

Policy for Weddings

adopted by the Session

St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church

1545 State Street

New Orleans, Louisiana 70118

(504) 897-0101 · www.scapc.org

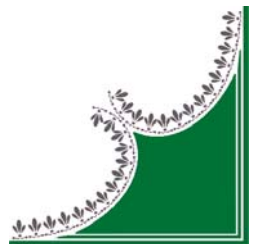
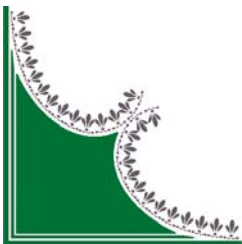


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INTRODUCTION

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

- *Book of Order*, Presbyterian Church (USA), W-4.9001

Surely there are few experiences in life to compare to the joy and significance of Christian marriage. The commitment of one to another in marriage is both unique and sacred, and deserves the utmost thought, care, and planning.

The Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (USA) states that “as a service of Christian worship, the marriage service is **under the direction of the minister and the supervision of the session.**” (BO, W-4.9003). Accordingly, the Session of St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church has established the following policy to direct couples as they prepare for marriage in this church.

PREPARATORY STEPS

1. Notifying the Church of a Wedding Request

Persons interested in scheduling a wedding at St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church should call the church office (897-0101) and ask for the Wedding Coordinator. *Members of the church* should call as soon as they know the date. *Non-members* may make this call *not more than eight months before the date of the wedding.*

After speaking to the Wedding Coordinator as to the availability of the desired date, a Wedding Application will be mailed.

2. Wedding Application

The Wedding Application must be completed and returned with the Deposit to the Wedding Coordinator within seven days of its receipt. Please mail to:

Wedding Coordinator
St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church
1545 State Street
New Orleans, LA 70118

The wedding date will be confirmed only when:

- a. The Wedding Application has been returned to the church with the required deposit.
- b. The Pastor, after having met with the couple, has agreed to conduct the wedding service. (see 3)

St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church receives many requests for marriage services. If there are two weddings on the same day, there must be at least three hours scheduled between them.

3. Meeting with the Pastor

After the Wedding Application and deposit have been mailed to the Wedding Coordinator, the couple will make an appointment with the Pastor. Call the Pastor's assistant to schedule this appointment. The purpose of this meeting is for the Pastor to become acquainted with the couple. No wedding will receive final approval without the Pastor's consent.

4. Pre-marital Counseling

The requested date for a wedding is not confirmed until the couple has met with the Pastor. If the Pastor approves the wedding, the couple will be expected to have pre-marital counseling. If either the man or woman is a church member, the counseling will be offered by the Pastor. The last meeting will take place on the Thursday afternoon proceeding the wedding. If the couple are non-members, the counseling will need to be obtained by another counselor who is approved by the Pastor.

5. Meeting with the Wedding Coordinator

The SCAPC Wedding Coordinator will direct the wedding, including the rehearsal. The couple must contact the Wedding Coordinator after the application has been approved. In the event an outside wedding planner is contracted by the couple, this Planner must coordinate his or her work with the Wedding Coordinator.

6. Meeting with the Director of Music

The couple must meet with the Director of Music to plan the music as soon as the wedding application is approved (please see page 5 for details regarding music).

OTHER POLICIES

1. Order of Worship

The marriage service is a service of worship unto God; therefore, it will follow an established and accepted order. The Presbyterian liturgy will be observed. The elements of the service, as well as the wording for these elements, are under the direction of the Pastor. The Presbyterian *Book of Order* requires that certain fundamental elements be included. The Pastor will provide the couple with a copy of the service during premarital counseling.

Marriage services should be celebrated in the place where the community gathers for worship, either in the Sanctuary or the Chapel. The service will take place at a time different from Sunday Morning Worship, unless an exception is granted by the Session and Pastor.

Weddings are not held on the following days: Holy Week, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day.

