

# First Presbyterian Church



Dear Friend,

Congratulations! And thank you for your inquiry about our facilities for your upcoming wedding. We hope we will be able to assist you in hosting your wedding. But even more importantly, we desire to be a community of faith that assists couples before the wedding day and beyond in building both a loving and lasting relationship.

The wedding day has always been a significant event in peoples lives, but weddings are often more complex than they once were. This booklet will answer your questions regarding our wedding policy and expenses which will be incurred.

Feel free to discuss with the Wedding Coordinator any matters not discussed in this booklet. Also, please bring the enclosed forms with you to your meeting with the Wedding Coordinator.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

The Staff at First Presbyterian Church

**First Presbyterian Church**  
650 - 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North, Fargo, North Dakota 58102  
Phone: 701.293.6311 Fax: 701.293.9067  
[www.firstpresfargo.org](http://www.firstpresfargo.org)

## Request for Wedding Ceremony at First Presbyterian Church

Wedding Date Desired: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Bride's First and Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Groom's First and Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Rehearsal Date Desired: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Member of First Presbyterian Church? \_\_\_\_\_

*If no, then please answer below:*

Home Church: \_\_\_\_\_

*If you desire a pastor other than one from First Presbyterian to perform the ceremony, please answer below:*

Officiant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you! Please return this completed form to:

Receptionist  
First Presbyterian Church -or- [staff@firstpresfargo.org](mailto:staff@firstpresfargo.org)  
650 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave North  
Fargo, ND 58102

You will be contacted when your request has/has not been approved by the Session\*, and a pastor and wedding coordinator has been assigned. After approval, you will need to return your signed wedding policy and the deposit to the church office to reserve your date on the church calendar.

\*Note: Session meets the third Monday of each month.

## Wedding Contract

We, the bride and groom, have read the First Presbyterian Church Wedding Policy and will abide by all guidelines and procedures as stated therein. If destruction of property or undue custodial services are required during the rehearsal or wedding, we agree to remunerate the church for such damages or services.

Bride Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Bride Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Groom Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Groom Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Wedding Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Please return this sheet along with deposit to the church office to reserve the wedding date.*

# Wedding Ceremony Checklist for Couples

## First Presbyterian Church, Fargo, ND

### Date Completed

- \_\_\_\_\_ Turn in *Request for Wedding at First Presbyterian Church* form
- \_\_\_\_\_ Deposit and signed copy of wedding policy given to the church office or Wedding Coordinator
- \_\_\_\_\_ Receive approval for wedding date, and arrange with minister to officiate
- \_\_\_\_\_ Meet with Wedding Coordinator
- \_\_\_\_\_ Schedule Pre-Marital Counseling with minister
- \_\_\_\_\_ Attend Pre-Marital Counseling
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Schedule rehearsal date with Wedding Coordinator
- \_\_\_\_\_ Fill out *Wedding Worksheet* and return to Wedding Coordinator at least one week prior to wedding
- \_\_\_\_\_ Fill out *Wedding Arrangements* sheet and return to Wedding Coordinator at least one week prior to wedding
- \_\_\_\_\_ Fill out *Wedding Costs* sheet and return to Wedding Coordinator or Church Office along with check for remainder of fees due before the rehearsal date

# Wedding Policy

## First Presbyterian Church

650 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave N  
Fargo, ND 58102  
701.293.6311

[www.firstpresfargo.org](http://www.firstpresfargo.org)

Office Hours: M-TH 8:30am-4pm, F by appointment

One of God's greatest gifts and blessings to humanity is holy marriage, "which is instituted of God, regulated by his commandments, blessed by our Lord Jesus Christ, and to be held in honor among all people." Weddings are times of both joy and reverence. The companionship of marriage is deep joy and also calls for reverence because of the deep commitment two people make to each other under the grace of God.

The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church USA clearly and definitively on "The Christian Service of Marriage," saying,

"(Marriage) has been declared holy throughout the life of the church" and "those who pledge themselves each to the other in the sight of God are promised God's help as they enter into the joys and duties of life together."

