

# Weddings at First Presbyterian Church

## WEDDINGS IN THE CHURCH

Marriage is a gift from God given for the well-being of the entire human family. For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out, in the presence of God, their discipleship to Jesus Christ and their devotion to one another. In the service of Christian marriage, a lifelong commitment is made to each other which is witnessed and acknowledged by the gathered community of faith. In weddings performed at First Presbyterian Church one or both of the couple will be professing Christians who are deciding that their wedding is to be a Worship Service. Therefore, all elements of the service should focus on praise and thanksgiving to God. We expect all members of the wedding party and witnesses of the ceremony to participate in an attitude of reverence and Christian joy.

## THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY

We are pleased you are considering First Presbyterian Church of Sumter for your wedding and we extend to you our best wishes at this joyful time. During the next few very busy months, you will make decisions regarding one of the most important events in your life. This *Wedding Handbook* of policies has been adopted by the First Presbyterian Church Session and conforms to the Marriage Guidelines (**W-4.9000**) listed in the Presbyterian Church (USA) *Book of Order*. **Marriage, as a service of Christian worship, is under the direction of the Minister and is approved by the Session.** Our Minister, Wedding Coordinator and Wedding Director will assist you as you plan all aspects of your wedding.

## GETTING STARTED AND SETTING THE DATE

We extend our Congratulations! **After reading this *Wedding Handbook*, contact the Wedding Coordinator, Linda Hogon at 803-840-7671 or lhogon03@yahoo.com, to discuss the wedding date.** At a follow-up appointment, she will review with you the Handbook as well as answer questions about the church facilities, its equipment and the cost.

1. Your requested wedding date will be officially placed on the church calendar after the Wedding Coordination schedules the use of our facilities as well as the availability of our Minister, Organist, Sound/Lighting Technician, and Wedding Director.
2. Confirmation of the date will be secured by submitting the deposit and the Wedding Reservation Form to the church office concurrent with our Member/Non-Member policies.
3. You will receive a letter from the Wedding Coordinator confirming your wedding date.

### Reserving the Church

Our facilities may be reserved by members and those persons with immediate family ties (children and grandchildren) of First Presbyterian Church. Non-members may schedule their wedding by submitting a written request to seek approval by the Session which usually meets on the fourth Monday of each month. You will be notified once approval has been given.

### Scheduling the Wedding Date

We will not schedule a wedding from the last Sunday in Lent thru Easter Sunday (dates vary) nor from mid-December thru the first Sunday of January. We will not schedule two weddings on the same day. We will not schedule a wedding if there is a confirmed activity planned at FPC. Liturgical colors and seasonal items and decorations may not be moved or rearranged for weddings. Ceremonies should begin no later than 7 pm and photographs should conclude no later than 45 minutes after the completion of the ceremony.

### Officiating Ministers

One of our Ministers, in concurrence with the Session, is required to officiate at weddings. If you desire to have another Ordained Minister assist during the ceremony, he/she must be approved by the Session of First Presbyterian Church by submitting the Officiating Guest Minister Request Form at least 120 days before the wedding. You will be notified once approval has been given.

### Pre-marital Counseling

Counseling should be scheduled with the one of our ministers by contacting our office at least 120 days before your wedding. He/she will instruct and discuss with the bride and groom the privileges and obligations which are assumed in marriage.

**WEDDING COORDINATOR—Linda Hogon**

**WEDDING DIRECTORS—Micki Harritt and Linda Hogon**

Our **Wedding Coordinator** and **Wedding Director** serve separate roles, however the Coordinator may serve as both. The Coordinator is the liaison between you and the church to schedule your wedding date as well as be available, as needed, for concerns that are not handled by the Wedding Director.

The **Wedding Coordinator** works with the Minister as well as the Wedding Director and the church staff to insure careful planning for your important event. After the date is secured by submitting the Wedding Reservation Form and the deposit, she will meet with the bride to discuss the Wedding Handbook and provide forms for those assisting with the wedding—florist, musician/s, photographer, and caterer, if using our Fellowship Hall for the reception. The signed forms from those persons involved with your wedding should be returned to the church office or Wedding Coordinator at least 30 days prior to the wedding date.

