

**St. Stephen Presbyterian Church**  
**Fort Worth, Texas**  
**Wedding Procedures, Policies and Fees**  
Updated April 2024

**THE CHRISTIAN WEDDING**

Marriage is a gift that 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. Because St. Stephen is an intentionally inclusive community of believers, all who seek to be married are welcome.

**PROCEDURES**

*The following procedures should be completed in order.*

1. Contact St. Stephen's Wedding Coordinator to discuss wedding policies, procedures, dates and forms. The Wedding Coordinator will be the principal point of contact for the wedding party. The Sanctuary and Chapel are shown by appointment only.

The Wedding Coordinator may be contacted by phone or email:

Anne Barrett  
817.927.8411

[admin@ststephenpresbyterian.com](mailto:admin@ststephenpresbyterian.com)

2. Submit a written request to the Pastor requesting permission to use the church for your wedding; and/or requesting permission for a specific pastor to perform the ceremony at St. Stephen. The Pastor will contact you to schedule a time for a first meeting.
  - a. If you wish for a pastor other than St. Stephen's staff to perform the ceremony, they should contact St. Stephen's Pastor for permission to perform the ceremony and premarital counseling as required.

The Pastor may be contacted by phone or email:

Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Callender  
817.927.8411

[elizabeth@ststephenpresbyterian.com](mailto:elizabeth@ststephenpresbyterian.com)

3. Complete the Wedding Information Form and return to the Wedding Coordinator with payment of a deposit equal to 50% of all wedding fees. The deposit will secure the date. The remaining balance due must be paid no later than 90 days prior to the wedding date. A separate deposit of \$500 will also be paid at this time. This deposit will be returned after the ceremony if no policies are violated by the wedding party, guests, or vendors, and there are no physical damages to church property.
4. Contact and schedule an appointment to meet with the Organist & Director of Music Ministries to discuss wedding music to be performed at the ceremony.

## POLICIES

- The rehearsal time will be scheduled no later than 6:00 pm on the agreed-upon day (typically a Friday). The time of the wedding ceremony will be scheduled no later than 7:00 pm on the agreed-upon day (typically a Saturday).
- If St. Stephen's Pastor is performing the wedding, the order of worship that will be used for the marriage at St. Stephen is found in the Presbyterian *Book of Common Worship*. The Wedding Coordinator can 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 Wedding Coordinator for approval. Once approved, you are responsible for printing and providing enough copies for your guests. The wedding bulletin/program should include the names of the Pastor, any musicians, and St. Stephen Presbyterian Church.
- Floral arrangements are allowed in the Chancel. Any additional floral arrangements placed in the Sanctuary or Chapel must be approved by the Wedding Coordinator in advance.
- No cloth runners may be used down the aisles. No arches, bows on pews, or anything obscuring the view of existing Christian faith symbols. Flower pedals may be used, however, must be picked up following the ceremony. No birdseed, rice, petals, etc. may be used or thrown inside the Sanctuary, Chapel, Education Building or on church grounds.
- Photos and videos taken inside the church should be completed 30 minutes before the wedding ceremony or may be taken following the ceremony. For more information, see the Photography & Videography Policy Agreement which is included in this packet.
- No furniture in or outside the Sanctuary or Chapel may be moved.
- St. Stephen Presbyterian Church is not responsible for any personal property brought or left on the premises. All gifts, clothing, and personal belongings must be removed from the Sanctuary following the ceremony.
- St. Stephen is a non-smoking facility. No smoking is permitted anywhere on church property.
- Alcohol (wine/champagne) may be consumed only at the rehearsal dinner and/or reception if held at St. Stephen. Wine and champagne may be served at such events. It may not be served to minors. Alcohol consumption is not allowed in the Sanctuary building before, during, or after the wedding ceremony. If a member of the wedding party arrives visibly intoxicated, the Pastor or Wedding Coordinator may cancel the ceremony.
- It is recommended that attendants dress before coming to the church due to limited space.
- In order to be eligible for the member fee rate, you must be a member of St. Stephen Presbyterian Church for at least one year.
- Because the wedding ceremony 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. Any announcements you wish to relay to guests should be printed in your wedding bulletin/program. Pastors and/or guests should not shout announcements at any point before, during or after the ceremony, including while music is being performed.
- Violation of any of these policies or the terms of the Photography and Videography Policy and Agreement will result in the forfeiture of the \$500 additional deposit.