The Christian marriage ceremony is a service of worship before God, normally conducted within the sanctuary. The service shall be under the sole direction of the minister. Within the bounds of the responsibility for the supervision and direction of worship, the Session of this church bears responsibility for the service for Christian marriage. Hence, the First Presbyterian Church governing body, the Session, approves this guide.

### **Pre-marital Counseling**

The Pastor performing the wedding will meet with the couple to discuss and plan the service and will also seek to lay a Christian foundation, inform the couple of the commitment and discover issues of and within their marriage. This will normally require between three and four meetings. Since both the bride and groom are expected to attend all sessions, appointments should be made as early as possible, usually four to six months before the wedding.

### **Schedule of the Ceremony**

No weddings or wedding activities are scheduled during Holy Week (between Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday), on the first full weekend in November, on Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. Weddings on New Year's Eve, New Year's Day or other holiday weekends are discouraged, however exceptions may be made. The scheduling of a wedding is begun after a Request for Wedding Ceremony at First Presbyterian Church has been submitted to the church by the couple. After the ceremony date has been approved by the Session and a pastor has been assigned, the couple will be notified. The dates will then be permanently placed on the church's calendar after receiving the deposit, and signed policy. Public announcements of the wedding date should wait until this process has been completed.

**In planning your wedding at First Presbyterian Church, these policies shall be followed:**

**1. Minister Performing the Ceremony**

A minister from First Presbyterian Church shall normally officiate all weddings held at the church. If the couple desires another minister to assist in the ceremony, approval from a First Presbyterian Church pastor is required. Ministers not of First Presbyterian Church may officiate at a service with approval of the Session. The couple will provide in writing the visiting pastor's name, church affiliation, address, telephone number(s), and e-mail address upon their initial request for a wedding date. The First Presbyterian minister will extend an invitation to the visiting minister.

**2. Order of the Service of the Marriage**

Since the marriage ceremony is a worship service, the Book of Order prescribes the order of worship.

“The marriage service shall begin with a brief statement of the meaning of Christian marriage.

At appropriate times during the ceremony there shall be prayer for the couple...exchange of vows...Scripture appropriate for the occasion...a charge to the couple...(public declaration) that this man and woman are now joined in marriage according to the ordinance of God and the law of the state...benediction”...W-49.004

The order of worship shall include affirmation of commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and affirmation of commitment by both the bride and groom to each other. The ceremony may include affirmation of the families and friends, particular vows along with the exchange of rings, prayers, Scripture readings, and a brief homily by the minister. Special music or hymns are also appropriate to include in the service.

If the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is requested, it needs to be discussed with a minister of First Presbyterian Church and then approved by the Session.

The minister from First Presbyterian Church has full responsibility for the order of worship. The couple may assist the minister in planning the marriage service.

**3. Use of the Building**

The sanctuary is available for weddings. The sanctuary can seat between 550-600 guests.

**4. Arrangements and Decorations**

“Flowers, decorations and other appointments should be appropriate to the place of worship...”

W4.9005

The sanctuary is furnished with symbols of our Christian faith such as the baptismal font, communion table and the pulpit. Decorations or flowers shall not obscure these symbols. When planning for flower arrangements and decorations, the couple is urged to remember the church's valuing of simplicity. Candelabras, floral arrangement, unity candle(s) and/or pew markers are permitted if placed in the appropriate location. Please consult with the Wedding Coordinator for guidance on your flowers and decorations. Special flowers and decorations used by the church during Advent and Christmas seasons may not be moved for the wedding without permission from the minister or Wedding Coordinator. No tacks, nails, tape, sticky tape, wire, or other materials that will deface the church property will be used. All flowers and decorations should be removed immediately after the wedding in order for the church to be ready for the next scheduled use. Donation of floral arrangements for Sunday's worship service is appreciated. If this is your desire, please consult the Wedding Coordinator.

