

# First & Franklin Presbyterian Church

## Weddings

(rev. June 2023)



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## **Your Christian Wedding**

This booklet explains the basic elements for a marriage ceremony at First & Franklin Presbyterian Church. It has been approved by The Committee (also known as Session or the governing board) of First & Franklin Presbyterian Church and includes the procedures, 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.

By requesting that marriage ceremony be performed at First & Franklin Presbyterian Church you are asking for a service of worship, and God to bless your marriage. Participating in this 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.

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 must be a professing Christian.
- A conference with the couple will be held with First & Franklin's Wedding Coordinator and Minister of Music & Arts/Organist before final confirmation of the wedding.
- The presiding minister will offer to the couple options for wording of the service. The couple is welcome to add other readings but the minister has the final say over the ceremony.
- The Session of First & Franklin Presbyterian Church has final approval over all aspects of 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**

### **Sanctuary**

Our sanctuary is incredibly beautiful, designed by Norris Starkweather and was completed in the 1859. 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: Until fall 2023, there is not a wheelchair accessible restroom in the sanctuary building.) The church can comfortably seat 500 people.

### **Backus House**

Backus House, located next door to the church is available for the bridal party before the wedding for dressing and photographs. The house, also designed by Starkweather, is a beautiful home featuring a magnificent spiral staircase. Refurbished in 2005, it is a wonderful setting for wedding photos. Unfortunately, the building is not handicap accessible.

### **Parking**

The church access to use of a parking lot accessed off Howard Street, one block away. We have a few reserved spaces in this lot and other spaces that can be used with arrangement through the church office. Public parking is available on the streets surrounding the church as well as at Maryland General Hospital garage (one block from the church.)

## Ceremony Related Items

### Clergy

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.

The Session of First & Franklin Presbyterian Church must grant approval for any guest minister. The presiding minister in charge of the wedding ceremony will work with you in creating the service.

### Counseling

If you wish to be married by the Pastor of First & Franklin Presbyterian Church you will be expected to attend three pre-nuptial counseling sessions. These will be scheduled at the convenience of the parties involved. Please note: If the minister is convinced that a true commitment is lacking for either party 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.

### Wedding Coordinator

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 Session. Outside private wedding planners must work with the church's coordinator for all events which take place within church buildings.

- The Wedding Coordinator shows the sanctuary, chapel, and Backus House to a potential couple and acts as a liaison between Session, Minister of Music, Custodian and the couple.
- Wedding Coordinator will be present at the rehearsal to be a liaison with the wedding party, church staff, and musicians and will ensure an efficient rehearsal process.
- 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 assists the pastor and wedding party to ensure that the ceremony proceeds in a timely and respectful manner.

### Minister of Music & Arts / Organist

The Minister of Music will serve as the principal musician for the service. During the staff conference, the Minister of Music will assist in selecting music that reflects your unique feelings yet upholds the integrity of the service of worship.

Please do not invite musicians (including, but not limited to organists, pianists, other instrumentalists and vocalists) without the Minister of Music & Arts permission. All outside musicians require prior permission to participate.

Due to the planning, coordination and oversight required, even when outside musicians are used, the fee for our Minister of Music & Arts / Organist will always be included in the overall ceremonial fees.

### 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 congregation may join in hymns and other musical forms of praise and prayer. Because a wedding is a service of worship, the liturgical guidelines for music are subject to the same standards as music for any other worship service at First & Franklin Presbyterian Church.

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. **No**

**recorded music in any form will be permitted.** All musical selections will be discussed and approved by the Minister of Music & Arts.

### **Communion**

The policies the Presbyterian Church (USA) and First & Franklin state that if the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is to be included in a wedding ceremony, the elements must be served to the entire assembly of guests. Communion must be approved by Session

“The invitation to the Lord's Supper is extended to all who have been baptized, remembering that access to the Table is not a right conferred upon the worthy, but a privilege given to the undeserving who come in faith, repentance, and love. In preparing to receive Christ in this Sacrament, the believer is to confess sin and brokenness, to seek reconciliation with God and neighbor, and to trust in Jesus Christ for cleansing and renewal. Even one who doubts or whose trust is wavering may come to the Table in order to be assured of God's love and grace in Christ Jesus”  
(Book of Order, W-2.4011a).

