

WEDDING POLICY FOR THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CHERAW (proposed revision)

June 27, 2023

A wedding is a Christian service of worship and commitment, in the presence of God, family and friends. This policy has been prepared to assist couples to participate in a worship service in our church facilities and to make specific preparations for this special occasion.

Date and Time of the Wedding

The bride or groom should notify the church office (843-537-7474) as soon as the couple has a wedding date in mind. Once the required forms are completed, and deposit paid, and the minister has approved the date and time, the church secretary can confirm the reservation of the Church for the wedding service. *No wedding date or time is confirmed until these conditions are met!*

There shall be no weddings in our Church facilities on New Year's Day, Easter Sunday (or that weekend), Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

The Minister and the Sanctuary

The first step in wedding planning should be a conference of the bride and groom with our Church's minister. Usually, there will be pre-marital counseling sessions with our church's minister. If a couple desiring a wedding here are not members of this Church, another minister may be invited to perform all or part of the wedding service *only with the approval of our minister and the session of this Church!*

Our Church's sanctuary should be appreciated for its beautiful setting. Weddings in our sanctuary will be conducted in accordance with our Church traditions and the Reformed (Presbyterian) faith.

If the couple desires to hire a wedding director, then he/she must work cooperatively with our minister in planning the wedding, and the actual ceremony on the wedding day. Our minister is the actual leader of the wedding service – not the “wedding director.”

The marriage license shall be placed in the hands of the officiating minister by the time of the rehearsal, and no later than the day before the wedding.

If any sanctuary or chancel furnishings are moved for the wedding service, it will be the responsibility of the families of the bride and groom to return all furnishings to their proper places immediately following the wedding service.

Dressing Rooms for the Wedding Party

The Church Parlor shall be made available to the bride and her attendants. The Choir Room shall be made available to the groom and groomsmen. The Church shall not be responsible for any items left in these rooms. Any personal items of the bride and groom shall be removed immediately following the wedding service.

Reception in our Fellowship Hall, and Checklist for a Caterer

If the reception will be held at First Presbyterian Church, a reservation for use of the fellowship hall should be made when the wedding date is set. The same care and consideration described above for the sanctuary applies to the fellowship hall.

The Church does not provide catering services. The caterer must be approved by the Church office and shall receive a copy of this wedding policy.

Checklist for caterer:

1. The use of alcohol on church property is prohibited. If you plan to serve alcohol at your reception, then you should choose another venue for your reception.
2. The church kitchen may be used, and its dishes and utensils may be used. However, the kitchen, dishes and utensils MUST be washed and returned to their proper places immediately after the reception.
3. Folding tables are available in the fellowship hall. If used, they must also be returned to their places immediately after the reception.
4. No rice, bird seed, confetti or the like may be thrown inside the church buildings, or in front of the entrances of the sanctuary and fellowship building.

Flowers, Decorations and Candles, and a Checklist for Florists

The bride and groom must contact the church office and review this checklist before making plans for decorating the church. The Church encourages simplicity in floral decorations.

The Church has two candelabra available to the wedding party. Only non-drip candles may be used and must be supplied by the bride and groom. If floor-standing candelabra are used, some type of protection must be provided to protect the sanctuary carpet.

Checklist for Florist

1. Flowers must be furnished by the bridal party.
2. Adhesives and nails are not allowed to be used in the sanctuary or any other place in the Church buildings. Metal clamps used on reserved pews must be carefully cushioned.
3. Because of fire safety, candles should not be placed in the sanctuary windows. Candles are not to be carried down the aisles by members of the wedding party. Protection should be placed under the candelabra to prevent candle wax from dripping on the floor and carpet. Only non-drip candles may be used at our Church.

Photography

To maintain the dignity of the wedding as a worship service, pictures should be taken before or after the service, but not during the service. The bride and groom should remind the photographer of this stipulation. Video taping is permitted from the balcony only.

Music for the Wedding Service

Musical selections should be appropriate for a worship service in our sanctuary. Our minister and music director have the final say over the selection of music, if there are any questions. Prerecorded music is prohibited for a wedding in our sanctuary. Our church organist has the right of first refusal when it comes to a wedding service in our sanctuary. If our organist is unavailable, then any guest organist or musician must have the approval of our minister and session before the wedding happens. Our sanctuary piano and other instruments may also be used in a wedding service.

Worship Bulletins

Printed bulletins for wedding services are encouraged but not required. Bulletins are the responsibility of the bride and groom. Along with the order of service, the bulletin should contain statements regarding the use of photography or video equipment during the service.

ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT ANY OF THESE POLICY STATEMENTS SHOULD BE DIRECTED FIRST TO OUR MINISTER. CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE AT 843-537-7474 TO SPEAK TO THE MINISTER.

Fees for Members and Non-members

	<u>Member fees</u>	<u>Non-member fees</u>
Sanctuary/Parlor	No charge	\$300.00
Fellowship building and kitchen	No charge	\$200.00
Session House	No charge	\$150.00
Organist Fee	\$250.00 minimum	\$300.00 minimum
Custodial Fee	\$100.00	\$150.00
Officiating minister	\$250.00	\$300.00

The session of First Presbyterian Church may, upon receiving a written request, provide an exemption for fees for use of the sanctuary, fellowship building, kitchen and session house. The session may also grant exemptions to any of these policy statements when the elders believe that it is best to do so.

WEDDING REQUEST FORM

BRIDE

Full Name _____

Age _____

Home Address _____

Telephone _____

Occupation _____

Any special family requests or accommodations needed? If so, please describe:

GROOM

Full name _____

Age _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Occupation _____

[Continue on back of this page.]

Requested wedding date and time: _____

Date and time of rehearsal: _____

Location of reception: _____

Florist _____

Caterer _____

Photographer _____

Wedding director (if other than the minister) _____

Director's contact information _____

Requested church facilities (check all that apply)

- _____ sanctuary
- _____ choir room
- _____ parlor
- _____ fellowship hall

AFFIRMATION: I have read and agree to all of the above guidelines for our wedding at the First Presbyterian Church of Cheraw, SC.

_____ (BRIDE'S SIGNATURE)