**The facilities will be open one hour before rehearsal and four hours before the wedding.** Please *do not* arrive to the church more than four hours before the wedding. The wedding couple will be responsible for alerting family, bridal party, guests, and vendors of these rules. The sanctuary is normally available for decorating on the day of the rehearsal during usual church office hours *if* an appointment is made through the church office.

## 5. Music

“Music suitable for the marriage service directs attention to God and expresses the faith of the church.”  
W-2.1004

It is requested that the bride and groom schedule a time with the church organist and/or Director of Music Ministry to discuss the selection of music for the service. The church organist is often available to play for weddings. If the organist is not available, he/she could assist the couple by providing names of other organists. If the couple would like to invite another organist to play, the guest organist should contact the church organist regarding the use of the organ and practice times.

All music used during the wedding ceremony must direct attention to God and express the faith of the church. Although it is possible that some secular songs may achieve this purpose, generally such songs are better used at the rehearsal dinner or reception. It is the responsibility of the wedding party to provide any sheet music the organist does not possess. Songs that extol romanticized or secular ideas about love and marriage are nearly always inappropriate. The congregational singing of hymns is encouraged. The minister and the church musicians will suggest appropriate musical selections. They will make every effort to consider and accommodate the requests of the couple.

If special vocal or instrumental music is to be provided with the accompaniment of the church organist, it may be necessary to make arrangements for a rehearsal in addition to the standard rehearsal. The soloist is responsible for initiating such arrangements with the organist. The organist reserves the right to charge a higher fee if more than one rehearsal is required. All pre-recorded music is discouraged, and the minister will make all final decisions concerning the appropriateness of music. A list of suggested music will be provided to the couple.

If the bride and groom want to include a vocal or instrumental soloist in their wedding, but do not know whom to contact, one of the church musicians will make recommendations. Financial arrangements must be made privately with that musician(s).

## 6. Photography/Sound System

The church understands the desires to have wedding pictures, however, distractions during the wedding service are not permitted. Flash photographs may be taken in the sanctuary **before and after the service of worship. Photographs may be taken during the processional (seating of the family and entrance of the wedding party) and the recessional. Flash photographs are not allowed to be taken during the service. It is the couple’s responsibility to inform the photographers and family of the above policy.** If a photographer wishes to take a look at the sanctuary or set up equipment in advance, they will need to make an appointment to do so through the church office. Formal pictures should be concluded an hour before the wedding ceremony begins. Videotaping of the service is allowed by available lighting only (no floods) and the camera(s) and operator(s) must remain stationary and in an unobtrusive location. The minister must approve the location of the camera(s). The display of a video presentation prior to or during the service is not allowed. The use of the church’s sound system is encouraged. An audio taping of the service is possible through the sound system. A member of the sound system team is available to run the system and can be coordinated through the Wedding Coordinator.

## 7. Wedding Coordinator

It is suggested that the services of First Presbyterian Wedding Coordinator be used for the planning, rehearsal, and service. If the wedding party has two (2) or more attendants or plans to invite seventy-five (75) guests or more, the Wedding Coordinator must be used. The Wedding Coordinator is available to assist in the planning, to direct the rehearsal and wedding and to assist the minister. The Wedding Coordinator will oversee the arrangements and details of the wedding and discuss the policies and fees of the church with the couple. All forms and payments can be given to the Wedding Coordinator, or returned to the church office.

## **8. Miscellaneous**

Wedding bulletins are prepared at the discretion of the couple with consultation and approval from the Wedding Coordinator. The printing of the program is the responsibility of the couple.

Rice, bird seed, or confetti may not be thrown in or on the church grounds or buildings. Real or silk flower petals may be thrown in the aisle by the flower girl, if desired.

Sparklers and other fireworks are not permitted on church property.

No alcoholic beverages are to be served on the premises or used on the grounds. No person under the influence may participate in the rehearsal or marriage service.

Smoking is not permitted in the buildings and is limited on the grounds to areas where ash receptacles are available.

The wedding party and families are responsible for retrieving belongings, food and personal items and for returning the church to the same state as prior to the event. Garbage should be placed in appropriate receptacles.