2. Guest Pastors

A Pastor from the staff of St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church will conduct all weddings at the church. Should a bride/groom request a guest Pastor/priest to assist, this should be cleared with our Pastors before the guest is invited. Any exceptions must be approved by the Session. As a matter of courtesy, upon arrival, our Pastor will invite the other clergy to participate.

3. Fee Schedule

The SCAPC Wedding Coordinator will provide the current Fee Schedule.

REHEARSAL

1. The rehearsal will take approximately one hour in the sanctuary or one-half hour in the chapel. Plan accordingly when making any rehearsal dinner arrangements.

2. Rehearsals start promptly at the agreed-upon time. It is the responsibility of the Bride and Groom to have the Wedding Party present and on time for the Rehearsal and Wedding. Therefore, it is suggested that all participants arrive 15 minutes before the scheduled time so we can begin promptly. Being punctual will ensure that there is enough time to prepare the par-

ticipants for their Wedding duties. It is important that all members of the Wedding Party, including Parents, Readers and Ushers, attend the Rehearsal.

Children in the Wedding - It has been our experience that children under the age of 5 are sometimes ill at ease at Weddings. Because they often become tired, are restless, talk, or distract the rest of the Wedding Party, the Church discourages their participation.

Dressing Rooms - There is no designated “Brides Room”. The Land Building, at State and Benjamin Streets is available for a small fee.

3. The Marriage License must be given to the Wedding Coordinator at the time of the rehearsal in order that the bride, groom and witnesses can sign it, or it shall be brought into the office 48 hours before the wedding if no rehearsal is necessary. Marriage licenses may be obtained from the State Office Building at 325 Loyola Street, Room 102.

Please see the enclosed form, “**Requirements for Obtaining a License to Marry in New Orleans, Louisiana.**” Any questions should be directed to the State marriage license office (504-568-2561). Marriage licenses may be obtained by residents outside of Louisiana, provided they have a local address (hotel, relative/friend’s home where they are staying).

4. Rehearsals are ordinarily scheduled the day before the wedding.

MUSIC

All music in worship should serve the purpose of worship and should represent the best Christians have to offer God. Such music as accompanies the marriage ceremony should direct attention to God, who sanctifies marriage, and special care should be taken to assure that it is suitable and reverent.

- Book of Order, Presbyterian Church (USA)

Director of Music/Organist

The Director of Music/Organist will normally play for all weddings at the church. Should he be unavailable for a particular wedding date, the Director of Music will designate a substitute organist to provide music for the ceremony.*

Soloists*

The use of vocal soloists greatly enhances the quality of worship at church weddings. St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church employs a num-

ber of soloists, any of whom may be available to sing for a particular wedding. Arrangements to employ the services of one or more of these individuals should be made through the Director of Music.

Instrumentalists*

As with vocal soloists, the use of other instruments can add greatly to the dimension and variety of a musical offering. There exists a wealth of good music for organ or harpsichord in combination with other instruments such as flute, oboe, violin, trumpet, cello, or harp. The Director of Music will be happy to contact instrumentalists to provide music for your wedding.

**Use of non-professional musicians is discouraged; exceptions will be made only at the discretion of the Director of Music through audition or supplied recording. Musicians must be classically trained. There will be no use of microphones to amplify singers.*

Fees

Fees for Soloists should be brought to the Rehearsal. All payments should be made directly to the Soloist.

Prelude Music

Music prior to the wedding ceremony may be up to thirty minutes in length and may include selections for solo organ and, if applicable, vocal and other instrumental music. The organ music used during this time will be chosen from the Director of Music's repertoire. Specific appropriate selections may be requested, but are subject to approval. The use of popular music or "show tunes" is not allowed. The Director of Music will be glad to make suggestions for appropriate vocal and/or instrumental music (see below).

