

WEDDING POLICY FOR UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF KEOKUK

INTRODUCTION

The members of the United Presbyterian Church of Keokuk are pleased you wish to hold your wedding service in our sanctuary. Like you, we want the day to be a joyous and memorable event. To that end we have formulated the following policy to help with your planning.

Any persons who wish to be married in the United Presbyterian Church should be advised at the outset that all services which take place here shall be services of worship which reflect Christian belief and tradition. In any marriage service performed in this church, care will be taken to have a ceremony that is suitable in every respect to a worship service.

A wedding in a church differs from a civil marriage in several ways:

- * A Wedding Service is a worship service that is focused on God. God is recognized as the Author of love, the One who has brought the couple together, and the Power that will continue building the loving relationship of the couple.
- * The Bride and Groom are asking God to be a part of their union, not only on their wedding day but throughout their marriage.
- * A Christian marriage affirms that God has established good and just ways that couples should care for each other. The wedding service is a way of honoring God's decrees.

In order to honor the above principles, couples desiring to be married in the United Presbyterian Church will:

1. Meet with the Pastor for a series of premarital discussions. The purpose of these meetings is to explore the meaning of Christian marriage, to develop understandings that will make the transition to married life easier, and to talk about the wedding service.

2. Have an appreciation for the Christian principles underlying marriage and desire to be married in a ceremony that reflects these principles.

HOW TO SCHEDULE YOUR WEDDING

Approval of the Pastor is necessary in order that a wedding take place in the United Presbyterian Church of Keokuk, and then must be approved by the Session (church governing board). Member weddings may be placed on the church calendar and approved for any date in the future that does not conflict with regular church use. Non-member weddings may not be approved more than nine (9) months in advance of the wedding date. The date for the wedding service will not be confirmed until the couple has met with the Pastor and paid a \$100.00 deposit to the church. It is required that the Pastor of this church officiate at all weddings performed in the church. The Pastor may invite other ministers in good standing with their denominations when appropriate to assist and participate, and will determine his/her role and responsibilities.

SANCTUARY AND CHURCH BUILDING

The sanctuary and church building are the central places where our congregation worships, teaches, shares fellowship, and holds its various meetings. Please treat our facilities in the way you would expect an invited guest to treat your home.

No person or group will move or replace any items having to do with worship, furniture, classrooms, bulletin boards, banners, pictures, etc. Symbols of the church may not be removed or covered by decorations.

Decorations and floral arrangements are the responsibility of the families involved in the wedding. Do not use tape, which might mar the finishes in the building. All decorations, floral arrangements, reception items, and gifts need to be cleaned up and removed from the building **IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE WEDDING OR RECEPTION**, if held here.

We ask only birdseed or bubbles be used to shower the couple and that they are **DISTRIBUTED OUTSIDE THE CLOSED EXTERIOR DOOR.**

THE ORGANIST

The regular church organist will normally be the organist for any church ceremony. The regular organist must approve any other arrangement.

WEDDING MUSIC

Music can be other than sacred, but must be chosen in keeping with the religious nature of the ceremony. The Pastor and the organist must approve such music in advance of the time of rehearsal, and any "outside" organist, accompanist or soloist must be apprised of these requirements, and abide by them.

The Casavant pipe organ is a delicate instrument and requires certain expertise and knowledge to play. It is the privilege of the church's organist to provide both organ and piano music for your wedding. If the organist is unable to play, an organist of your own choosing may play, provided that person confers with and is approved by the church's organist.

LITURGIES

The liturgy for the ceremony will be one of those approved for use in the Presbyterian Church. Couples wishing to develop some part of the service themselves are expected to discuss this matter with the Pastor. The Pastor must approve any deviation from the Presbyterian liturgy.

Like any other worship service in the sanctuary, the Pastor is in charge of the wedding service. All arrangements, including words, ordering of service and components are to be made through him. During consultation with the Pastor, the service will be reviewed along with what it means to be married in a Presbyterian Church.

THE WEDDING PARTY

The wedding party must be present at the rehearsal as well as the wedding. This includes bride, groom, best man, maid/matron of honor, bridesmaids, groomsmen, junior attendants, ushers, musicians, and parents.

Generally, the size of the wedding party is a matter of choice of the couple to be married. The minimum numbers of attendants is two - a best man and a maid/matron of honor.

