



WEDDING POLICY and PROCEDURES

ST. STEPHEN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
2700 McPherson Ave., Fort Worth, TX 76109
(817) 927-8411

Anne Barrett, Wedding Coordinator
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WEDDING POLICY & PROCEDURES

1. Call the Church Wedding Coordinator and speak about wedding policies, procedures, dates and forms. The Sanctuary is shown by appointment only.
2. The wedding date will be secured and placed on the Church calendar **AFTER**:
 - You have submitted a letter to the Pastor requesting permission to use the Church for your wedding;
 - The Pastor and appropriate personnel have approved the date of the wedding;
 - You have completed and returned a Wedding Information Form to the Church office; and
 - You have paid the refundable deposit.
3. Complete the Wedding Information Form and returned it to the Church Wedding Coordinator, with payment of a refundable deposit equal to 50% of all wedding fees.
4. The Church Wedding Coordinator will send copies of the completed Wedding Information Form to the appropriate personnel.
5. The Wedding Coordinator will be the principal point of contact for the wedding party.
6. The Pastor will contact you to schedule a time for a first meeting.
7. You should contact and schedule a time to meet with the Organist and Director of Music Ministries.
8. The remaining balance of all wedding fees is due no later than **two months prior to the date of the wedding**.
9. The **rehearsal** time shall be scheduled for **no later than 6:00 p.m.** on the agreed-upon day (typically a Friday). The **wedding** time shall be scheduled **no later than 7:00 pm** on the agreed-upon day (typically a Saturday).
10. Regarding the wedding service and the use of the facilities:
 - The Church staff will provide a template of the order of worship which should be followed when preparing your wedding bulletin/program. The wedding bulletin/program should be submitted to the pastor for approval. Once approved, you are responsible for printing and providing enough copies for your guests.
 - No decorations are allowed in the Chancel of the Sanctuary or in the Chapel other than the single floral arrangement permitted, *e.g.*, no arches, bows on candelabras or anything obscuring the view of existing Christian faith symbols.
 - The Church is a non-smoking facility. No smoking is permitted anywhere in the Sanctuary, Chapel, Parish Hall, or Education Building.
 - Cloth runners may not be used down any of the aisles.
 - Flowers or petals of any kind or facsimiles thereof may not be thrown down the center aisle or anywhere else in the Sanctuary or Chapel.

- Pictures and videos taken before the service may be taken in any area of the Church, but must be completed at least one hour prior to the beginning of the wedding ceremony. During the wedding service, the previously designated wedding photographer and/or videographer may take pictures and videos without flash or additional lighting from the gallery area in the choir loft and other specified areas of the Sanctuary or Chapel that have been pre-approved for the previously designated wedding photographer's and/or videographer's use by the Pastor, Wedding Coordinator, Assistant Wedding Coordinator or Sexton.
- Wedding guests should refrain from taking pictures or videos in the Sanctuary or Chapel until the ceremony is completed.
- Two podiums are furnished for a guest book(s). No other tables are permitted.
- No birdseed, rice, petals, *etc.*, may be used inside the Sanctuary, Chapel, Education Building, Parish Hall or on Church grounds.
- All gifts, clothing, and personal belongings must be removed from the Sanctuary following the ceremony.
- No furniture in or outside the Sanctuary or Chapel may be moved.
- The only alcohol which may be served at receptions is wine, to be consumed only by those of legal age. All responsibility and liability for serving alcohol is on the wedding party. No visibly intoxicated person may be served.
- St. Stephen Presbyterian Church is not responsible for any personal property brought or left on the premises.

THE CHRISTIAN WEDDING

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage involves a unique commitment between two people to love and support each other for the rest of their lives. This sacrificial love that unites the couple sustains them as faithful and responsible members of the Church and the wider community. In civil law, marriage is a contract that recognizes the rights and obligations of the married couple in society. In the Reformed tradition, marriage is also a covenant in which God has an active part, and which the community of faith publicly witnesses and acknowledges.