Vocal solos with texts that are appropriate to the worship of God may be used, either in the pre-service music or at appropriate places within the ceremony. For instance, they may follow the reading of the Scripture, Declaration of Intent, the Vows, the Creed, the Presentation of the Wedding Party, or the Prayers. The Director of Music will be happy to play sample selections to assist the couple as they make their choices. Listed below are suggestions of the type of music that might be utilized:

- "My Heart Ever Faithful" - Bach
- "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" - Bach
- "Jesus, Shepherd, Be Thou Near Me" - Bach
- "O Love That Casts Out Fear" - Bach
- "O Perfect Love" - Barnby
- "Eternal Source of Light Divine" - Händel

- “The Gift of Love” - Hopson
- “Biblical Songs” - Dvorak
- “Five Mystical Songs” - Vaughan Williams (baritone only)
- “Alleluia” from *Exsultate, Jubilate* - Mozart

Note: The use of musical settings of “The Lord’s Prayer” is discouraged since it is included in the order of worship as a congregational prayer. Since weddings performed at this church reflect Reformed Presbyterian traditions, the use of any setting of “Ave Maria” as any part of the service is not allowed.

Processions

There exist many good pieces of dignified, joyous music that may be used to accompany wedding processions. The “Bridal Chorus” from Wagner’s *Lohengrin* and “The Wedding March” from Mendelssohn’s *Midsummer Night’s Dream* are pieces rooted in secular tradition which have no place in a service of divine worship. The former is performed in the opera surrounding the doomed marriage of Elsa and Lohengrin, while the latter accompanies the clowning of the characters Bottom and Flute in a work based on supernatural fantasy. For these reasons, the use of these particular pieces is not permitted. The following is a partial listing of pieces that are suitable:

- “Rigaudon” - Campra
- “Crown Imperial” - Walton
- “Allegro Maestoso” from *Water Music* - Händel
- “Prelude” from *Te Deum* - Charpentier
- “Three Trumpet Tunes” - Johnson
- “Trumpet Voluntary” - Clarke*
- “Trumpet Voluntary” - Stanley*
- “Trumpet Tune” - Purcell*
- “Psalm XIX” - Marcello
- “A Mighty Fortress” - Walcha
- “Rondeau” - Mouret*
- “Toccatà” from Symphony V - Widor
- “Final” from Symphony III - Vierne
- “Rondo” - Bull
- “This Day Full of Gladness” - Dupré

**solo trumpet may be used*

Congregational Hymns

As in any service of worship, the singing of hymns is appropriate and

provides an excellent means of congregational participation. Hymns may be used as processionals, as hymns of praise, or following particularly significant events in the ceremony. Following is a list of suggested titles:

- “All Creatures of Our God and King”
- “Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee”
- “Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”
- “Sing Praise to God, Who Reigns Above”
- “Come, Christians, Join to Sing”
- “Be Thou My Vision”
- “O Perfect Love”
- “The Grace of Life is Theirs”

When the wedding occurs in a particular season of the church years, hymns appropriate to the season may be used.

FLOWERS, DECORATIONS, AND CANDLES

Flowers, decorations, and other appointments should be appropriate to the place of worship, enhance the worshippers' consciousness of the reality of God, and reflect the integrity and simplicity of Christian life.

- Book of Order, Presbyterian Church (USA)

A beautiful sanctuary such as the one here at St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church does not require lavish or elaborate decorations. In all activities surrounding the wedding ceremony, excessive expense and ostentation should be avoided.

The bride should work with her florist to accomplish her desires in good taste and make her florist aware of the rules of the church regarding decorations and candles.

1. The couple is responsible for giving these regulations to the florist. (See enclosed copy.)
2. The church is open Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. and on Saturdays between 8:30 and noon for flower delivery.
3. The church owns two sets of flower urns that may be used for weddings:
 - 2 - Silver urns: 7” deep, 6” wide
 - 2 - Antique urns: 13” deep, 11” wide at top rim, 8” wide inside