The number of ushers is dependent upon the number of guests expected at the wedding. A formula of one usher for every fifty guests is suggested. Two is a minimum number.

Those contemplating the use of a flower girl and/or ring bearer should consider the maturity of such persons. As a general rule, they should be at least four years of age.

THE LICENSE

The couple will provide the officiating minister with a valid Iowa wedding license at least five days in advance of the wedding ceremony. (An Iowa license is valid for one year.)

Certain information is required of the couple in order to complete the Iowa license and other information of record. The bride and groom are required by law to affix their signatures to the license to certify its truthfulness. The couple is advised to be as candid as possible in answering the questions of the Pastor and/or the church office.

FLOWERS

The church office should be notified of the delivery time of flowers.

The congregation is always grateful to have chancel flowers left in place for Sunday services.

CANDLES

There are legal restrictions governing the use of candles not in a proper candelabra. And, because of the heating and cooling system of the sanctuary, certain types of candles are required to be in compliance.

The church will provide a pair of candelabra and candles for a fee of \$25.00.(Please use gloves or cloth when handling the candelabrams to prevent tarnishing.)

Candles must not be placed in windowsills or on the pews in accordance with the Iowa State Fire Code.

PHOTOGRAPHS

Professional photographers should be instructed to check with the Pastor as soon as they arrive at the wedding. The Pastor will review with him/her restrictions. Under NO circumstances will there be any flash photography during the exchange of the vows and rings.

BRIDAL CONSULTANTS

The wedding party may use Professional bridal consultants only if they check with the Pastor in advance. It is assumed that such persons will attend the rehearsal in order to be fully aware of the procedures to be followed. At NO time will such persons interfere with the rehearsed procedures of which the Pastor is in charge.

The church wedding consultant is always available to answer any questions you may have. The church consultant may assist the Pastor at the rehearsal and the wedding to help the service run smoothly. The church wedding consultant is required to be present for your wedding.

There is adequate accommodation for the bride to dress at the church. However, any valuables left unattended are not the responsibility of the church.

ETIQUETTE

In addition to the rules of the Presbyterian Church, the normal rules of etiquette will be used in the formation of the ceremony.

At times, questions arise which etiquette does not address. In such instances, the officiating minister will work out a procedure with the bride and groom which is mutually satisfactory.

SPECIAL NOTE

Under NO circumstances will drugs or alcoholic beverages be brought onto church property. This prohibition includes all church buildings and parking lots. Smoking is also prohibited inside the building.

RECEPTION

If you will be using Fellowship Hall for your reception, all arrangements must be made through the Wedding Chairperson of Presbyterian Women (P.W.). The Wedding Chairperson must be contacted as soon as possible and will oversee all reception arrangements. P.W. will itemize their fees for you and these will be included in your final total.

FEES

All fees are to be given to the church office secretary NO LATER THAN THE REHEARSAL. They may be paid at any time prior to that. A current fee schedule is attached.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Dressing facilities for the bride and her attendants can be found upstairs in the choir rehearsal room or a room in the education wing.

Alcoholic beverages in any form are not to be served or consumed at any time on the premises of the church. Members of the wedding party who appear to be under the influence of alcohol or other substances will be asked to leave.

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

Non-flash pictures and video taking are welcome provided they do not disrupt the service. Equipment should not be positioned in noticeable places.

Children should not be left unattended during the rehearsal or the day of the wedding. There is to be no running around in the building or getting into areas that do not pertain to the wedding. A nursery with proper supervision is available if requested. (See Schedule of Wedding Fees for the cost of this service.)

The church is equipped with a sound system and no outside systems are to be brought in.

CANCELLATIONS

Written cancellation must be made by the bride or groom at least thirty (30) days before the date of the wedding for 75% of the deposit to be refunded. After that time, only 50% of the deposit will be refunded.

This \$100.00 deposit is to cover any damages or special cleaning fees and will be refunded after the wedding when the policies of the agreement have all been fulfilled. The bride or groom is also responsible for damage or cleaning costs beyond the \$100.00 deposit amount.

I/WE agree to abide by all regulations and requirements in the Wedding Policy materials, including that of paying for any damages.

BRIDE'S SIGNATURE

DATE

GROOM'S SIGNATURE

DATE