

Wedding Policy

First Presbyterian Church of Edmond, Oklahoma

(Approved by Session on June 23, 2008)

You are on the threshold of one of the greatest events in life - your marriage! We are happy that you wish to have the wedding ceremony performed here, and we will do our best to insure that your wedding day and the years of your marriage are filled with the love of God in Jesus Christ!

With that in mind, please know that we approach your wedding ceremony as a worship service and your marriage as a sacred, life-long commitment. The policies which follow are intended to enhance this understanding expressed in the Directory for Worship of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as follows:

Christian marriage should be celebrated in the place where the community gathers for worship.

As a service of Christian worship, the marriage service is under the direction of the minister and the supervision of the session. The marriage ordinarily takes place in a special service which focuses upon marriage as a gift of God and as an expression of the Christian life.

As a worship service, your wedding ceremony will include not only your vows, but also prayers, often music, and a message appropriate to the day. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is permissible, but only as authorized by the Session of the church and inclusive of all baptized attendees at the wedding. Every aspect of the wedding – the ceremony, the decorations, the decorum – should bring honor and glory to God.

Honoring the *Oklahoma Marriage Initiative*

The Session of First Presbyterian Church of Edmond believes thoughtful and intentional pre-marriage preparation is vital to the success of all marriages regardless of age or circumstance. We pray you will be blessed by these opportunities and will consider each to be a special wedding gift from our church to you! With this in mind:

Weddings at First Presbyterian Church of Edmond will not be scheduled until you have completed the FOCCUS evaluation and the follow up with a trained Mentor Facilitator. Because of its importance our church has become part of the *Oklahoma Marriage Initiative* and has adopted the following standards for all engaged couples seeking to be married in our church, including those officiated by a guest pastor:

- A preparation period of at least four months.
- Pre-Marriage Ministry

FOCCUS, Inc. Inventory (Facilitating Open Couple Communication, Understanding & Study) is a self-diagnostic inventory designed to help couples learn more about themselves and their unique relationship. It is not a test nor meant as a predictor of success or failure in marriage. It is a tool to help couples name and work through issues before marriage. *FOCCUS, Inc. Inventory* is facilitated by an assigned mentor couple or pastor. You may expect to meet with your Mentor Couple several times prior to the wedding and several times during your first year of marriage.

A mentor couple is a more experienced couple who empowers a newly married couple through sharing resources and relational experiences. The relationship begins with the initial *FOCCUS, Inc. Inventory* and continues through the first year of marriage.

If you are not being married by a pastor from our church and/or live away, you may take the *FOCCUS, Inc. Inventory* and follow-up through your home church or community. A letter or certificate of completion will be required. If you are in the military and living out of state, *FOCCUS, Inc. Inventory* is available through most branches of the service and can be taken on the base where you are stationed.

As a couple, you will be expected to attend a Together Forever Retreat, offered by our church several times during the year. If distance makes this a hardship, you may request from the pastor who will perform your wedding, permission to attend a workshop of similar length and content at your home church or community. This will be in addition to the pre-marital mentoring. If participating in a pre-marital workshop other than the “Together Forever Retreat”, please provide the Wedding Coordinator with the name of the workshop and a letter of completion from either your Pastor or facilitator of the workshop.

Getting Started

Members and their immediate family (parents, children, and grandchildren) may be married in the church. (Members are defined as individuals who have officially joined the church and are on our membership rolls.) Please make a personal appointment with a member of our pastoral staff to talk about your wedding. You must secure a pastor's agreement to perform the ceremony. If you want to have a pastor from outside our church officiate at your wedding, a letter of request must be sent to the Session (our governing body) which includes information about the pastor's credentials and indicates that pastor's willingness to abide by this policy. Notification of authorization will come by return mail from the Clerk of Session.

Scheduling Your Wedding

YOUR WEDDING WILL BE SCHEDULED FOR A SPECIFIED NUMBER OF HOURS BUT NOT THE ENTIRE DAY OF THE WEDDING. Because other activities and events may be going on within the church, we ask that you adhere to the areas of the church and the times that have been scheduled for you.