4. Christmas decorations and flowers will remain in the Church once in place during the Christmas season. These are to be used if a Wedding is scheduled during Christmas.
5. If there are two or more Weddings in the Church on the same day, we suggest that the flowers be shared.
6. Bouquets, corsages, and boutonnieres may be stored in the refrigerator located in the Kitchen.
7. The church has two brass candelabras available for use at Weddings. Each candelabra holds 15 candles. These must be reserved with the Wedding Coordinator when making arrangements for the wedding.
8. If candles are to be used in the aisles, the hurricane globes must be secured to the pews. (The church has two sections of 22 rows of pews.). Candles may be used in the chancel loft (except under the horizontal trumpets). All candles must be of the no-drip variety. The church does not provide the candles. We recommend at least 12" no-drip tapers, with a 3/4" - 1" base. Please do not order metal candles with spring-loaded wax inserts.
9. Candles or other candelabras must be obtained from a florist or other vendor. All candelabras used must be of heavy construction and must be sturdy enough to resist tipping over.
10. No nails or screws be used when decorating the church.
11. Aisle runners are not allowed because they are dangerous and frequently unmanageable.
12. A "unity" candle is not a part of the Presbyterian liturgy and is therefore not permitted.
13. The communion table may not be removed from the chancel area. No flower arrangements may be placed on the table.
14. Petals may not be thrown by the flower girl as the petals can stain the carpet or can cause a hazard because they are slippery.

PHOTOGRAPHY

1. The wedding ceremony is a service of worship; therefore, the use of flash equipment is not allowed in any area of the sanctuary, choir loft, or balcony during the ceremony. Flash equipment may be allowed only in the narthex (entry) prior to the processional and after the recessional. Wedding guests are not permitted to take pictures during the ceremony.
2. The photographer may wish to use a fast film and the available light. This may be done during the wedding ceremony from the rear balcony, but not from the main floor.
3. It is the responsibility of the couple to see that the photographer is given a copy of the enclosed photographer's instruction sheet.
4. We ask that the bride or the photographer send to us one photograph from the wedding depicting the entire wedding party in the chancel area. This will enable us to show other prospective brides and grooms what weddings may look like at St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church.
5. We suggest taking group pictures at the reception.

VIDEOGRAPHY

Video equipment is allowed in the church sanctuary, without artificial lighting equipment, provided prior approval has been obtained from the Pastor. Taping of the wedding ceremony is allowed only from the rear balcony of the sanctuary and the video equipment must remain stationary during the ceremony.

Video personnel should dress formally in attire appropriate for a service of worship. Use of video images for commercial purposes whether by news organizations or otherwise will require written approval by the Pastor of St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church.

OTHER INFORMATION

1. We ask that weddings be scheduled at least 3 months in advance.
2. Reminder: Payment in full is due one month prior to the wedding.
3. SEATING CAPACITY: Sanctuary (546); Chapel (60).

4. No beverages or food shall be allowed in the sanctuary or the chapel, nor on the grounds of the church. No smoking is allowed in the building. No alcohol is allowed on the premises at any time, with the exception of wine used during communion.

5. The throwing of rice, confetti, flower petals, birdseed, etc. is NOT permitted in any area of the church or its property.

6. No awnings or canopies will be allowed.

7. All outside suppliers (florists, caterers, awning vendors, etc.) will be held responsible for any damages incurred by that company to the church property. If a company has not previously provided services at St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church, a representative must contact the Wedding Coordinator for approval.

8. Child care is not provided during the wedding ceremony. Every possible effort will be made to protect personal items. However, as our buildings are open to the public, St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church cannot be held responsible for items if lost, damaged or stolen.

We hope that we have anticipated some of the questions you will have concerning plans for your Wedding. Please call the Wedding Coordinator whenever questions occur or for clarification of policies.

