

Celebrating Weddings, Preparing for Marriage



First Presbyterian Church of Maumee
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Marriage in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A)

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

- In preparation for the marriage service, the minister shall provide for a discussion with the man and the 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 the Christian community to assist them in fulfilling their marriage commitments

The Wedding Ceremony as an Act of Worship

Because the marriage ceremony is an act of worship within the congregation of First Presbyterian Church, care will be taken to maintain the dignity of worship, the high place of the name of Jesus and the maintenance of the church facility. The following requirements have been ordered by Session to that end:

- Flowers or decorations should not be attached to surfaces within the facility in any way that may cause permanent damage. (ie. nails, staples, glues, etc.)
- Rice should not be thrown on church grounds. Bubbles are suggested as a substitute.
- Flash photography is not permitted during the worship service. The worship service is

Beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. – Philippians 4:8

understood to begin with the minister's opening statement and concludes with the blessing. *(Photographers and videographers should speak with the minister prior to the rehearsal with regard to positioning for photography during the service)*

- Smoking is allowed outside of the Gibbs St. entrance only.
- No alcohol is permitted on church grounds.
- Only driplless candles, purchased from the church may be used in the church's candelabras or unity candle.
- Aisle runners become a tripping hazard

when used on our church's carpeting and are therefore not permitted.

- Animals *(except assistance dogs)* are not permitted in the church building.

Though it is difficult to set "requirements" the couple is encouraged to be mindful about the dignity of worship. **Final decisions about what will and will not be permitted in a marriage ceremony at First Presbyterian Church resides with the minister conducting the service.** *(except the enforcement of the above Session established requirements)*



Wedding Coordinators at FPC

In order to ensure that the wedding ceremony blesses all involved, First Presbyterian Church has created the position of "Wedding Coordinator." The Wedding Coordinator is servant to couple, pastor and church. Because they work with the couple to ensure that the "details" of the ceremony are given attention the wedding coordinator is integral to the success of a wedding ceremony at First Presbyterian. This person is responsible to ensure that the church's wedding policy is carried out and the couple's wishes are honored. If there is question about the permissibility of a request, the minister is responsible to make the final decision.

Music

Music is a critical element to most wedding ceremonies. It helps to create the mood, provides for transitions in the service and can communicate both truth and emotion. Because music is so important and music tastes are so varied, questions surrounding music selections can be complicated. Because of this, couples should consider their



expectations for music in the service early in the planning process. Our accompanist, Mr. Wayne Whitten, is a very accomplished musician with both a bachelor's and master's degree in organ performance. He is a wonderful resource for planning the musical portion of a wedding. Mr. Whitten's phone number is (734) 854-2583 or he can be reached at ewmjwhit@aol.com. Whether it is organ, piano or other live instrumentation, the church highly encourages the use of "live" music during the service. Recorded music presents some extraordinarily difficult circumstances when introduced into a worship service.

Decorating FPC's Facilities

For many couples, decorating the sanctuary is an important part of the planning. The church will seek to be as permission giving as

possible with regard to decorations as individual tastes vary greatly. FPC's wedding coordinators should be consulted early in the planning process with regard to decorating the church facilities. They are familiar with what has worked well with our particular worship spaces and have creative ways for overcoming decorating challenges. Please keep in mind that our church is subject to Maumee City Fire Policies. One policy that frequently comes into play is the requirement that window or aisle candles be "globed." Also, couples planning to be married during the Advent season should plan to incorporate the church's advent decorations into their decorating plans as they will not be removed.

Timing the Wedding Ceremony

First Presbyterian Church typically conducts wedding ceremonies on Saturday afternoons, but other days and times may be considered at the request of the couple. Wedding ceremonies will not be permitted to begin after 5pm on Saturday evenings in order to allow

adequate time for our custodial staff to prepare for Sunday morning worship services. Ordinarily wedding ceremonies are not conducted on national holiday weekends to allow our staff the opportunity to rest and celebrate with their families. If a couple desires to be married on a holiday weekend they should speak to the minister to see if an exception can be made.

