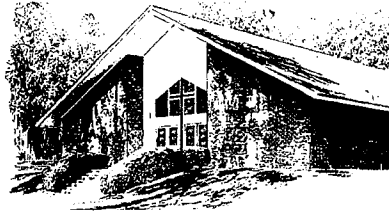


Weddings at Lafayette Presbyterian Church



Please read this first ...

If you are reading this, you are probably anticipating a most special event in your life which we call a “wedding.” Congratulations! What follows here - the policies and guidelines for the conduct of a wedding ceremony at Lafayette Presbyterian Church - has a purpose. That purpose is to provide, in as convenient a way as possible, answers to the most frequently asked questions of those who are preparing weddings at our church.

The information in these guidelines is both practical and theological. It tries to anticipate the many areas where decisions are to be made concerning the wedding. It gives some common sense answers; it gives some answers that are based on much practical experience with weddings in our setting; it gives some answers that are formal policies of Lafayette Presbyterian Church; and it gives some answers that are directed by the Book of Order and by our reformed theology for worship in a Presbyterian Church.

The Pastor will want to review these guidelines at one of the Pastor’s first meetings with any couple to be married. If, when you review them, you have a question or if you consider some requirement or expectation unclear or unreasonable, you should call or visit the Pastor to resolve the issue quickly and directly.

The Session and the Pastor, most of all, hope and expect that these guidelines will be helpful to you and will serve to enrich the wedding ceremony we all anticipate so eagerly.

As we said, your wedding is a very special event in your life. The beauty of your wedding ceremony will come, not from the expense you put into it, but from the sincerity you bring to it, the affection you share in it, the commitment you freely express through it, and the reverence in which you hold it before God.

A church wedding is more than a social event ... it is not an occasion for entertainment or lavish display. It is recognition of the importance of spiritual promises and demands for our individual lives. **The Presbyterian Church celebrates marriage in worship**, with prayer and blessings, and requires vows concerning the couple’s covenant with God.

*A wedding ceremony is brief. A marriage lasts a lifetime.
We pray God’s blessing upon you and the home you are beginning to build.*

Lafayette Presbyterian Wedding Policy

SEATING CAPACITY IN SANCTUARY: 220 - including family seating

FEES

Use of the Sanctuary	There is NO charge for the use of the Sanctuary and/or Fellowship Hall and/or Fellowship hall for weddings, showers, etc. for Lafayette members and their immediate family members (parents & children).
Accompanist Fee	The church accompanist has first refusal for these services. Fees are due fourteen days prior to the wedding. \$150.00 for the rehearsal and ceremony, with a \$20.00 fee for each additional consultation.
Pastor's Fee	There is no fee for the services, but it is customary to offer a gift. The recommended amount is \$100.00.
Custodial Fee	The fee is \$50.00 and is due fourteen (14) days prior to the wedding. The wedding party is responsible for taking down and removing decorations.

GENERAL POLICY

The principles and practices of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) regarding weddings are specified in the Constitution of this Church, the *Book of Order*, W-4.900 (attached), and will be followed.

The “Lafayette Presbyterian Church Wedding Request Form” is to be completed and returned to the church office for approval by the Session. **Weddings are required to be approved by the Session of Lafayette Presbyterian Church, by way of the Worship Committee. Approval should be obtained at least four weeks prior to the wedding ceremony.**

Because of the faith commitments required for Christian marriage and the theological bases for weddings in this congregation, as a general rule, no non-member weddings will be approved. In *exceptional circumstances*, requests for non-member weddings will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Please do not ask the Church to accept you for membership solely for the purpose of having your wedding.

The minister is responsible for the manner in which the wedding ceremony is conducted. The couple would be required to attend a meeting with the minister where the policies of the Church regarding weddings are reviewed and agreed upon.

Both parties of the wedding shall be willing to follow the practices of the Presbyterian Church for the Worship Service of Christian Marriage. Both parties are to attend the premarital counseling as required by the minister. According to the *Book Of Order* (W-4.9002b), the pastor has the right to refuse to officiate at a requested wedding.

If you desire another minister to officiate, the minister of this church must first be notified in order that he may extend the invitation without which any other minister would hesitate to come. The minister of this church will require at least one meeting with the minister to officiate in order to clarify the policies, including the theology of Christian worship, of this church, and to have assurance that these will be followed.

No alcohol is to be served on Church grounds.

Music: In consultation with the officiating Pastor, Lafayette's Director of Music will approve the requested accompanist and all music selections. An additional section on "*Music for Your Wedding*" is attached.