PREPARATION FOR MARRIAGE

In preparation for the marriage service, the Pastor shall counsel with the couple. If the Pastor is unavailable for counseling, the couple may counsel with staff at the Brite Divinity School's Pastoral Care Center, Texas Christian University, regarding:

- the nature of their Christian commitment, assuring that at least one is a professing Christian;
- the legal requirements of the State of Texas;
- the privileges and responsibilities of Christian marriage;
- the nature and form of the marriage service;
- the vows and commitments they will be asked to make;
- the relationship of these commitments to their lives of discipleship; and
- the resources of the faith and the Christian community to assist them in fulfilling their marriage commitments.

Counseling is required. It is equally important whether a first marriage, a marriage after the death of a spouse, or when one or both parties are divorced.

After counseling the couple, if the Pastor feels that the commitment, responsibility, maturity, or Christian understanding are so lacking that the marriage is unwise, the Pastor shall assure the couple of the Church's continuing concern for them, but shall not approve the wedding. In making this decision, the Pastor may seek the counsel of the Session. Should this be necessary, the utmost confidentiality shall be maintained at all times by all parties.

THE ROLE OF THE PASTOR

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 Pastor and the supervision of the Session. In the event that a pastor, other than a pastor of St. Stephen Presbyterian Church, is desired to perform the wedding ceremony, permission must first be obtained from the Pastor of St. Stephen Presbyterian Church. Further, the Pastor of St. Stephen Presbyterian Church, or the Pastor's appointee, must be present to ensure that all policies herein are followed. The visiting pastor's fee is not included in the fees paid to the Church, nor shall they be paid by St. Stephen Presbyterian Church; *i.e.*, you must make separate arrangements to compensate the visiting pastor conducting the wedding service.

TIME AND PLACE OF THE SERVICE

The marriage ordinarily takes place in a special worship service that focuses upon marriage as a gift of God and an expression of the Christian life. The Sanctuary (seating 1,400) and the Chapel of the Holy Trinity (seating 68) are available for weddings.

The Parish Hall or the Eastminster Room may be used for a rehearsal dinner prior to or a reception following the wedding.

It is essential that reservations for the exact times of both the wedding and the rehearsal be made as early as possible with the appropriate Church personnel. A rehearsal time should be selected when all members of the wedding party can be present. The betrothed must take part in the rehearsal, *i.e.*, stand-ins are not permitted. **Rehearsals shall begin no later than 6:00 p.m.**

Ushers should be present and ready to perform their duties one hour before the wedding ceremony.

If the reception is held at the Church, a designated representative of the wedding party shall make complete arrangements for decorations, refreshments and service, including cleanup of the Parish Hall/Eastminster Room and kitchen. The Sexton/Building Supervisor of St. Stephen Presbyterian Church, or the Sexton's appointee, must be present to ensure that all policies herein are followed.

The Church will open 2 hours prior to the ceremony. The holding rooms for the Bride and Groom are available for their use 2 hours before the wedding and 1 hour following the ceremony. The bride's maids and groom's men are encouraged to dress before coming to the church due to limited space.

A designated person should ensure that all clothing and belongings of the wedding party are removed from the Sanctuary following the wedding.

The order of worship that shall be used for the marriage at St. Stephen Presbyterian Church is found in the Presbyterian *Book of Common Worship*.

Because the wedding is a worship service, no announcements will be made about the time and place of the reception before, during or after the service in the Sanctuary or Chapel.

MUSIC AND APPOINTMENTS

Music for the Wedding Ceremony

The wedding ceremony is a service of worship, and music for the service must be appropriate in expressing gratitude and praise to God for the gift of marriage (secular or popular songs of special meaning to you should be reserved for the wedding reception). Music for the service is under the direction and supervision of the Director of Music and Organist, who is expected to play all weddings. After your initial meeting with the pastor, plan to make an appointment with the Director of Music and Organist to discuss (in person or by phone, whichever is most convenient) the music for the service, including any hymn to be sung by the congregation.

Alternate Organist

If the Director of Music and Organist is not available to play at the wedding, he will arrange for a substitute. If our organist is available, but you desire a guest organist or other musicians, we follow the policy of the American Guild of Organists: a guest organist or other musicians must meet with our organist, who will assess the musicians' competence and experience. If approved for the service, it will be your responsibility to arrange for and pay the musicians' fees, as well as our Director of Music/Organist's standard fee.

