

THE FIRST AND FRANKLIN STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Weddings



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The First and Franklin St. Presbyterian Church

Your Christian Wedding

This booklet is dedicated to explaining the basic elements of and procedures for a marriage ceremony at The First and Franklin St. Presbyterian Church. It has been approved by the Session of the congregation and includes the protocols, procedures, expectations, fees, and a few restrictions which we believe to be important. Our greatest concern is that your wedding in its beauty and sincerity will reflect your deepest conviction, and ours, of the nature of a Christian marriage.

A Christian Marriage

A Christian marriage is an institution ordained by God, blessed by our Lord Jesus Christ, established and sanctified for the happiness and welfare of humankind, into which spiritual and physical union two individuals enter, cherishing a mutual esteem and love, bearing with each other's infirmities and weaknesses, comforting each other in trouble, providing in honesty and industry for each other and for their household, praying for each other, living together the length of their days as heirs of the grace of life. (Adaptation of the Westminster Confession of Faith)

When you ask a minister of this church to conduct a marriage ceremony, you are asking God to bless your marriage. In requesting that the ceremony be performed in the church you are asking for a worship service at the same time. Participating in such a service demonstrates that you have a vital faith in God and a sincere desire to understand and live up to the meaning of marriage as described above.

One of the happiest privileges a minister has is that of assisting a couple to enter upon the joy of marriage. It is also her/his duty to be sure that the responsibilities of marriage are understood and undertaken in Christian faith

In conformity with our understanding of Christian marriage and accordance with the *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (USA) the following requirements have been established:

- One of the persons should be a professing Christian
- A conference with the couple will be held with the minister before he/she agrees to conduct the service or schedule it on the church's calendar.
- The minister will offer to the couple some options for wording of the service. The couple is welcome to add other readings but the minister has the final say over the ceremony.

It is a joy and privilege to share with you in the planning of this important day in your life. May the miracle of Christ's love transform your love as you commit yourselves to one another.

Buildings and Property

The Sanctuary

Our sanctuary is incredibly beautiful and was built in the 1850's. It is one of the finest examples of flamboyant gothic architecture in the United States. Recently refurbished, it is air-conditioned and is handicap accessible, (please note: the bathroom although on the same level is not large enough to be wheelchair accessible). The church can comfortably seat 500 people.

The Backus House

The Backus House next door to the church is available for the bridal party before the wedding for changing and photographs. The house was built in the 1850's and is a beautiful old home with a spiral staircase and many once functional fireplaces. Refurbished in 2005, it is a wonderful setting for bridal photos and contains full length mirrors and bathrooms. Unfortunately, the building is not handicap accessible.

Parking

The church has use of a parking lot located off of Howard Street one block away on Friday evenings through the weekend. There are spaces for about 40 cars in the lot. Public parking is available on the streets surrounding the church as well as next to the Maryland General Hospital (one block from the church).

Ceremony Related Items

Personnel

It is expected that a Minister associated with the church and the Director of Music of The First and Franklin St. Church will conduct your ceremony. Permission may be granted by the above staff of the church for other people (i.e. other clergy, readers) to be involved. The minister is in charge of the ceremony and will work with you in creating a service that is both reverent and meaningful to you. In case the minister is not available, the Session must approve the officiating minister.

The Wedding Coordinator's role is to ensure the respectful use of the church and property and that the ceremony follows the guidelines set by the Session. Outside private wedding planners must work with the church's coordinator for all events which take place within our buildings.

The Wedding Coordinator shows the sanctuary, chapel, and Backus House to a potential couple and acts as a liaison between the Pastor, Director of Music, Parish Coordinator and the soon-to-be-wed couple. The coordinator will assist with the rehearsal and wedding.

Specific duties:

Wedding Coordinator will be present at the rehearsal which should last no longer than 45 minutes and is usually scheduled the day before the wedding.

Wedding Coordinator will be present the day of the wedding to coordinate and maintain compliance of the rules with the florist, photographer, and videographer and outside musician(s)/soloist(s). Wedding Coordinator will make certain the facilities are prepared for the ceremony.

Wedding Coordinator will assist the presiding minister.

Wedding Coordinator assists the pastor and wedding party to ensure that the ceremony begins on-time and proceeds in a respectful manner.

Counseling

If you wish to be married at the church you should complete the application three months prior to your wedding. You will be expected to attend three pre-nuptial counseling sessions with the minister performing the ceremony before the date of the wedding. These will be scheduled at the convenience of the parties involved. Please note: If the minister is convinced that a true commitment is lacking on the part of either the man or the woman and the marriage has little chance of survival the minister has the right not to perform the ceremony. In such a case this will be discussed with you with ample time given prior to the date set for the wedding.

