

WEDDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES
Las Placitas Presbyterian Church

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OUTLINE OF PROCEDURES:

1. The initial request to schedule a wedding is made through the church office. Our Administrator will direct the interested party to the website to review the wedding policy, and will briefly go through some of the main points of the policy. The date will be penciled in on the church calendar by the Administrator who will then get the necessary contact information of those wishing to be married. **This does not constitute a firm commitment by either party.**
2. The inquiring party will be responsible for completing the *Affidavit* and *Application for a Church Wedding* and returning them to the Administrator for approval or disapproval by the Pastor. Disapproval may be with or without cause.
3. Once the wedding has been approved by the Pastor, a \$250 refundable deposit will be required within two weeks following notice of approval. This money will be refunded within one month after the wedding as long as all appropriate fees have been paid and there is no damage found to the church property.
4. Once the deposit is received, the inquiring party will be assigned a Wedding Coordinator from Las Placitas Presbyterian Church (which may be our Administrator).
5. The application is placed on file in the church office, and the security deposit check is processed. **At this point the date is confirmed and placed on the church master calendar by the Administrator.**
6. The party then contacts the Pastor to schedule an initial meeting in order to begin planning and to make arrangements for premarital counseling.

THE WEDDING POLICY

Christian marriage is a solemn and public covenant, entered into in the presence of God and lived out with the support of a community of faith. Christian marriage is a life-long relationship lived out in God's presence and committed to God's will. The wedding ceremony, therefore, is a service of worship of God, in which we celebrate that relationship and ask God's blessing upon it.

Those who come to the church seeking God's blessing on their relationship should do so with a clear intention of maintaining an active participation in the life of a church. Ideally, weddings take place in the church where the couple intends to worship so that they can be surrounded by the people and environment that will support them throughout their marriage. Sometimes, for a variety of reasons, that is not practical or possible. We are willing to work with non-member couples to serve their needs when it is not possible for them to be married in their home church, or if they do not have a church home.

Ordinarily, weddings for members of Las Placitas Presbyterian Church shall receive priority in scheduling. Upon recommendation of the Pastor and approval of the Session (the ruling council of members elected by the congregation), weddings also may be performed for: (1) family members of church members; (2) for those persons who may be looking for a church home and considering Las Placitas Presbyterian Church as their home; (3) for members of other Presbyterian churches when the persons are living in this area on a temporary basis, or (4) those who, for pastoral reasons, the Pastor recommends.

Persons desiring to be married at Las Placitas Presbyterian Church must meet with the Pastor to discuss the order of worship and premarital preparation. They must complete the recommended course provided by the pastor or a counselor to whom the couple may be referred. Additional costs may be associated with counseling referrals.

Ordinarily, the Pastor of Las Placitas Presbyterian Church must officiate at weddings in the church. Pastors of other churches, denominations or faiths may be invited to participate by our Pastor, with concurrence of the Session. Under no circumstances shall a marriage be performed at Las Placitas Presbyterian Church without a minister in good standing of the Presbyterian Church (USA) participating. All wedding ceremonies shall be approved by our Pastor.

The Lord's Supper may be celebrated during the ceremony, but under no circumstances may it be celebrated privately for the wedding party or a limited group of individuals only; the elements must be offered to all gathered during a wedding service. Elders and/or Deacons of Las Placitas Presbyterian Church can be available to assist with the Lord's Supper, if desired, and requested in advance through the Wedding Coordinator.

Stipulations and Fees:

1. All use of the Sanctuary or church facilities for weddings must be cleared through our Pastor. The approval of your application will accomplish this. **Please complete the application and signed affidavit promptly and return it to the church office. The \$250 security deposit is required within two weeks of approval.** If the wedding party employs the services of an outside wedding planner, that person shall work under the supervision of the church Wedding Coordinator.

2. Schedule of fees for weddings at Las Placitas Presbyterian Church:

For all weddings there is a refundable security deposit in the form of a check made payable to Las Placitas Presbyterian Church for \$250. The deposit will be returned within one month following the wedding, if there are no damages or unpaid charges. The wedding party is financially responsible for any damages that exceed the deposit. The deposit is also refundable if the wedding is cancelled given sufficient notice.