Instrumental and Vocal Soloists

Vocal and instrumental soloists are encouraged and can add great beauty to a wedding ceremony. The Director of Music and Organist coordinates the hiring of any additional musicians, and will be happy to be in contact with you about these musical possibilities. A variety of instruments (the most common being trumpet, violin, cello, harp, and bagpipes) are effective in our church setting and are also popular choices among couples. If you wish to have a friend or family member sing or play at the service, arrangements must be made with the Director of Music and Organist as soon as possible.

WEDDING INFORMATION FORM

Please Complete and Return to St. Stephen Presbyterian Church
2700 McPherson Avenue, Fort Worth, Texas 76109
817-927-8411

Rehearsal day and date: _____
Wedding day and date: _____

Rehearsal time: _____
Wedding time: _____

Bride: _____
Cell Phone: _____ Alternate Phone: _____
Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____
E-mail Address: _____

Groom: _____
Cell Phone: _____ Alternate Phone: _____
Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____
E-mail Address: _____

Wedding to be in SANCTUARY CHAPEL

First Conference with Pastor scheduled for:
Date: _____ Time: _____

Conference with Organist and Director of Music Ministries scheduled for:
Date: _____ Time: _____

(Complete if Pastor requested is not a member of the St. Stephen staff.)

Pastor's Name: _____ Denomination: _____
Mailing Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____
Phone Number: _____
Wedding Policy Provided to Pastor on (date:) _____

Photographer: _____ Phone: _____

Has the Photographer signed an acknowledgment of Church policy concerning
wedding photography? YES NO

Videographer: _____ Phone: _____

Has the Videographer signed an acknowledgment of Church policy concerning
wedding videography? YES NO

Attendants:

Number of Bride's maids: _____ Number of Groom's Men: _____
Number of Ring bearers: _____ Number of Flower girls: _____
Number of Ushers: _____

Number of guests invited to wedding: _____

Do you wish your reception to be held at St. Stephen? YES NO

If yes: PARISH HALL EASTMINSTER

If NO, location of reception: _____

Florist: _____ Phone: _____

Has the Florist has been informed of Church policy concerning décor? YES NO

Wedding Party Designated Representative or Wedding Consultant:

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Has Designated Representative/Consultant has been informed of the Church's Wedding Policy? YES NO

Do you wish an audio recording (\$10 each)? YES / NO Number of copies desired: _____

FEES:

WEDDING **\$ 2,900.00**

50% deposit + application **\$ 1,450.00**

RECEPTION (optional) \$ _____

AUDIO RECORDING (optional) \$ _____

OTHER \$ _____

By your signature below you acknowledge that you have read, understood, and agree to be bound by the Wedding Policy of St. Stephen Presbyterian Church. Any violation of this policy could result in your use of the Church being denied, without refund.

Signature Bride or Groom: _____ Date: _____

For St. Stephen: _____ Date: _____

Emergency Contacts

Emergency Contact for the Bride:

Name: _____ Cell phone: _____

Relationship to the bride: _____

Emergency Contact for the Groom:

Name: _____ Cell phone: _____

Relationship to the groom: _____

CENTER AISLE ESCORTS:

List the names and relationships anyone who will escorted down the escorted down the center aisle. Your list should include the names of all parents, grandparents, guardians, special guests, bridesmaids, groom's men, and ushers. Opposite their name, please list the name of the usher or person who will escort that person down the aisle.

Name	Relationship to Bride/Groom	To be Escorted By
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		
9.		
10.		
11.		
12.		
13.		
14.		
15.		

Wedding Fee Schedule

Non-Members

		Sanctuary Wedding	Chapel Wedding (60 guests max)	Reception or Rehearsal Dinner
<u>Flat Rate</u>		\$2,900	Starting at \$1,000	\$500

CANCELLATION POLICY

Refund of your deposit are based on the following sliding scale:

- Six months or more before the date of the wedding will result in a refund of 100% of the deposit
- 90 – 180 days before the date of the wedding will result in a refund of 75% of the deposit
- 60 – 90 days before the date of the wedding will result in a refund of 50% of the deposit
- 30 – 60 days before the date of the wedding will result in a refund of 25% of the deposit
- 30 days or less before the date of the wedding – No refund

Bride:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Groom:

Signature: _____ Date: _____