

STATE COLLEGE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

132 West Beaver Avenue
State College, Pennsylvania 16801
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WEDDING POLICY

The State College Presbyterian Church is pleased to make available the facilities of the Church for those weddings which are approved by the Ministers. Ordinarily weddings are performed only for Church members or their families. The following regulations have been designed in order to maintain the facilities of the Church in accordance with the standards and purposes to which they have been dedicated, and in order to clarify the responsibilities of those using the Church.

1. THE MARRIAGE SERVICE: The marriage service is a service of worship and dedication in which two persons enter the presence of God, praying that by grace, God will unite their lives in a spiritual union. It has real significance only as both bride and groom are willing to enter a continuing relationship with God throughout the rest of their lives. The first condition for marriage in the Church is a willingness to enter into this relationship and to seek the guidance and presence of God in both the marriage service and the years of life ahead.

Sample orders of service and vows will be provided by the Pastoral Staff. Options are available within the standard order of service for additional Scripture selections, a meditation/sermon by the Pastor, other appropriate readings, etc. The man and woman speak their promises, facing each other in the presence of the congregation, which witnesses their covenant.

For Church weddings the bride is responsible for the following items:

- A. Reserve the Church through the Church Office as early as possible, designating specific rooms, facilities and equipment desired. When your request to be married at the State College Presbyterian Church is confirmed to you by the Church Office, your date will be reserved on two calendars: those of the Church and one of the Pastors (non-members must supply their own pastor to officiate). You will need to contact the Organist to reserve the date on his calendar. The Bride and Groom (or Bride and family) will need to meet with the Program Associate shortly after the date is confirmed.
- B. Arrange a meeting with the Sexton to plan your set-up in the sanctuary (this meeting should be scheduled for 2-3 months prior to the wedding). The services of a wedding consultant, if one is engaged, shall be limited to preparations prior to the marriage ceremony, and shall not involve the ceremony itself. Furniture in the sanctuary will not be moved.
- C. Arrange for the removal of the decorations after the wedding. If the flowers are to be offered for use in the Church on the following Sunday, the Flower Committee of the Presbyterian Women should be notified as soon as possible. The name of the current chairperson is available through the Church Office.

- D. To avoid problems related to florists, rehearsal times, Minister/Organist schedules, ordinarily no more than one wedding will be scheduled at the Church on any calendar date.
- E. The sanctuary will be available for three (3) hours prior to the marriage ceremony for decorating and other preparations, and for **one (1) hour** from the end of the ceremony or receiving line for removal of decorations, clean-up and photographs.

MINISTERS: According to the Directory for Worship of the Presbyterian Church (USA), the installed Minister is fully responsible for all weddings held in the Church whether or not he/she participates in the wedding ceremony. Ordinarily the bride or groom or their parents should be members or regular worshipers at the State College Presbyterian Church. Given the size of our congregation and the amount of time involved in preparation for the wedding, the Pastoral Staff shall have the right to refuse services for those with no affiliation with the State College Presbyterian Church. Persons desiring a waiver of these rules in order to be married by other than a Minister of the State College Presbyterian Church should discuss this arrangement with the installed Ministers as early as possible. All weddings performed must be recorded with the Church Office. Information required: full names, birth dates, birth places, previous marital status, place of residence, name of the Minister(s) performing the ceremony, License date and License number.

Non church members must provide their own pastor and adhere to a Christian ceremony.

- 2. **PREMARITAL COUNSELING:** All couples married by a Minister of this congregation are asked to fulfill a program of premarital counseling that includes the following:

Conferences with the Minister, (preferably at least one, 2-3 months in advance of the wedding date); in addition to preparations for the wedding service, the Minister will want to discuss interpersonal communication and the meaning of marriage.
- 3. **MUSIC:** As stated in the Directory of Worship, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) "music suitable for the marriage service directs attention to God and expresses the faith of the Church."

