



Wedding Policies

While the polity of our church does not require each church to have a written marriage policy, many do, and find it helpful in addressing questions from couples wishing to be married.

Normally a wedding policy covers who may be married, what the church will provide, what is expected of the couple, and the fees that a couple can expect to pay.

It should be noted that there should be no difference between the fees charged to members and non-members. This is in keeping with Canada Revenue Agency stipulations that members who receive charitable receipts from an organization may not receive any personal benefit as a result of their contributions.

A Session may wish to consider the following sample in developing a policy.

Sample Wedding Policy

[Name] Presbyterian Church
[Address]

Congratulations on your upcoming wedding! Christian marriage bears witness to the love and will of God for the whole of creation and for the social order. The marriage liturgy attempts to express, through words and actions, the church's understanding of Christian marriage.

The covenant made between a couple in marriage is private but it is also a public covenant made before God and witnesses. It is a covenant made for the good of the natural and social order. It is a relationship rooted in faithfulness. In the marriage service, we are reminded of the faithful God who entered into covenant with a beloved people. As we celebrate, we are given a glimpse of the kingdom of God.

The worship of God is the appropriate context for a service which unites Christians in marriage.

In accordance with the policy of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Session of [Name] Presbyterian Church has determined that for our congregation, marriage is a covenant between one man and one woman and, subject to this policy, is pleased to be a part of weddings on that basis. If we cannot conduct your wedding due to this policy, we can refer you to a ministry that can.

or

In accordance with the policy of The Presbyterian Church in the Session of [Name] Presbyterian Church has determined that for our congregation, marriage is a covenant between two people and, subject to this policy, is pleased to be a part of weddings on that basis.

The following may be included and modified as appropriate.

[At least one person will be baptized]

[At least one person will be a member of the church]

[The couple will have or establish a pastoral relationship with the minister]

[Pre-marriage preparation will take place in consultation with the minister]

[The minister will be free to decline to conduct any wedding]

[The couple will be desirous of a Christian marriage service]

[The couple will provide a marriage licence at least one week before the wedding.

Members of the congregation may have banns read before the congregation in accordance with the laws of the province and policy of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. In this case a separate license is not required.]

The church will provide:

[Sanctuary for the conduct of the wedding, for up to XXX guests for up to XX hours at a cost of \$XXX]

[The services of a minister to plan the service with you, conduct a rehearsal and conduct the wedding in accordance with the laws of province. An honorarium of \$XXX is suggested]

[The minister of the congregation and music director shall be given the right of first refusal for all weddings. A guest clergy officiant or assistant may be considered by the minister.]

[The marriage will be recorded in the marriage register of the congregation and filed with the appropriate government department in a timely manner]

[The services of an organist at a fee of \$XXX payable to the organist prior to the wedding]

[Custodial services at a fee of \$XXX payable to the church/custodial prior to the wedding]

[Hall space for receptions on the following terms...]

No confetti or other material may be thrown within the church [on church property].

Decorations (ribbons, flowers etc.) may be placed in the sanctuary provided they do not cause any damage.