The **Wedding Director** will meet with you approximately three months prior to your wedding to plan specific details for your wedding as well as supervise and direct the rehearsal and wedding ceremony.

**MARRIAGE LICENSE**

We recommend that the Marriage License be secured at least two weeks before the wedding.

- The bride and groom together must apply at the Probate Judge’s Office at the Sumter County Courthouse.
- The license should be given to the Officiating Minister at the rehearsal or at another time prior to the wedding.
- Signatures for the completion of the Marriage Certificate will be made after the marriage ceremony.
- As required by law, the Minister will give one copy to the bride and groom and mail the other copies to the County Judge of Probate.

**SEATING CAPACITY & USE OF FACILITIES**

Sanctuary . . .	600	Fellowship Hall	
Chapel . . . . .	150	Seated . . . . .	150      Standing . . . . . 350

Occupancy of the Church building will be limited to 2 hours for the rehearsal and 5 hours for the wedding including preparation, ceremony, photographs and departure. If the reception is held in the Fellowship Hall, the time will be extended. The building must be vacated within one hour after the ceremony when the reception is not held at the church. It is to be understood that our church facilities should remain as they were found upon arrival. Alcoholic beverages and smoking are not permitted on church premises.

## FLOWERS & DECORATIONS

Flowers add to the inherent beauty and dignity of our sanctuary but their modesty will allow greater attention on the wedding as a worship service.

- To maintain the beauty of our church, only the use of floral tape or clips is acceptable. No staples, thumbtacks, tape or wire may be used on any surface.
- All flowers should be in the sanctuary at least two hours before the ceremony. Contact the Wedding Director to schedule a delivery time.
- Flowers and/or decorations will be removed after the ceremony by our custodial staff and put in a designated location for pick up no later than Monday, unless otherwise arranged. If you would like to leave your floral arrangement for the Sunday worship service, it is advisable that you indicate your desires early enough to be included on the church's floral calendar. The wording for an acknowledgement that will appear in the Sunday bulletin should be submitted to the church office at least two weeks before your wedding.
- All flowers must be in clean, rust free containers.
- Any flower containers on furniture or carpeted areas must be placed in clear, waterproof plastic liners.
- The central floral arrangement must not exceed a height of 24 inches to allow the Organist a clear view of the sanctuary.
- Flower girls may only drop silk petals.
- Pedestals, baskets, and/or candelabra should be in place prior to the rehearsal with consideration given to allow space and movement for the wedding party during the ceremony.
- The church has a kneeling bench, a pair of candelabrum, candle holders, a unity candlestand and electric single candles for the windows available for use. Chase candles must be used in the candle holders and candelabra and may be purchased from the church. No other flammable materials may be used in the decorations.
- Either a white or liturgical seasonal colors will be hung from the pulpit for weddings.
- The Sanctuary decorations during the Advent and Christmas season will not be changed or moved. However, wedding floral designs may be incorporated.
- Aisle cloths or runners are not allowed.
- The pulpit and lectern are stationary. The Communion Table and cross must remain on the chancel. The Wedding Director must grant permission for the movement of any other sanctuary items.

## MUSIC

The music for a wedding ceremony, as for all worship services, is a way to express gratitude and to praise God for the gift of marriage. There is a rich array of sacred music from which to choose and the Organist of First Presbyterian Church will approve all music. After meeting with the Wedding Coordinator, you should make an appointment with our Organist at least four months before the wedding. She will direct all musical elements of the wedding service including selection of music and directing any vocalists or instrumentalists that the bride wishes to include. Pre-recorded music may not be used. The Organist, as well as vocalists or instrumentalists, will attend the rehearsal.

## SOUND & LIGHTING

A technician will be assigned to facilitate the sound & lighting needs for your wedding. Arrangements for a video of your wedding ceremony can be made through the Wedding Coordinator.

## PHOTOGRAPHY

Photographs are a valuable and lasting remembrance of your wedding and we strive to cooperate with your contracted photographer within the guidelines of our policies. Photos made by wedding guests during the ceremony are discouraged.