Church Membership

When neither you nor your fiancé is a member of the church, you will be invited to attend worship services. While you will not have to join the church, we ask that you consider membership because we believe that marriages are stronger and healthier when they benefit from the support of a church family.

The Service

We recall with joy that Christ performed his first miracle at a wedding in Cana of Galilee. The wedding is a worship service of joy and reverence. The minister will recommend services from the church's worship heritage and will plan with you approaches to the service designed to express your particular relationship to one another and to God. You will work with the minister to design their service, making sure that the music and vows reflect the importance of this event.

Music

“Music suitable for the marriage service directs attention to God and expresses the faith of the church” from The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA), W-4.9005

The position of the Presbyterian Church on the marriage service is clearly set forth as a joyful, reverent and dignified celebration of worship. Therefore, the music used should enhance this joy, reverence and dignity, and possess a level of musical integrity consistent with that of the regular church music program.

When the wedding is confirmed, and before plans for any music are made, a conference with the Director of Music should be arranged to seek suggestions and advice. All musical selections will be discussed and approved by the Director of Music. He is familiar with a wide variety of literature and will be happy to assist you in finding music that reflects the your unique feelings, yet upholds the integrity of the worship service.

Changes or Cancellations

Please notify the church office as soon as possible if there are any changes in the date or time of your wedding. If the wedding is canceled 60 days prior to the scheduled date you will receive a full refund. If later than 60 days the deposit will be forfeited.

Rehearsal

The minister will be in charge of all the details. All rehearsals will be held at 5:00 PM the evening prior to the wedding, unless alternative plans are made with the minister and church. Promptness in arriving for the 45 minute rehearsal is important, as well. Everyone involved in the wedding, including parents, readers, and musicians should attend. Please bring the wedding license to the rehearsal for the minister.

The Wedding Day

The bride and her attendants may dress in the front parlor of the Backus House next door to the church (210 W. Madison St.) The groom and his attendants typically dress elsewhere prior to coming to the church. Let the wedding coordinator know if the Backus House is needed and whether arrangements need to be made for the groom and groomsmen.

The groom and his attendants need to be at the church at least forty-five minutes prior to the ceremony. The groom and best man may “relax” in the Reid Chapel prior to the ceremony. It is air-conditioned and bathrooms are available.

Ushers will normally begin seating guests thirty minutes prior to the wedding although larger weddings may require additional time for seating. The rule of thumb is one usher for every fifty guests.

A stand is available if you wish to have a guest book at the ceremony. Let the wedding coordinator know if it is needed. A friend or family member should oversee the book and take it to the reception.

Receiving lines are permitted in the narthex or outside. Again, let the wedding coordinator know if you plan to do such at the church and this can be set up at the rehearsal.

Other Concerns

Flowers and Decorations

It is really not necessary to use more than two floral arrangements in the sanctuary. The sanctuary is beautiful on its own. The decorations should be in keeping with the dignity of the wedding service and cannot cause damage to the facility. These may be taken or left for the Sunday morning’s worship. Please let the wedding coordinator know if they will be left. You may also decorate the ends of the pews as long as no tacks, nails or tape are used. You may use ribbon to tie on bows or floral decorations. All decorations must be in place no later than 1 and ½ hours prior to the service and you will be responsible for their removal within an hour after the ceremony.

Note: No aisle runners may be used since the heating ducts are placed beneath the center aisle and it is dangerous for women in heels. The aisle is 60 feet long.

Note: from the second week of December through early January, Christmas greenery and trees will be in place in the church.

Note: No weddings will be performed the weekend Easter is celebrated.

Candles

You may use the church's large brass unity candle holder. You will need two candles (1 ½" X 8" or 10") and one large candle (2" X 8" or 10"), these must be purchased from First and Franklin.

Bulletins

If you wish to create a bulletin, the minister will work on the content of it with you. You are responsible for having it produced and making sure it is delivered to the church at the time of the rehearsal.

Photographer

The photographer may take photographs during the processional and may take one non flash photograph from the balcony right before the recessional. For the benefit of all, from the time the minister begins to speak through the benediction, photography of any kind is prohibited. The service may also be video taped as long as natural light is used and the camera is placed on a tripod and is not moved during the service. Please have the photographer speak with the minister prior to the ceremony. He/she will be pleased to cooperate with the wedding party in posing for pictures.