Organ and vocal selections must be approved by the officiating Pastor. Taped music may not be used in place of an organist. Because we have only one Organist, if he is not available on your date he will assist you in finding a replacement. See attached letter from the Director of Music Ministry.
- 4. **REHEARSALS:** A rehearsal is necessary for all except the smallest informal wedding. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to set the date and time of the rehearsal in consultation with the Minister. The bride and groom shall also advise all members of the wedding party that it is important for them to attend the rehearsal. **It is essential that the Marriage License be given to the Minister no later than the date of the rehearsal.**

5. MISCELLANEOUS REGULATIONS

- A. Alcoholic beverages: Alcoholic beverages may not be served at any function held in the State College Presbyterian Church and are NOT permitted in the Church building. Furthermore, it shall be the responsibility of the bride and groom and their families to assure that there is no indulgence of alcoholic beverages immediately before the rehearsal or wedding by any of those taking part. If there is any evidence of this, the Church reserves the right to cancel the wedding at any time **and the \$200 deposit fee will not be refunded.**
- B. Sexton: The Church Sexton must be engaged for all weddings. The Sexton is to be contacted by the bride and groom so that the required facilities will be in order. The Sexton's fee schedule is as follows:
- Wedding and rehearsal **\$200.00**
 - Wedding with a start time of 4:00 p.m. or later, additional **\$45.00.**
- C. Pictures: Pictures may be taken before and/or after the ceremony (there is a 1 hour time limit after the ceremony/receiving line for photos and clearing the building). No flash pictures may be taken during the service – from the end of the processional to the beginning of the recessional. Available light photos may be taken from the rear balcony of the sanctuary. No artificial light may be used for photography during the service. The service may be videotaped, provided the taping does not interfere with the ceremony.
- D. Smoking: No smoking in the church buildings.
- E. Bird Seed: Bird seed is permitted to be thrown outside, but only if the wedding party is not reentering the Church building for pictures. No other materials (e.g. rice, rose petals) are permitted inside or outside the church.
- F. Dressing rooms: Bride and bridesmaids' room is Classroom 103 across from the Martin Room. Groom and groomsmen's room is the Church Library, Room 202 on the second floor.
- G. Removal of personal possessions after ceremony: All personal belongings should be removed from the dressing rooms, Sanctuary and all other areas within one hour following the ceremony/receiving line. It becomes difficult to locate any items left for an extended period after weddings.
- H. Candles: The Church will provide candles for wedding ceremonies at a cost of \$1.00 per candle. If the bride and groom wish to furnish candles to be used in the service, all candles must be non-drip. The Sexton will put them in the holders if requested. If, however, a unity candle is to be used, this candle and holder shall be furnished by the bride and groom. Pew torches are available for a rental fee of \$50.00.
- I. Flowers/Aisle Runner: A florist may be engaged by the bride and groom. Flowers and decorations should not be unduly elaborate. In all the activities surrounding the service, excessive expense and ostentation should be avoided. Should the wedding party desire an aisle runner, it must be secured through the florist. Runner needs to be 60 feet in length.

6. FEE SCHEDULE SUMMARY

Pastor: Since non-members must provide their own pastor, fees are to be negotiated directly between the bridal couple and that pastor.

Security Deposit: A security deposit of **\$200.00** is required at time of booking in order to reserve the date on the Church Calendar. If the wedding is cancelled up to 3 months before the wedding date 50% of the fee will be refunded. If no damage occurs (which includes alcohol in the church), the Security Deposit will be refunded.

Organist: The current fee of our Organist is **\$150.00**, depending on the amount of work involved.

Sexton: Wedding and rehearsal **\$200.00**; wedding with a start time of 4:00 p.m. or after, additional \$45.00. Check with the Church Office to obtain the name of the Sexton working so that your check may be made payable directly to him.

Building Use: If approved for non-member families (those who are not active, participating members of the congregation) - **\$500.00**. (An **active member** is one who has been a participating member of the congregation for at least one year prior to scheduling the wedding).

Any violation to the church's wedding policy will result in the forfeiture of the security deposit.

ALL FEES (EXCEPT THE SECURITY DEPOSIT WHICH IS DUE AT TIME OF BOOKING) ARE DUE IN THE CHURCH OFFICE ONE WEEK BEFORE THE REHEARSAL DATE.

Approved by Building and Property Ministry Unit

November 2001
Rev. July 2004
August 2007
May 2008