In addition to the refundable security deposit, there are two fee schedules. The first is for church members or their direct family members. The second is for those who are not members of Las Placitas Presbyterian Church.

Church Member (\$600)

Wedding	**
Covers the use of the church building including the grounds and opening/closing of the building	
Wedding Coordinator	\$150
Pastor's Honorarium	**
Accompanist (rehearsal & wedding)	\$200
Sound & audio recording system operator	\$75
Use of kitchen (Reasonable use for staging food)	\$75
Housekeeping	\$100

** Donations accepted at the member's discretion

Non-member (\$1475)

Wedding	\$400
Covers the use of the church building including the grounds and opening/closing of the building	
Wedding Coordinator	\$300
Pastor's Honorarium	\$250
Accompanist (rehearsal & wedding)	\$200
Sound & audio recording system operator	\$75
Use of kitchen (Reasonable use for staging food)	\$150
Housekeeping	\$100

Payments can be coordinated through the Wedding Coordinator or mailed directly to the church office. The wedding cannot proceed until all fees are paid. Payments to

the Minister and Accompanist are to be given directly to them before the ceremony or may be given to the Wedding Coordinator to distribute prior to the service. Other payments are due to the church no later than two weeks prior to the wedding date.

3. As part of the application process, the Pastor of Las Placitas Presbyterian Church must approve the date and starting times for weddings and rehearsals. The Wedding Coordinator will facilitate this. Weddings will not be conducted on Sunday, nor during the week leading up to Christmas or Easter. Weddings on holidays will be at the discretion of the Pastor. When the application is approved, it is the responsibility of the couple being married to contact the Pastor to set up an appointment to discuss the service and required premarital counseling. This should be done as early as possible, and normally at least three months prior to the date for the ceremony. Members may apply for a firm scheduled date up to one year in advance; non-members within three to nine months before the wedding date. Once a date is committed to a party, whether member or non-member, no other weddings may be scheduled in conflict with it.

4. Most weddings at Las Placitas Presbyterian Church take place in our Sanctuary. It seats approximately 160 people. The Sanctuary is appropriately arranged for all religious services, including weddings. The pews, furnishings and other decorations in the Sanctuary are not to be moved. The Communion Table can be pushed back to accommodate the wedding party.

5. Decorations should be kept simple, in keeping with the dignity of the occasion. Flowers and taper dripless candles may be used. The church does not decorate or remove decorations; this is the responsibility of the wedding party. In the event of a Saturday wedding, the church must be cleaned and ready for Sunday services no later than 8:00 a.m. on Sunday morning. Failure to comply will constitute forfeiture of the security deposit. If the wedding takes place after Christmas decorations have been placed in the Sanctuary, no decorations may be replaced or moved (with the exception of poinsettias on the chancel steps). If the wedding is on a Saturday and the couple wishes to leave flowers for the following Sunday's services, plans must be made with the Wedding Coordinator ahead of time to do so.

6. No tacks, staples, nails, adhesives or other such items may be used in decorating, and no tape or other adhesives may be affixed to walls, pews, or furniture. Rubber bands, ribbon or padded clips may be used. No balloons are allowed in the Sanctuary, as they are difficult to remove from the ceiling. Clear any questions through the Wedding Coordinator in advance. In the event there is damage to church property, the party will be held financially responsible.

7. All plans for decorations and the timing of their placement must be made in consultation with the Wedding Coordinator, with whom rests the final authority for their approval or disapproval.

8. Music plays an important role in the worship life of the church, including weddings. Our church accompanist may be available to play for weddings or to suggest other appropriate musicians. Please confer with the accompanist concerning additional fees, rehearsals and appropriate music. All musical selections should reflect the sacred and joyful nature of the service. Final approval for any music rests with the Pastor and accompanist. Use of another accompanist or musician(s) requires prior approval from our accompanist before making such arrangements.