### **Children in the Wedding**

We believe children are an important part of the life of the church, and we support the age-appropriate inclusion of children in wedding ceremonies. In consideration of the age and enjoyment of the children in your lives, we suggest that children ages 5 to 10 years participate in the procession with the adults, and then sit for the remainder of the service. We also strongly suggest that children younger than 5 years be accompanied by an adult during the procession.

### **Photography and Videography**

The photographer may take flash photographs during the processional and the recessional. No flash photography during service; photographs may be taken from rear of sanctuary and balcony. The service may also be videotaped as long as natural light is used and the camera is placed on a tripod and is not moved during the service.

Please instruct your guests that photography during the service is not allowed at First & Franklin. Photography by guests distracts from both the purpose and solemnity of the occasion. Your wedding is a service of worship and should be respected as such.

### **Audio Engineer**

As part of the regular fees, we will provide basic audio services, consisting of microphones for the pastor and for readers. The basic audio services do not include microphones for musicians (which are generally not needed in our sanctuary), or any additional setup of equipment. If advanced audio/video services are needed, additional fees will apply. (see page 8 for more information)

### **Programs**

All programs are the responsibility of the wedding couple and must include the following wording.

*As this wedding is a service of worship, there may be no photography or videography during the service. Thank you for your help in celebrating our special day.*

A draft of the program must be submitted to the First & Franklin Wedding Coordinator for approval.

### **Flowers and Decorations**

Two fresh floral arrangements are permitted in the sanctuary and should be in keeping with the dignity of the wedding service. These may be taken or left for Sunday mornings worship. You may also decorate the ends of the pews with tie on bows or fresh floral decorations. No tacks, nails, clip or tape may be used. All decorations must be in place no later than 90 minutes prior to the service and you will be responsible for their removal within an hour after the ceremony.

If you plan to have a flower person sprinkle flowers in the aisle before the bride processes, only silk petals may be used. Fresh flower petals can get ground into our carpet and stain.

Note: No aisle runners are permitted as we have a carpeted aisle with a couple air handling grates. It is difficult to secure aisle runners in a way that prevents them from bunching or creating hazards, especially for anyone in heels. We will make sure that all open grates are covered for your ceremony.

### **Candles**

You may use the church's large brass unity candle holder and/or the candelabras, Candles these must be purchased from First & Franklin.

### **Rice**

Since the church doors empty out onto a busy city sidewalk, no rice or birdseed may be thrown.

## **Other Important Items**

### **Church Membership**

When neither you nor your fiancé is a member of this church, you will be invited to attend services of worship. While you are not required to join a 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.

### **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 of any monies paid. If later than 60 days the deposit of \$500 will be forfeited.

### **Wedding Rehearsal**

All rehearsals will be held after 4:00 p.m. day prior to the wedding and last no more than 45 minutes. Punctuality is expected. All members of the wedding party, including parents and readers need to attend. **Please bring the wedding license to the rehearsal for the minister.**

### **The Wedding Day**

The party and attendants may dress in the front parlor of the Backus House. *No arrangements can be made for bringing wedding dresses/suits to the church overnight, in the event you select to dress at the church.*

The party and attendants need to be at the church at least sixty minutes prior to the ceremony and may "relax" in the Reid Memorial Chapel prior to the ceremony. It is air-conditioned and restrooms 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.

### **Rehearsal Dinners and Receptions**

You may hold your rehearsal dinner or 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. Any use of alcohol must be approved by First & Franklins Session.

### **Smoking**

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

### **Alcoholic Beverages**

The Session and staff of First & Franklin respectfully request that all members of the wedding party refrain from beverages containing alcohol prior to the rehearsal and prior to the wedding ceremony. Any consumption of alcoholic beverages at dinners and receptions must be approved by the Session of First & Franklin and must comply with all local ordinances.

**Marriage License**

The wedding couple is responsible for obtaining a marriage license and you must bring it with you to your wedding rehearsal.

