4 Months or more

- ✓ Begin pre-marriage counseling with Pastor or approved counselor

8 Weeks

- ✓ Absolute deadline to begin pre-marriage process

- ✓ Finalize any plans for use of outside musicians
- ✓ Apply for wedding license

3 to 5 Weeks

- ✓ Plan wedding service with Pastor & Director of Worship and Music

1 Week

- ✓ Submit wedding bulletin to office for proofreading (if desired)

1 to 3 Days – Wedding Rehearsal

- ✓ Bring license
- ✓ Bring fees & honoraria
- ✓ Rehearse before any meal or party

Evening Before or Day of Wedding

- ✓ Decorate Sanctuary (and Voorhees Hall if desired)

Wedding Day

- ✓ Men arrive 45 minutes before ceremony
- ✓ Bride arrives 30 minutes before ceremony
- ✓ Photographers & Videographers introduced to Pastor
- ✓ CELEBRATE your new life together as Husband and Wife!