All weddings are scheduled through our Wedding Coordinator, whose name and number are available by calling the receptionist in the church office at 341-3602, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

- For your rehearsal, the SANCTUARY may be reserved for two hours on the evening before your wedding.
- On the day of your wedding, the SANCTUARY may be reserved for SIX hours for decorating, photographers, the ceremony and to remove flowers and decorations following the ceremony.
- In order to allow our staff time to prepare for Sunday worship, Saturday weddings will be scheduled no later than 7 P.M. and the Sanctuary vacated by 8 P.M.
- The GREAT HALL may be reserved for THREE hours on the day of your wedding.

- If your reception is held at the church, the designated RECEPTION ROOM (usually the GREAT HALL) may be reserved for six hours on the day of the wedding to decorate, hold the reception and remove flowers, food and decorations.
- All receptions must be over and the church vacated by 10 P.M. to accommodate our Custodian Staff.
- Dressing rooms for the Bride and for the Groom will be reserved for two hours before and one hour after the wedding.
- Weddings will not be scheduled during December or on any day the church is closed for a holiday.
- Sanctuary weddings will not be scheduled on Sunday.

Working With Our Wedding Coordinator

The Wedding Coordinator will:

- Contact the FOCCUS Inc. coordinator to schedule the FOCCUS inventory.
- Provide you the Wedding Reservation Form
- Ensure the date and times you have requested are available.
- Confirm your arrangements with the pastor
- Review the details of your plans with you.

Your date is not confirmed until

- The FOCCUS survey is completed and evaluated.
- The Wedding Information and Reservation form is completed
- and returned with \$100.00 deposit made payable to First Presbyterian Church
- The pastor has confirmed the arrangements.

The remainder of the total inclusive fee must be given to the Wedding Coordinator two weeks prior to your wedding.

All weddings regardless of size or location must be arranged through the Wedding Coordinator. Our Wedding Coordinator will be your primary contact in arranging all details of your wedding. As soon as your wedding has been scheduled and confirmed, our Wedding Coordinator will work with you from that point through your wedding day and will help you attend to the many details related to having your wedding in our church.

The Wedding Coordinator will schedule a time to meet with you and do the initial planning for your wedding, answering questions you have regarding the details of how weddings are conducted at our church. The Wedding

Coordinator will be present at your wedding rehearsal to help that event go smoothly and at your wedding, coordinating the activities of the wedding photographer, videographer and florist. The Wedding Coordinator also will help in the special seating of grandparents and parents, as well as with the processional and other matters, and is trained to put you at ease and to take care of the details that will make your wedding go smoothly.

Anticipating the Costs of Your Church Wedding

The cost to have a wedding in the Church Sanctuary is \$600 on non-holiday weekends and \$650 on holiday weekends (extra fees are for overtime pay for our hourly staff and apply to those holidays recognized in the Church Personnel Policy). This fee includes the services of the wedding coordinator, organist, sound and lighting technicians, and custodians for the rehearsal and wedding. It also includes the cost of the *FOCCUS* Survey, pre-marriage seminar, and equipment such as the candelabras, unity candle, and kneeling bench.

The costs for small, private weddings are dependent upon what staff are required and are assessed according to a separate fee structure available upon request. This includes weddings in the sanctuary, Prayer Chapel, or other rooms, and may involve charges covered in a separate Facilities Stewardship Policy.

Please be aware that honoraria or payment to soloists or other guest musicians are not included in the fees above. These are the responsibility of the wedding party, and usually the family of the bride.

Our Pastors do not charge a fee for weddings. A customary honorarium for your pastor for counseling and conducting the wedding may be discussed with the Wedding Coordinator, and is usually the responsibility of the groom.

The cost for the use of the Great Hall or another room for a reception is \$200.

Childcare, as needed, may be requested through the Wedding Coordinator and must be secured by the church's Childcare Coordinator. There is a two-hour minimum with charges pro-rated in 30-minute intervals after the two hours. The number of children attending will determine the number of workers needed, and charges will be assessed accordingly. Child care is available at a rate of \$10.00/hour/worker and requires a minimum of two persons for at least two hours (\$40 minimum).