9. If a printed program is to be used and distributed to guests at the wedding, the program shall correspond with the agreed upon order of service. The program must be approved by the Pastor prior to final printing.

9. With advanced arrangements, the Fellowship Hall may be used for a wedding reception. No alcoholic beverages are allowed. Catering arrangements are the responsibility of the wedding party. If a reception is held in the church or on the grounds, additional housekeeping fees may be assessed as necessary.

10. Food and drink are not allowed in the Sanctuary. Intoxicants are not permitted anywhere on church property. No smoking is allowed on church property. For safety reasons, no rice, confetti, birdseed or similar material may be thrown inside or outside the church; silk flower petals inside and/or bubbles outside are recommended.

11. Because the wedding ceremony takes place within a context of worship, photography must not detract from the beauty and solemnity of the service. Therefore, photography is not allowed in the Sanctuary during the ceremony. Pictures may be taken during the processional and recessional only, and are to be made from the rear of the church behind the worshippers. Likewise, wedding guests should be advised not to use cameras of any kind during the service. Photographs may be taken prior to and following the ceremony. Photographs scheduled before the wedding ceremony must be completed 30 minutes prior to the start of the service. The wedding party may return to the Sanctuary after the service for additional pictures. It is the couple's responsibility to inform their photographer about these stipulations and to instruct him or her to be discreet at all times in taking pictures utilizing available light. **Prior to the ceremony, the couple shall provide the Wedding Coordinator with a signed affidavit that they understand this policy and have informed their photographer(s) of it.** The Wedding Coordinator can advise about this policy, and the Wedding Coordinator and/or Pastor will enforce it.

13. A stationary video camera is permitted if it is set up prior to the service, as long as it is not obtrusive. The location of the camera must be approved in advance by the Wedding Coordinator. No lighting device may be used, nor may anyone move around during the ceremony in order to make videos or photographs.

14. The sound or lighting system may not be used, moved or adjusted except by the church's approved operator(s).

15. It is the sole responsibility of the couple to be married to obtain a marriage license from a county clerk's office in New Mexico. The license must be brought to the Pastor at the rehearsal. The wedding cannot proceed without the proper license.

Sandoval County Residents The marriage license may be obtained at the County Clerk's Office at 711 S. Camino Del Pueblo in Bernalillo. A blood test is no longer required, and both applicants must be present to apply for the license. There is no waiting period. The cost is \$25 cash only. You must show a current, valid ID and your social security number. For more information call 505-867-7572.

Bernalillo County Residents The marriage license may be obtained at the County Clerk's Office at One Civic Plaza on the 6th floor at the City/County Government Center in Albuquerque. A blood test is no longer required, and both applicants must be present to apply for the license. There is no waiting period. The cost is \$25 cash only. You must show a current, valid ID and your social security numbers. For more information call 505-468-1290

Other County Residents The marriage license may be obtained at any County Clerk's Office within the state of New Mexico. A blood test is no longer required, and both applicants must be present to apply for the license. There is no waiting period. The cost is \$25 cash only. You must show a current, valid ID and your social security. For more information call your local County Clerk's Office.

16. The Wedding Coordinator is the primary link between the party and the church. Should the party choose to employ another wedding planner, that planner will work under the supervision of the Wedding Coordinator with regard to all matters involving the church, church staff, and facilities. It is the responsibility of the Wedding Coordinator to return calls and emails in a timely manner and to set up an initial meeting to discuss the wishes of the party and to review the wedding policies of the church. **It is the responsibility of the party to assure that church policy is understood and followed by everyone connected to the wedding. The Wedding Coordinator is not authorized to make exceptions to the written policy.**

The Wedding Coordinator will be available by phone and email for additional consultation, questions or guidance leading up to the wedding date. The Coordinator will arrange plans for the rehearsal, in consultation with the Pastor, and will assure that the facilities are available to the wedding party at appropriate times. The Pastor, in conjunction with the Wedding Coordinator, will conduct the actual rehearsal. A