The wedding party and families are responsible for advising all who assist in preparations and/or take part in the wedding service of these guidelines and policies.

## **9. Schedule of Fees**

For those families who are currently active members of First Presbyterian Church, and have been for at least one year prior to their request to be married at First Presbyterian Church, there is no charge to use the Sanctuary. A reasonable fee is charged for non-members. However, custodial fees and honorariums will be assessed to both members and non-members according to the fee schedule.

Attached to this policy is the listing of current fees and suggested honorariums for the minister, Wedding Coordinator, sound system person, musicians, and other persons assisting with the wedding. For non-members, a fee will be assessed for the use of the facilities, in addition to the other fees and honorariums.

**A \$100 deposit is required to reserve the date for members and a \$300 deposit is required to reserve the date for non-members.** This deposit is non-refundable. The deposit will be applied toward total fees due.

## Schedule of Fees

Use of Sanctuary, member	No charge
Custodial fee, member	\$175.00
Use of Sanctuary, non-member	\$500.00
Custodial fee, non-member	\$175.00
Church's Wedding Coordinator	\$125.00
Church's organist	
Rehearsal & wedding	\$175.00
(depends on musical selections and amount of music selected)	
Church's Sound System	\$ 75.00

## Suggested Honorariums

Pastor \$200-250.00  
(This is a suggested honorarium for church members, but is a required fee for non-church members.)

Church Choir(s) or Hand bells \$250.00  
(includes \$150.00 for the Director's honorarium and minimum of \$100.00 donation to the choir)

**Above fees and honorariums are payable to the First Presbyterian Church prior to the rehearsal (give fees to wedding coordinator). The church will deduct from the fees and honorariums appropriate employment taxes.**

Guest musician Determined by musician(s)

**Above Payable to the individual prior to the rehearsal.**

Approved by the Session November, 2010.

# Wedding Worksheet

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

Bride \_\_\_\_\_ Phone# \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Groom \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Previously married? \_\_\_\_\_ Children & ages \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Attendance \_\_\_\_\_

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

Bride's Grandparents \_\_\_\_\_

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

Groom's Grandparents \_\_\_\_\_

Other Special Guests \_\_\_\_\_

Concerns for handicapped guests \_\_\_\_\_

## *Bride's Attendants*

Maid/Matron of Honor \_\_\_\_\_

Bridesmaids (In order) \_\_\_\_\_

Flower Girl \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Standing with wedding party? \_\_\_\_\_

Personal Attendant \_\_\_\_\_

## *Groom's Attendants*

Best Man \_\_\_\_\_

Ushers \_\_\_\_\_

Groomsmen (In order) \_\_\_\_\_

Ring Bearer \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Standing with wedding party? \_\_\_\_\_

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

Who will give the bride away? \_\_\_\_\_

Will attendants walk down the aisle in singles or couples? \_\_\_\_\_

Bride or Groom seating or mixed sides? \_\_\_\_\_

Who will seat the parents? Bride's \_\_\_\_\_ Groom's \_\_\_\_\_

Will grandparents be seated separately? \_\_\_\_\_

Aisle Runner \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no Who will unroll it? \_\_\_\_\_

Candelabras \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no Who will light them? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you plan to have music? (Be sure to contact all who are involved well in advance.)

Before \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no During \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no After \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no

Organist \_\_\_\_\_ Pianist \_\_\_\_\_

Soloist(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Song Titles for Ceremony \_\_\_\_\_

Will couple usher guests out? \_\_\_ If not, which ushers? \_\_\_\_\_

Will dressing rooms be needed for bridal party & groomsmen? \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no

Will bride & groom see each other before the ceremony? \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no

Pastor performing ceremony \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Photographer \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Notified of policies? \_\_\_\_\_ Time of Arrival: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Videographer \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Florist \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Delivery time: \_\_\_\_\_ Roses for moms? \_\_\_\_\_ Leave for Sunday? \_\_\_\_\_

Place of reception \_\_\_\_\_

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

Wedding Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Couple's residence after wedding \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this form and return to wedding coordinator at least one week prior to wedding.