Making Music Arrangements

Because you desire a church wedding, we want to help you make it an act of Christian worship in a spirit of reverence. Music is an important part of most ceremonies and you will want to give it careful consideration. Our Wedding Coordinator will put you in contact with our Director of Music who will be happy to help you select music for this very special occasion. Music suitable for the marriage service directs attention to God and expresses the faith of the church (*Directory for Worship, W-2.1004*). **Approval by the Director of Music is required for all music used in the ceremony, including musical selections, musicians, soundtracks, CD 's, etc.**

Our church has several soloists who can be secured through our Director of Music. Guest musicians chosen by the wedding party may be used, but are also subject to the approval of the Director of Music. All music elements need to be approved by the Director of Music. Music elements constitute but are not limited to: music selections, musicians, soundtracks, CDs, etc. The use of the organ is restricted to our church organists if they are available, or an organist approved by the Director of Music if one of our organists is not available. The Director of Music will have the sound system and technician available for a total of two hours for the rehearsal

and wedding. Please do not remove the choir mikes.

Having A Reception at Our Church

We would be pleased to provide a lovely place for you to have your wedding reception if you choose. All wedding receptions taking place in our church shall be coordinated and supervised by our Wedding Coordinator.

Your reception will need to be handled by a full service caterer. Please note that your caterer will not have access to our kitchen facilities, so food and drink will need to be prepared before bringing it to the church. If a caterer brings food or equipment which must be returned to them, they must plan to come back to the church immediately following the reception to pick up equipment no later than three hours after the reception starts.. We have no place to store caterer's equipment at the church and the church will not accept responsibility for it.

Wedding receptions are ordinarily held in the Great Hall, but other rooms are available. All food and drink must be confined to the room reserved for the reception. Red punch and chocolate fountains are not allowed in any carpeted room. The fee for a reception includes the use of the facility, tables, chairs, and custodial services.

If dancing is desired at the reception a room other than the Great Hall must be used and the time constraints mentioned elsewhere in this policy must be observed.

Flowers, Candles, and Photography

Wedding flowers and decorations must be provided only by a professional florist. The bride and groom are responsible for advising their florist to check in with the Wedding Coordinator prior to decorating. If the church is decorated for special church seasons you should expect to use the seasonal decorations in your own decorating theme.

Only mechanical candles may be used. The Wedding Coordinator must approve candles not provided by the church.

You and your photographer should agree on a time for you to be ready well before the ceremony begins in order to provide you with the best pictures possible. Your photographer should be instructed to take as many pictures as possible before the wedding.

Once the Call to Worship has been given, only proper decorum for worship should be exercised. This includes refraining from photography during the service. Please inform family and friends of this prohibition. The use of a video camera is permitted, provided it is from an unobtrusive and fixed position approved by the Wedding Coordinator.

A Few Other Important Matters

The communion table is reserved for the elements of communion. Pictures, flowers and or other decorations are not allowed.

Alcoholic beverages of any kind and tobacco use are explicitly prohibited in the church's facilities. All food and beverages are restricted to the room contracted for the reception and should not be taken into other areas of the building.

Flower girls are to drop dried or artificial flower petals when walking down the aisle. Unfortunately, fresh flower petals stain the carpet.

Birdseed, confetti, glitter or other items are not to be thrown inside or outside the church. No fireworks can be used in or outside the church. Bubbles are acceptable outside the church.

Any items that have been rented by you for your wedding are your responsibility and should be removed from our building immediately following the ceremony.

Any items belonging to members of the wedding party which are lost or misplaced will not be the responsibility of the church. Every precaution should be taken by the wedding party to secure all valuables.

Please designate a person to remove all gifts and vases of flowers from the church immediately following the wedding.

Make-up should be applied and hair styled prior to your arrival. Please do not bring fingernail polish or remover into the Parlor. Food served in the parlor should be refreshment type only, and coasters must be provided if drinks are served. The kitchenette adjacent to the Parlor is available for your use. Please do not move any furniture or chairs into or out of these rooms. Extra chairs can be provided upon request.

Items broken or damaged should be replaced or paid for by the person responsible for scheduling the wedding.

The pastors and staff of our church look forward to serving you in a positive manner during the events surrounding your wedding. Our Wedding Coordinator is ready and willing to provide expertise and wise counsel gained from experience. Please feel free to contact with any additional questions you might have. Our goal is to provide a wonderful setting for your wedding while also allowing for the other functions that are a part of the life of our church.

We look forward to working together with you to make your wedding the most special and sacred event possible, all to the glory of God, the author and designer of the institution of marriage!