CHURCH STAFF MEMBERS

Pastors

Donald R. Frampton, Senior Pastor

Kelly W. Hostetler, Associate Pastor

Director of Music/Organist

Steven B. Blackmon

Director of Christian Education

Michele Murphy

Director of Youth Ministries

Ellen Shields

Director of Administration

Wayne C. Willcox

Wedding Coordinator

Sara Warren

Publications Coordinator

Hallie L. White

Accountant

Carol Pointer

Membership & Facilities Coordinator

Pierce Young

Community Ministry Coordinator

Collen Frampton

Nursery School Director

Keflyn Fransen

RHINO Project Manager

Sarah Edgecombe

RHINO Coordinator

Carro Gardner

Sextons

Donald R. Jefferson · Tyronne Smith · Terry Patterson

Map of SCAPC First Floor

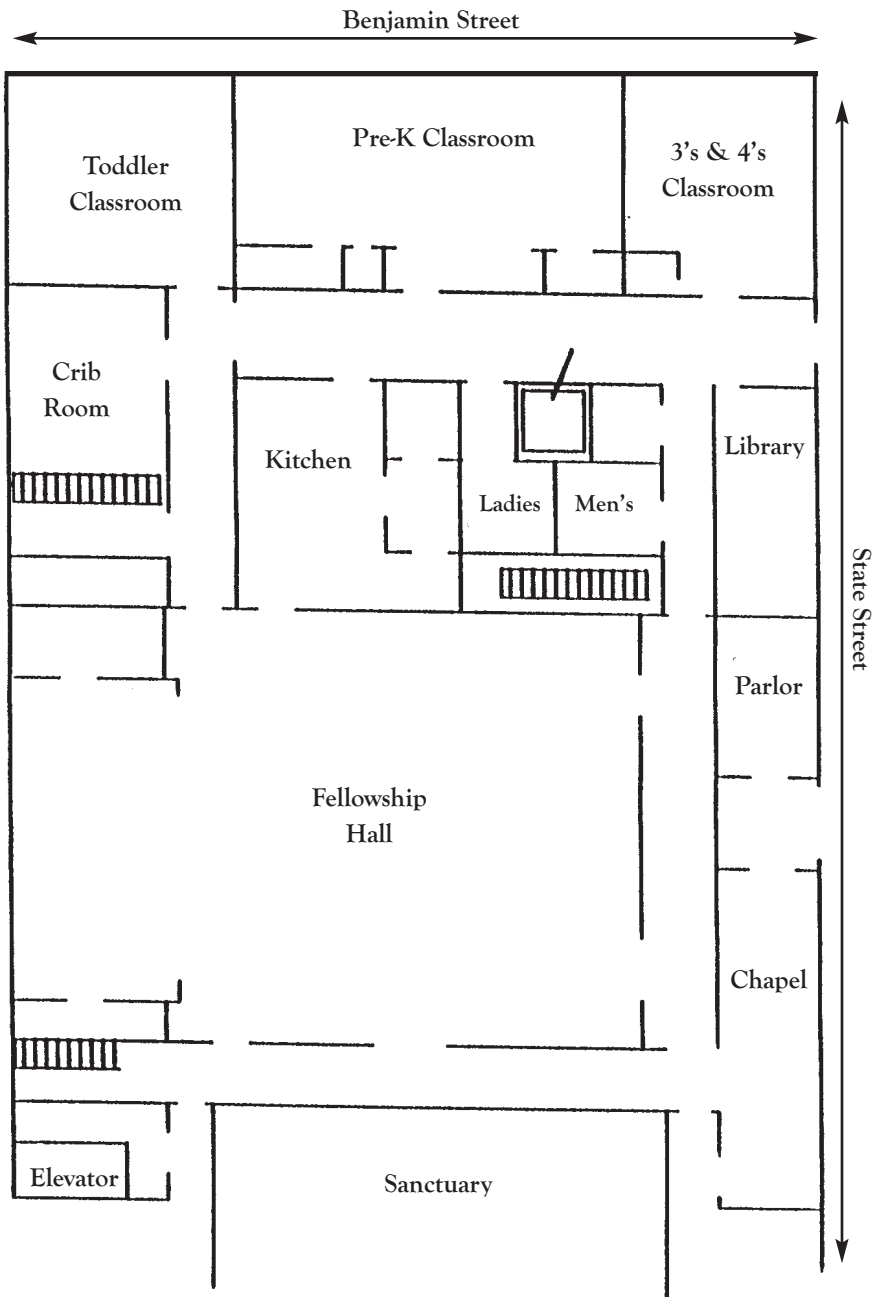


Diagram of the Sanctuary