If printing a bulletin, it is recommended that the following wording be included in the program: "Because this is a worship service, we ask that guests please refrain from taking photos during the ceremony."

Rice

Since the church doors empty out onto a busy city sidewalk, no rice or birdseed may be thrown. Rose petals or blown bubbles are allowed outside.

Church Receptions

You may hold your reception in the Reid Chapel or in the Backus House. There is an additional fee for the use of these spaces. We are able to accommodate 60 people seated or 100 for a stand up buffet. The reception must be catered and utensils and plates must be supplied by the caterer.

Marriage License

To obtain a license both parties must:

- Be at least 18 years of age (proof required)
- Visit the Circuit Court Clerk's Office
Location: Clarence Mitchell Courthouse Building, Marriage License Department,
Room 628, 100 North Calvert Street, Baltimore, MD

Hours: 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM

Who Must Appear: Either bride-to-be or groom-to-be

- **ID Required:** Photo ID included Drivers License, Military ID, Passport, and your Birth Certificate if under age 22. You may also need both of your social security numbers.
- **Other Documents Required If Previously Married:** Death Certificate or Divorce Decree
- **License Available:** 48 Hours After Application (sometimes immediately) Cost: \$35 (cash)
Valid For: Six Months Valid In: Baltimore City

Other

Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the church or on the church grounds.

The minister respectfully requests that all members of the wedding party refrain from beverages containing alcohol prior to the rehearsal and prior to the wedding ceremony.



First and Franklin Presbyterian Church
 Donation Schedule for Non-Members' Weddings and Union Services

For the Wedding/Union of: _____
 Date of Ceremony: _____
 Address: _____
 Phone Number: _____
 Email: _____

Ceremonial Fees (Rehearsal and Service)

Use of Sanctuary	\$1500.00
Pastor (includes premarital/preunion counseling)	\$500.00
Director of Music and Organist (includes \$100.00 consultation fee)	\$350.00
Wedding Coordinator	\$250.00
Custodial Services	\$250.00
Soloist	\$200.00
Use of Backus House for dressing prior to service	No Charge

Receptions/Rehearsal Dinners

Backus House	Fee available upon request
Reid Chapel	Fee available upon request

Note:

1. First and Franklin Presbyterian Church's Director of Music and Organist must give permission for use of any outside musician. If the Director of Music is not used, he must still be compensated.
2. In order to schedule a wedding/union service, the completed application and a deposit of \$500.00 must be received by the church office. (Note: For cancellations received 60 days prior to the ceremony, a refund for unused services will be made. Cancellations with less than 60days notice, deposit will be forfeited.)
3. The total fee must be received 60 days in advance of the ceremony. If not, it will be removed from the church calendar.

Make checks payable to: The First and Franklin Street Presbyterian Church

Mailing address: 210 West Madison Street
 Baltimore, MD 21201-4693

The First and Franklin Street Presbyterian Church

210 W. Madison Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
410-728-5545

Wedding Application

Date of Application: _____

Wedding Date: _____ Time: _____ Number of Guests: _____

Rehearsal Date and Time: (See Wedding Booklet)

Bride's full name: _____

Birth date: _____ Religious Affiliation: _____

Residence: _____
(Address) (City) (State) (Zip)

Cell Phone: _____ Other Phone: _____

email: _____

Number of previous marriages: _____ Names and ages of children: _____

Bride's Mother: _____
(Name) (Phone)

Bride's Father: _____
(Name) (Phone)

Groom's full name: _____

Birth date: _____ Religious Affiliation: _____

Residence: _____
(Address) (City) (State) (Zip)

Cell Phone: _____ Other Phone: _____

email: _____

Number of previous marriages: _____ Names and ages of children: _____

Groom's Mother: _____
(Name) (Phone)

Groom's Father: _____
(Name) (Phone)

Couple's future residence: _____
(Address) (City) (State) (Zip)

Officiating Clergy: _____
(Name) (Phone) (email)

Church: _____ Religious Affiliation: _____

(Address) (City) (State) (Zip)

Maid of Honor: _____ Best Man: _____

Attendants: _____

Flower Children: _____ Ring Bearers: _____

Musicians and Soloists: _____

Readers: _____

Wedding Planner: _____
(Name) (Phone)

Photographer: _____ Videographer: _____

Florist: _____ Will flowers be left for Sunday Worship? _____

Time flowers will arrive at church: _____

Signature: _____

Office Use Only

Deposit received: _____ Paid with Check # _____ in the amount of: \$ _____

Balance Due by: (60 days before wedding date): _____

Balance \$ _____ Date paid: _____