- Photographs taken on the church grounds and in the sanctuary must be completed prior to the arrival of wedding guests.
- Wedding party and family pictures taken before and after the ceremony should be well planned with the photographer prior to the wedding in order to avoid confusion and delays.
- All persons who will be photographed after the wedding should be present in the sanctuary.
- Photographs of the bride and groom signing the Marriage Certificate will be taken first after the ceremony.
- Completion of photographs and departure should take place no later than 45 minutes after the wedding ceremony.
- Photographers must dress appropriately and must adhere to the instructions of the Wedding Director.

### **Photographs during the ceremony**

- **Photographers are not allowed to stand on pews for any photographs or take pictures during a spoken or sung prayer.**
- **Photographers must not go down the aisles of the sanctuary to take pictures during the wedding ceremony or during the processional or recessional.**
- **Flash photography is prohibited once the service begins and photos can only be taken from the balcony or through the open Narthex doors.**

## VIDEOGRAPHY

The Sound & Lighting Technician is available to video your wedding upon request through the Wedding Coordinator at least six weeks prior to the wedding.

- The video camera set up an hour before the ceremony must not obstruct the view of wedding guests.
- Any unmanned video camera in the choir loft must not attract attention.
- Videographers must dress appropriately and must adhere to the instructions of the Wedding Director.

## PREPARATION ROOMS

**The Bride's Room**—Parlor and Restroom—is located below the sanctuary and provides dressing space for the bride and her attendants. First Presbyterian Church cannot accept responsibility for delivery of the wedding dress prior to the wedding day.

**The Groom's Room**—Friendship Classroom and nearby Restroom—is located on the second floor of the Fellowship Hall.

Snacks and non-alcoholic drinks are permitted in these rooms with care given to the furnishings. All personal and food items must be removed from the preparation areas **before leaving for the reception**.

Please designate someone to take responsibility for valuables left in the preparation rooms during the wedding. First Presbyterian Church cannot assume this responsibility.

## NURSERY

A nursery for small children during the wedding ceremony can be arranged through the Wedding Coordinator. Our Child Safety Policy requires at least two adults in the nursery even if there is only one child under our care. If you desire the use of our nursery staff, please let the Wedding Coordinator know the approximate number of children that will attend. If you expect a large number of children, additional help may need to be arranged.

## BUILDING MONITOR

For the safety of you, your guests, and FPC all weddings require a Building Monitor to be present since the facilities will be unlocked and accessible before and during the wedding. This service is provided by the church and is included in your wedding cost.

## REHEARSAL

The wedding rehearsal, usually scheduled at 5:30 or 6:00 on the day before the wedding, is a very important part of your wedding because it defines the timeline and helps those participating become comfortable with all aspects of the wedding ceremony. ***All participants are asked to arrive fifteen minutes before the rehearsal time so that it can begin promptly and last no longer than one hour.*** The Wedding Director and the Officiating Minister will conduct the rehearsal with the Organist and any other musicians in attendance as well.

The marriage license, which will be signed after the wedding ceremony, may be given to the Minister at the rehearsal.

## GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- **The use of tobacco and alcoholic beverages is not permitted in any part of the church or grounds.**
- Food or drink provided for the wedding party prior to the ceremony is allowed only in the Bride's and Groom's preparation rooms.
- It is suggested that you allow one usher or groomsman for each 50 guests.
- First Presbyterian Church assumes no responsibility for deliveries to the church—cake, dress, etc.
- Any damages to the church facilities or furnishings caused by the wedding party or guests will be the financial responsibility of the person signing the Wedding Reservation Form.
- The church assumes no liability or responsibility for the security of personal items on church premises. You may wish to assign an individual to hold the valuables or to safeguard them in a designated place.

## RECEPTION

First Presbyterian Church welcomes your use of our Fellowship Hall and kitchen for your Wedding Reception. The Wedding Director will review the following policies with you and help you with your specific arrangements.

The Wedding Director will attend and represent the church in all matters.

- The bride and groom and immediate family members (fathers and mothers) may have a ceremonial first dance.
- Our amplification system is available for use during your reception.
- Tables and chairs are available for use during your reception.
- The caterer's use of the kitchen is only available for warming food, rather than cooking, baking, or food preparation.
- The tables must have adequate protection from hot food and beverages.
- The caterer or rental agency should furnish all serving equipment and supplies, including trays, punch bowls and cups, silver, glassware, china, and linens.
- Delivery of the wedding cake should be coordinated with the caterer or other responsible party.
- It is the responsibility of the caterer using the kitchen and Fellowship Hall to leave them in a clean and orderly condition within a maximum of 2 hours after the reception.
- Breakage costs will be assumed by the bridal couple.
- Bubbles are acceptable. Other items must be approved by the Wedding Coordinator.