## PREPARATION FOR MARRIAGE

*St. Stephen Members Only*

St. Stephen Presbyterian Church requires pre-marital counseling for all couples to be married in its Sanctuary, Chapel, or grounds. It is equally important whether a first marriage, a marriage after the death of a spouse, or when one or both parties are divorced. This counseling will ordinarily be performed by St. Stephen's Pastor or by the pastor whom the couple asked to officiate the wedding. It is acceptable for a couple to seek counseling from an outside therapist, another pastor or religious leader, or by attending a pre-marital workshop. Should the couple pursue one of these counseling alternatives, the counselor shall mail or email the following to St. Stephen's Pastor:

I am a certified counselor, religious leader, or pre-marital workshop leader and I verify that (names of the couple) have received pre-marital counseling or training and are prepared to enter into the covenant of marriage. Signed, name and credentials.

After successful counseling, the Pastor will approve the marriage. The wedding may not be approved if the Pastor feels that the commitment, responsibility, maturity, or Christian understanding are so lacking that the marriage is unwise. 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.

## 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 ceremony is under the direction of the Pastor and the supervision of the Session. In the event that a pastor, other than that 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.

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 ceremony.

## TIME AND PLACE OF THE SERVICE

- Three timeslots are available for ceremonies on Saturdays:
  - 11:00 am–2:00 pm, Friday rehearsal at 4:00 pm
  - 2:00 pm–5:00 pm, Friday rehearsal at 5:00 pm
  - 5:00 pm–8:00 pm, Friday rehearsal at 6:00 pm
- 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 1,000) and the Chapel of the Holy Trinity (seating 68) are available for weddings.
- Weddings will not be scheduled on weekends of religious and/or national holidays (i.e. Easter, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, etc.)
- The Parish Hall or the Eastminster Room may be rented for a rehearsal dinner prior to or a reception following the wedding for an additional fee. Wine, including champagne, may be served at such events. It may not be served to minors.
- It is essential that reservations for the exact times of both the wedding and the rehearsal be made as early as possible with the Wedding Coordinator. 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.
- Ushers should be instructed to be present and ready to escort guests 30 minutes before the wedding ceremony.
- If the reception is held at the church, a designated representative of the wedding party will make complete arrangements for decorations, refreshments and service, including cleanup of the Parish Hall/Eastminster Room and kitchen. The custodian of St. Stephen Presbyterian Church, or appointee, must be present to ensure that all policies herein are followed. Additional fees are applicable if the building is not left in an acceptable manner following the ceremony and/or reception.
- A designated person should ensure that all clothing and belongings of the wedding party are removed from the Sanctuary/Chapel following the wedding ceremony.
- Because the wedding ceremony 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. Any announcements you wish to relay to guests should be printed in your wedding bulletin/program. Pastors and/or guests should not shout announcements at any point before, during or after the ceremony, including while music is being performed.

## 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 Organist & Director of Music Ministries of St. Stephen, who is expected to play all weddings. After your initial meeting with the Pastor, make an appointment with the Organist & Director of Music Ministries to discuss the music for the service. Pre-recorded music is not allowed.

### ALTERNATE ORGANIST

If the Organist & Director of Music Ministries is not available to play for 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 make an appointment and meet with the Organist & Director of Music Ministries who will assess the musicians' competence and experience and provide an overview of the Sanctuary Organ. If approved for the ceremony, it will be your responsibility to arrange for and pay the musicians' fees, as well as our Organist & Director of Music Ministries standard fee, which is included in the wedding fee package.

### INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLES AND VOCAL SOLOISTS

Instrumental ensembles and vocal soloists are encouraged and can add great beauty to a wedding ceremony. The Organist & Director of Music Ministries coordinates the contracting 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 string quartet, brass quintet, trumpet, harp, and bagpipes) are effective in our church setting and are also popular choices among couples. All musicians will perform in the Gallery unless accompanied by the piano. If you wish to have a friend or family member sing or play an instrument at the service, arrangements must be made with the Organist & Director of Music Ministries.