No flash pictures are to be taken during the wedding service or video camera filming with lights. The photographer should be inconspicuous at all times. Please advise your family - and guests, insofar as possible - of this requirement. You may remind them that this is a Service of Worship.

Care of Property: The wedding party is responsible for returning the premises to its original condition. If desired, arrangements may be made with the Church custodian, four weeks prior to the wedding. Arrangements will be made by way of the Property Committee when the Session approves the wedding, if it is requested on the "Request for Use of Lafayette Presbyterian Church Facilities" form. The custodial fee will be due and should be given to the Church fourteen days prior to the ceremony.

Decorations should be in keeping with the simplicity and dignity of the Reformed Tradition in which a minimum of adornment is practiced. Decorations should not be put up with anything (no nails or tacks) that would damage church property.

Candelabras, if used, shall be limited to no more than three (3) stands, containing no more than thirty (30) candles total. The purpose of this limitation is, first, to insure the safety and allow for the necessary movement of the wedding party. It has also been learned that more candles than this detracts from the simple beauty focused on a bride and groom standing at one of the great moments of their life.

All candelabra shall have non-flammable covering over the carpeting on the floor beneath the candles to catch wax drippings.

Lafayette Church does not have Candelabra. You will need to arrange for your florist to provide them.

Communion will not ordinarily be served as a part of the wedding ceremony unless the ceremony is a part of the regular Service of Worship of the congregation.

Please Note:

Before a wedding can be scheduled, a meeting must be held with the Minister (normally one hour) for consultation and “discussion with the man and the woman concerning,

- 1) the nature of their Christian commitment, assuring that at least one is a professing Christian,**
- 2) the legal requirements of the state,**
- 3) the privileges and responsibilities of Christian marriage,**
- 4) the nature and form of the marriage service,**
- 5) the vows and commitments they will be asked to make,**
- 6) the relationship of these commitments to their lives of discipleship,**
- 7) the resources of the faith and the Christian community to assist them in fulfilling their marriage commitments.**

This discussion is equally important in the case of a first marriage, a marriage after the death of a spouse, and a marriage following divorce.”

“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.”

(Book of Order, W-4.9002a)

If, following an initial meeting with the man and the woman, the minister concurs with the couple’s request for marriage, a date may then be confirmed for the wedding to take place.

The Minister, as Officiant, will meet with the man and the woman on several other occasions (ordinarily 3 or 4 times of one hour each) prior to the Wedding in order to provide additional counsel regarding marriage and to coordinate the planning of the wedding ceremony itself.

(REVISED 5/19/04)

Music for Your Wedding

After you have met with the Minister and your Wedding at Lafayette Presbyterian Church has received approval by the Session, please contact the church Pianist as soon as possible to make arrangements to meet and discuss your musical needs for the Wedding ceremony.

Your first meeting with the Pianist will usually be scheduled for the time following the 11:00 AM Worship Service on a Sunday.

Pianist: Deloise Lima-Ohlsson (Home Phone: 850-906-0290)
e-mail: delolima@hotmail.com

Minister: John Lown (Home Phone: 850-878-5732)
e-mail: JohnLown@earthlink.net

Lafayette Presbyterian Church office: 850-877-4428
e-mail: lpchurch@earthlink.net
fax: 850-877-5400

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Addition to the "*Lafayette Presbyterian Wedding Policy*" of Lafayette Presbyterian Church:

"All music for the ceremony should be planned in consultation with the church Pianist. Since a wedding is a sacred service of the Church, appropriate music should be used. The Pianist and Minister will be helpful in selecting appropriate music.

"The use of a Guest Pianist must be approved in consultation with the church's Pianist. The church Pianist will acquaint the guest with the piano.

"Soloists (vocalists or instrumentalists) may be arranged for by individuals or through the Pianist. All music selections must be approved through consultation with Lafayette's Director of Music, the Minister, and the Pianist."

* * *

The Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (USA) gives the following authoritative guidance concerning the Music for Christian Marriage:

"Music suitable for the marriage service directs attention to God and expresses the faith of the church (W-2.1004). The congregation may join in hymns and other musical forms of praise and prayer." (W-4.9005)

"To lead the congregation in the singing of prayer is a primary role of the choir and other musicians. They also may pray on behalf of the congregation with intonations, responses, and other musical forms. Instrumental music may be a form of prayer since words are not essential to prayer. In worship, music is not to be for entertainment or artistic display. Care should be taken that it not be used merely as a cover for silence. Music as prayer is to be a worthy offering to God on behalf of the people." (W-2.1004)

11-09-05