## WEDDING SERVICES FEES

Members of First Presbyterian Church pay a share of the care and maintenance of our church through ongoing contributions to the church budget and building fund. Non-members pay Basic Usage Fees which contribute to expenses incurred for the wedding. All wedding parties pay the Staff Fees and Honorarium.

*After scheduling the date with the Wedding Coordinator and submitting the deposit and Wedding Reservation Form, you will receive a confirmation letter from the Wedding Coordinator.*

*The balance of the Wedding Services Fees must be remitted to the First Presbyterian Church office at least one month before the wedding. The Honorarium, presented by the groom to the Minister/s, may be given at the rehearsal. The person signing the Wedding Reservation Form and the Wedding Services Invoice is responsible for the care of the church property and the fees.*

WEDDING SERVICES FEES	MEMBERS	NON-MEMBERS
<b>Deposit</b>	\$150	\$500
<b>Basic Usage Fees</b>		
Sanctuary		\$800
Chapel		\$300
Kitchen & Fellowship Hall—Rehearsal		\$300
Kitchen & Fellowship Hall—Reception		\$300
Chase candles—used in candelabrum	\$15	\$15
<b>Staff Fees</b>		
Custodial—Sanctuary & Related Areas	\$250	\$250
Custodial—Chapel & Related Areas	\$ 75	\$ 75
Custodial—Kitchen & Fellowship Hall	\$300	\$300
Building Monitor--\$15/hr	To be determined	To be determined
Wedding Director—Wedding	\$200	\$300
Wedding Director—Reception	\$ 50	\$ 50
Organist—Basic Fee includes one soloist, if applicable, and \$50 for each additional musician	\$300 To be determined	\$300 To be determined
Nursery—at least 2 workers at \$25/each	To be determined based on anticipated number of children	To be determined based on anticipated number of children
Technician—Sound & Lighting	\$50	\$50
Technician—Video of wedding	\$75	\$75
Technician—Video of rehearsal or reception, each	\$125	\$125
DVD copies—# _____ X \$5 each	\$5 each	\$5 each
<b>Honorarium</b>		
Given by the groom to the Officiating Minister at the rehearsal.	\$300 suggested	\$300 suggested

**WEDDING RESERVATION FORM**  
**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH                      SUMTER, SOUTH CAROLINA**

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Wedding \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Rehearsal \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Bride's Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ (Home), \_\_\_\_\_ (Work), \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell)

Bride's Parents \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ (Home), \_\_\_\_\_ (Work), \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell)

Groom's Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ (Home), \_\_\_\_\_ (Work), \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell)

Groom's Parents \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ (Home), \_\_\_\_\_ (Work), \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell)

Other Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ (Home), \_\_\_\_\_ (Work), \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell)

Approximate number of Wedding Guests \_\_\_\_\_ Approximate number of Reception Guests, if at FPC \_\_\_\_\_

Requested Guest Minister \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Church \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ (Home), \_\_\_\_\_ (Work), \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell)

Member of FPC, Sumter?  Yes  No

Related to a member of FPC, Sumter?  Yes  No

Name of member \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

**Rehearsal Needs:**

**Wedding Needs:**

Sanctuary  
 Chapel

Candelabra  
 Kneeling bench

Kitchen  
 Fellowship Hall

Sanctuary  
 Chapel  
 Nursery

Candelabra  
 Kneeling bench

Kitchen  
 Fellowship Hall

Your requested wedding date will be officially placed on the church calendar after the Wedding Coordinator schedules the use of our facilities as well as the availability of our Minister, Organist, and Wedding Director. Confirmation of the date will be secured by submitting the deposit and the Wedding Reservation Form to the church office. You will receive a letter from the Wedding Coordinator confirming your wedding date.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to abide by the policies as printed in the Wedding Handbook, to pay the balance of fees at least one month prior to the wedding date, and to be responsible for the use and care of the facilities used at First Presbyterian Church.