The Organist & Director of Music Ministries may be contacted by phone or email:

Jordan Smith

817.927.8411

[jordan@ststephenpresbyterian.com](mailto:jordan@ststephenpresbyterian.com)

# WEDDING INFORMATION FORM

Rehearsal date and time: \_\_\_\_\_

Wedding date and time: \_\_\_\_\_

Bride: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_

Groom: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_

Wedding to be held in (circle one):    SANCTUARY                    CHAPEL

Wedding Consultant: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Has the Wedding Consultant been informed of St. Stephen's Wedding Policies?    YES            NO

Photographer: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Has the Photographer signed the Acknowledgment of Church policy concerning photography and videography?    YES            NO

Videographer: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Has the Videographer signed the Acknowledgment of Church policy concerning photography and videography?    YES            NO

Florist: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Has the Florist been informed of St. Stephen's policy concerning décor?    YES            NO

## ATTENDANTS

Number of bridesmaids: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of groomsmen: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of ring bearers: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of flower girls: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of ushers: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of guests invited to the wedding: \_\_\_\_\_

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*Complete the following if pastor requested is not a member of the St. Stephen staff.*

Pastor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Denomination: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Has the St. Stephen Wedding Policy been provided to the guest pastor?    YES    NO

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## FEES

### Non-Member

Sanctuary Wedding: \$3,150  
Includes all services of church personnel

Chapel Wedding: \$1,900  
Includes all services of church personnel

Use of Sanctuary Pew Torches: \$500

Video Recording/Livestream: \$250

### Member\*

Sanctuary Wedding: \$1,750  
Includes all services of church personnel

Chapel Wedding: \$1,300  
Includes all services of church personnel

Use of Sanctuary Pew Torches: \$500

Video Recording/Livestream: \$250

\* In order to be eligible for the member fee rate, the bride and/or groom must meet the membership requirements as defined in the *Book of Order*, G-1.04.

Parish Hall and/or Eastminster room for rehearsal dinner and/or reception: Pricing on Request

**TOTAL FEES FOR YOUR WEDDING: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

## DEPOSITS

### The following deposits must be paid to secure your wedding date:

- 50% of all wedding fees
- \$500 damage deposit - This deposit will be returned after the ceremony if no policies are violated by the wedding party, guests, or vendors, and there are no physical damages to church property.

## **EMERGENCY CONTACTS**

Emergency contact for bride:

Phone:

Relationship to bride:

Emergency contact for groom:

Phone:

Relationship to groom:

## **CANCELLATION POLICY**

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

- 180 days or more before the wedding date: 100% refund
- 90-180 days before the wedding date: 75% refund
- 60-90 days before the wedding date: 50% refund
- 30-60 days before the wedding date: 25% refund
- 30 days or less before the wedding date: no refund

## **SIGNATURE OF BRIDE OR GROOM**

By signing below, you acknowledge and agree to the contents of St. Stephen Presbyterian Church's Wedding Policy and Procedures and agree that any damages to St. Stephen's property and/or deviation from the clearly stated policies and procedures could result in additional fees following the wedding ceremony.

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY POLICY AND AGREEMENT

- Photos and videos taken inside the church must be completed one hour before the wedding ceremony or may take place immediately after the ceremony.
- No flash or additional lighting by photographer/videographer is permitted during the ceremony.
- Photos/video may only be taken from the Gallery (choir loft) or designated areas in the East and West Transepts.
- No movement of photographers/videographers is permitted during the ceremony.
- During the wedding ceremony, the designated wedding photographer and/or videographer may take photos and videos without flash or additional lighting from the Gallery and other specified areas of the Sanctuary or Chapel that have been pre-approved by the Wedding Coordinator.

I, the undersigned, have been designated to serve as the photographer and/or videographer at a wedding occurring at St. Stephen Presbyterian Church. I have received a copy of St. Stephen Presbyterian Church's Wedding Policy and Procedures, which sets forth the church's photography and videography policies and procedures. I have read and understand the church's photography and videography policies and procedures contained in its Wedding Policy and Procedures and hereby agree that I will comply with such policies and procedures. Further, I have been informed and understand that my failure to comply with the church's photography and videography policies and procedures contained in its Wedding Policy and Procedure will result in St. Stephen Presbyterian Church denying me the opportunity to serve as the photographer and/or videographer at future weddings occurring at St. Stephen Presbyterian Church AND may result in the forfeiture of the deposit paid by the couple.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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*Return signed agreement by email, US mail, or hand deliver 30 days prior to the wedding.*

Anne Barrett, Wedding Coordinator  
St. Stephen Presbyterian Church  
2700 McPherson Avenue  
Fort Worth, TX 76109  
817.927.8411

[admin@ststephenpresbyterian.com](mailto:admin@ststephenpresbyterian.com)