

Cary Presbyterian Church Wedding Policy

Introduction:

We are pleased that you have chosen Cary Presbyterian Church (CPC) as the place for your wedding. All weddings held here will conform to the guidelines listed in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) *Book of Order* and in this policy adopted by the Session of CPC on March 22, 2010.

Purpose & Function:

Marriage is the public declaration of covenant love between a woman and a man. Marriage is to be regarded as a life-time commitment to be entered into prayerfully and joyfully.

“Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family...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.” (W-4-9001¹)

Eligibility:

For weddings held on site at Cary Presbyterian Church, the bride, groom or the bride’s or groom’s immediate family will ordinarily be members of Cary Presbyterian Church.

NOTE: The Ministers of Word and Sacrament of Cary Presbyterian Church *may be willing* to officiate at other weddings (held off site). Please contact one of the ministers to discuss this option.

Officiants:

Ordinarily, one of the installed pastors of Cary Presbyterian Church will officiate at each wedding. Additional ministers may be invited by the Pastor/Head of Staff to assist in the service. Weddings will be preceded by appropriate premarital counseling sessions (W-4.9002) by the officiating pastor or by someone recommended by the officiating pastor.

“If the minister is convinced after discussion with the couple that commitment, responsibility, maturity, or Christian understanding are so lacking that the marriage is unwise, the minister shall assure the couple of the church’s continuing concern for them and not conduct the ceremony. In making this decision the minister may seek the counsel of the session.” (W-4.9002b)

The session will grant approval for each wedding held at Cary Presbyterian Church. (W-1.4004e)

¹ *Directory for Worship; Book of Order* – Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

The Service:

The wedding ceremony is a service of worship that has as its central focus the worship of God. The service should not be ostentatious or showy, but a tasteful affirmation of God. The officiating pastor has the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of worship and reserves the right to determine what is or is not appropriate for the service.

Music - The CPC Director of Music will ordinarily provide music for weddings. All guest musicians, including soloists and guest organists, must be approved by the Director of Music.

- All music will be approved by the Director of Music. All music, including solos, must be liturgically appropriate. Love songs that focus on the couple should be reserved for the reception.
- Music Rehearsals - The Wedding Rehearsal is not a rehearsal for musicians. Any musical rehearsals must be scheduled at separate times. Additional rehearsals may impact the Director of Music's and musicians' fees.

Bulletin (or printed order of worship) - If the church office staff is producing the bulletin (or printed order of worship), all details must be submitted to the church office at least one week before the service.

Photography and Videography - No flash photography is permitted during the service. Placement of video cameras, and non-flash photography must be discreet and approved by the officiating minister. Photographers and/or videographers must consult with the wedding director (see p. 3) two weeks prior to the service. Upon request, the service may be video-recorded by Cary Presbyterian Church staff. The location of the video recorder is pre-set and may not be moved.

Decorations -

- **Flowers** – Session suggests one flower arrangement for the sanctuary. Flowers or other decorations must be appropriate and may not be affixed to other surfaces (ends of pews, etc.) by any means that result in permanent markings (no staples, no nails, no tape that leaves residue, etc.)
- **Candelabra** - If you wish to arrange for candelabra, session suggests one on each side of the Communion table. Non-drip candles must be used. The bride and groom are responsible for candelabra and non-drip candles.
- **Unity Candle** – Non-drip candles and candle holders must be provided by the bride and groom.
- **Aisle Runners** – Aisle runners are prohibited.

Communion - If communion is celebrated, it will be served to all people who desire to receive it. Presbyterian polity does not allow for only the couple to receive the Sacrament. Celebration of communion shall be approved by session. (W-4.9003)

The Rehearsal:

The rehearsal will begin and end on time.

It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to ensure all members of the wedding party are present and punctual.