Marriage licenses are handled by the Circuit Court of Baltimore City, and you can find more information at <https://www.baltimorecity.gov/answers/citywide/social-civic-services>



## Donation Schedule & Application For Non-Member Weddings

Deposit – A \$500 deposit must be made at the time of the wedding application. The deposit is **in addition** to any fees below. If there are no damages and all contractual obligations are met, the deposit will be returned to the payee within 2 weeks after the wedding date. \$500

### Ceremonial Fees

- Rehearsal and Service: includes use of Sanctuary for rehearsal & ceremony, Basic Audio Services\*, Backus House on wedding day, services of Minister of Music & Arts / Organist, Wedding Coordinator, and Custodian \$3000

### Optional Fees

- Pastor (if not using your own) – includes premarital counseling \$500
- Soloist (each) \$200
- Advanced Audio \* \$400
- Advanced Audio + Video Streaming \* \$550
- Unity Candle \$50
- Candelabras (with candles) \$40
- Pew Candles \$100

### Receptions & Rehearsal Dinners

- Reid Chapel Upon Request
- Backus House Upon Request

\* If the wedding requires more than basic audio, the fee for either Advanced Audio or Advanced Audio plus Video Streaming will be added to the Ceremonial Fees. Please see Audio and Streaming options on page 8 for more information.

Make checks payable to: First & Franklin Presbyterian Church

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



## Audio and Streaming Options for Weddings at First & Franklin

### **Basic Audio**

- 1 microphone for Pastor (typically a lavalier mic)
- 1 microphone for readers (pulpit mic)
- Audio Engineer will be present for wedding ceremony only

### **Advanced Audio**

- 1 microphone for Pastor (typically a lavalier mic)
- 1 microphone for readers (pulpit mic)
- Additional microphones as needed for amplification or third-party recording
- Audio Engineer will be present for both the wedding rehearsal and ceremony

### **Advanced Audio + Streaming and/or Recording**

- 1 microphone for Pastor (typically a lavalier mic)
- 1 microphone for readers (pulpit mic)
- Additional microphones as needed for amplification/streaming/recording
- Video Camera setup for streaming/recording
- Streaming to web via Zoom/Facebook or similar platform
- Audio Engineer will be present for both the wedding rehearsal and ceremony



# First & Franklin Presbyterian Church

## Wedding Application

### Application Process:

1. Tour & Meeting with First & Franklin staff
2. Two-week courtesy hold can be placed on your date (if available)
3. Application and \$500 deposit to hold your wedding date
4. First & Franklin Session (governing board) will approve wedding
5. First & Franklin staff will schedule meetings to coordinate details for the service, including music, readings, decorations, etc.
6. The full balance for the wedding is due **no less** than 60 days before the wedding date.

Date of Application: \_\_\_\_\_

Wedding Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Guests: \_\_\_\_\_

Rehearsal Date and Time: (See Wedding Booklet) \_\_\_\_\_

Party One Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Religious Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street Address) (City) (State) (Zip)

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Other Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Previous Marriages: \_\_\_\_\_

Names and ages of children: \_\_\_\_\_

Mother: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name) (Phone)

Father: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name) (Phone)

Party Two Full name: \_\_\_\_\_

Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Religious Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street Address) (City) (State) (Zip)

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Other Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Previous Marriages: \_\_\_\_\_

Names and Ages of Children: \_\_\_\_\_

Mother: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name) (Phone)

Father: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name) (Phone)

Couple's Future Residence: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Address) (City) (State) (Zip)

Officiating Clergy: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name) (Phone) (Email)

Church: \_\_\_\_\_ Religious Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street Address, City, State, Zip)

Person of Honor: \_\_\_\_\_ Best Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Attendants: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Flower Children: \_\_\_\_\_ Ring Bearers: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Readers: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Wedding Planner: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name) (Phone)

Photographer: \_\_\_\_\_ Videographer: \_\_\_\_\_

Florist: \_\_\_\_\_ Will flowers be left for Sunday Worship? \_\_\_\_\_

Time flowers will arrive at church: \_\_\_\_\_

Please initial next to each of the items below, and then sign the application.

\_\_\_\_\_ In order to schedule a wedding 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. The deposit will be forfeited for cancellations with less than 60 days notice.)

\_\_\_\_\_ The balance must be received 60 days in advance of the ceremony; otherwise the date will be removed from the church calendar.

\_\_\_\_\_ First & Franklin's Minister of Music & Arts / Organist must grant permission for any outside musician to participate in the ceremony or to use any church instruments.

\_\_\_\_\_ The wedding day is allotted four hours. If you plan to need any space for more than four hours, additional fees will apply as part of the overall fees. If the wedding is delayed, the additional charge is \$125 per hour or any part thereof and will be withheld from the refund of the deposit.

I have read and understand all the terms in the booklet and agree thereto.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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Office Use Only

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

Balance Due by: (60 days before wedding date): \_\_\_\_\_

Balance \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Date paid: \_\_\_\_\_