The Wedding Rehearsal

Ordinarily, a wedding rehearsal will be held on the evening prior to the wedding ceremony. This rehearsal will take about one hour. The couple is asked to encourage the wedding party and family members to be on time for the rehearsal so as to honor the time of all involved. Having already learned of the bride and groom's desires for the ceremony, the minister will lead the rehearsal with assistance from the wedding coordinator. The couple should remember to bring all outstanding fees to the rehearsal as well as their marriage license.

Faith, hope, and love abide, these three;
and the greatest of these is love.

– 1 Corinthians 13:13



Fee Schedule & Instructions

- The “Building Use” fee reserves the requested date and should be paid when the wedding application is submitted. Because others will have been denied this date as a result, this fee is non refundable.
- Fees paid to the Pastor, Organist and Wedding Coordinator should be made out to the individuals performing the service and given to the wedding coordinator at or before the wedding rehearsal.
- All other fees should be totaled, made out to “First Presbyterian Church,” and given to the wedding coordinator at the rehearsal.

Ceremony Fees	Active Member	Non or Inactive Member
Building Use	No Charge	\$500
Pastor (includes counseling)	Honorarium at member’s discretion	\$300
Couple Assessment Fee (to Life Innovations for the “Prepare” inventory)	\$30	\$30
Organist/Pianist	\$175	\$250
Wedding Coordinator	\$100	\$200
Custodial Fee	\$125	\$200
Total	\$430 (+ honorarium)	\$1480

Optional fees

Candles that fit the church’s candelabras

Liturgical set of 14	\$42	\$42
Unity/2 Family	\$24	\$24

Tapers

Soloist accompaniment fee (paid to organist)	\$25/song	\$25/song
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Reception – hall rental	No Charge	\$250
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Reception – custodial fee	\$200	\$250
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Beginning a Marriage is more than a Wedding

At First Presbyterian Church, we are very interested in helping couples begin a committed life together that honors Christ and that will bring joy and blessing to society. We recognize that marriage is a serious, challenging, life-long commitment. Therefore, premarital counseling is seen as a critically important part of First Presbyterian’s commitment to the

I pray that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. – Ephesians 3:17

couple. Couples will ordinarily enter into a counseling relationship with one of our pastors. In exceptional cases, other premarital counseling arrangements may be made with the pastor's approval.

Description of Premarital Counseling :

- Completion of the "Prepare" inventory by Life Innovations (lifeinnovations.com)
- Five to Seven sessions with the pastor using results from "Prepare" inventory and "Marriage 101" curriculum by Grace Products Corp. (marriage101online.com)
- A review of a sample copy of the wedding ceremony bulletin at the last counseling session with pastor and couple.
- One planning session with the pastor and wedding coordinator to arrange for the details of the service

First Presbyterian Church also recognizes the importance of a supportive church family in the life of a marriage relationship.

Therefore, couples being married at First Presbyterian Church are

expected to be active in the life of the church during their engagement. It is presumed the couple will seek to pursue that spiritual activity within the life of First Presbyterian Church.

However, if they have a home church in which they are active, the pastor of First Presbyterian Church will communicate with the couple's home pastor about premarital counseling plans and church life activity.

Ways to be Involved

- Worship on Sunday mornings at 8 (traditional, Chapel), 9 (contemporary, Fellowship Hall), and 11 am (traditional, Sanctuary).
- Participate in a Growth Group (home based Bible study)
- Attend Wednesday night activities (dinner, adult class, children's education/choir)
- Participate in a choir (Bell Choir, Chancel Choir, or Praise Band)
- Women's and Men's Fellowship Groups
- Young at Heart (Senior Adult Group)



To do before wedding day:

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- Five to Seven sessions with the pastor using results from “Prepare” inventory and “Marriage 101” curriculum by Grace Products Corp. (marriage101online.com)
- A review of a sample copy of the wedding ceremony bulletin at the last counseling session with pastor and couple.
- One planning session with the pastor and wedding coordinator to arrange for the details of the service
- One separate meeting with wedding coordinator



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