The following items must be brought to the rehearsal if not already given to the Wedding Director (for her/his role, see below):

1. The marriage license (give to the officiating pastor)
2. The guest register (if one is to be used)
3. The unity candle (if one is to be used)
4. The bulletins (or printed order of worship)
5. The names of guests and attendants who will be wearing flowers

Wedding Director:

A wedding director, who is a member of Cary Presbyterian Church, will be assigned in consultation with the officiating pastor and the couple. The wedding director will:

1. Contact the bride and groom to schedule an initial meeting to discuss the wedding policy. This conversation will include reviewing building guidelines, fees and facility use forms, dates/times, scheduling of the rehearsal and wedding day, and overall timetable for the wedding.
2. Schedule a meeting at least two weeks before the wedding to discuss wedding party placement, seating of special guests and other final details (including contact information for florist, photographers, videographers, caterers, etc.).
3. Assist at the rehearsal.
4. Coordinate the ushers, lighting of candles and the wedding processional/recessional.

Buildings and Grounds Manager:

The Buildings and Grounds Manager of Cary Presbyterian Church is ordinarily involved with all weddings. The Buildings and Grounds Manager will:

1. Open and close the building for events related to the wedding including the wedding itself.
2. Operate the sound system.
3. Video-record the worship service - upon request (see above).

Other Information:

Dressing - A “bride’s room” is available if the bride and/or her attendants wish to dress at the church. The same option is available for the groom and his attendants. The bride and groom are responsible for returning the room to the condition in which it was found. A portion of the refundable deposit will be held if the rooms are not returned to the conditions in which they were found.

Alcoholic beverages and other controlled substances are not permitted on church property. The presence of alcohol or other controlled substances (or observation of their effect at the rehearsal or on the day of the wedding) may result in immediate cancellation of the wedding.

Reception/Rehearsal Dinner - If a reception or rehearsal dinner is to be held at the church, the bride and groom are responsible for arranging that the facilities be left as they are found. Additional fees apply. Session approval is required. No alcoholic beverages are permitted on church property.

Honoraria:

The Session of Cary Presbyterian Church recognizes that weddings are part of the ordained pastors’ ministry and responsibility. The session also acknowledges that weddings require a significant amount of time and attention on the part of the pastor(s) involved. It is appropriate to honor the pastor(s) with a financial gift or honorarium, that is, a “payment for a service on which custom or propriety forbids a price to be set.”²

In the past, families have requested guidance about “an appropriate honorarium” for an officiating pastor. The following information is presented in response to those requests, NOT as an expected fee for service.

Officiating Pastor	\$500 – based on minimum of nine hours preparation/presence ³
Additional Pastor	\$100-200 – depending on the extent to which he or she is involved

An honorarium/gift may be given directly to the pastor(s) or to the Office Manager who will disburse the gift.

² <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/honoraria>

³ Based on a **minimum of 9 hours** of preparation/presence

Initial conversation and meeting	1 hour
Premarital Counseling/Additional Meetings	2 ½ hour (2 hours face to face)
Pastor’s prep time	2 hours (minimum)
Rehearsal	1 ½ hours (minimum)
Wedding (20 – 30 minute service)	1 hour (minimum)
Travel time (if in the Triangle)	1 hour (minimum)

Fees:

Weddings require special attention on the part of church staff. Fees must be paid in full (to the Office Manager) by check or money order at least 72 hours in advance of the wedding (unless previous arrangements are made). The following fees apply to weddings held at Cary Presbyterian Church. Please consult directly with the officiating pastor for non-Cary Presbyterian Church weddings. In certain circumstances, in consultation with the officiating pastor, fees may be waived.

Payable to “Cary Presbyterian Church”:

Refundable Deposit	\$200
Use of Sanctuary	no fee
Use of Dressing Rooms	no fee
Custodial Fee	\$100

Payable to the Individual:

Director of Music	\$400 (fee will increase if additional rehearsals are required)
Wedding Director	\$200
Buildings and Ground Manager	\$ 75

Information related to on-site rehearsal dinners or receptions and associated fees is available from the Office Manager.

Scheduling a Wedding at Cary Presbyterian Church:

The bride or groom should:

1. Contact the Office Manager to request a copy of the Wedding Policy. Read the policy in its entirety. Make note of any questions or concerns.
2. Speak with one of the pastors about your desire to be married at Cary Presbyterian Church.
3. After speaking with a pastor, complete the Wedding Information Form. Submit the form to the Office Manager. The Officer Manager will submit the date for approval by session and then reserve the date on the church calendar.
4. Consult with the officiating pastor (the pastor who will be officiating at the wedding) to arrange for a Cary Presbyterian Church Wedding Director.
5. Contact the Director of Music.