

Covenant Presbyterian Church

WEDDING POLICY



Covenant Presbyterian Church welcomes the opportunity to share with you in the development of your wedding plans. Our sanctuary, fellowship hall and other facilities are available for your use.

Covenant Presbyterian Church
3131 Walton Way, Augusta, Georgia 30909
706-733-0513

Revised-March 12, 2013
Session approved, May 7, 2013

A wedding is a joyous celebration. A couple has found the love of God in their intertwining lives. That love transcends them and makes them more than they could ever imagine. A wedding is then a service of worship--joyous, but still worship. The intent is to glorify God who has joined two hearts into one. That means that the service should share many of the feelings of a normal Sunday service--reverence, wonder, and adoration. In the service, the couple makes their vows to embody the love found through God, which is a truly serious commitment to make. So, yes, we are to enjoy this service of worship immensely, and our joy can be complete as we remember that all we say and do is before God, who also enjoys the celebration, and those who worship God's holy name.

Arrangements

1. Contact the pastor for an initial consultation and to establish a wedding date, in keeping with the pastor's schedule and the church calendar.
2. Dates requiring the pastor's special approval occur during Holy Week and the Advent/Christmas seasons.
3. A non-member's date can be confirmed 6 (six) months prior to the wedding. Members are those who are currently on the active membership list.
4. Schedule additional consultation with the pastor to discuss and set the service order.
5. The church office will contact the Wedding Committee with the confirmed wedding date.
6. The bridal couple/family should try to make arrangements to see the sanctuary (and fellowship hall if requested) during regular church office hours. A weekend day can be arranged, if necessary.

Officiating Minister

1. Only the pastor of Covenant, or those approved by the pastor, will perform weddings at Covenant.
2. When the bridal couple requests a guest minister, the pastor will extend Covenant's invitation to officiate at the ceremony. It is understood that the visiting minister will abide by the church wedding policies.

Session Approval Required

1. Wedding Date
2. Guest Minister
3. Use of church facilities
4. Communion during the wedding

Counseling

1. Pre-marital counseling is required for all persons who plan to marry at Covenant.
2. Schedule these sessions with the pastor, or with a counselor recommended by the pastor.

Wedding Coordinator

1. A member of the Wedding Committee will contact the bride as soon as possible after receiving confirmation of the wedding date.
2. The coordinator will assist the wedding party in any way possible to include reviewing the policies for the ceremony and possibly viewing the facilities.
3. The conduct of the ceremony will be under the direction of the coordinator and the minister.
4. Outside wedding consultants may assist the wedding party in the changing area but will not be used to direct the ceremony. Outside wedding consultants must be made aware of all policy details.
5. The coordinator will make sure the candles on the reed ledge are of adequate length.
6. The coordinator will make sure the paraments are changed to white for the ceremony and changed back to the appropriate color for Sunday worship service.
7. The coordinator will remain until the wedding party has departed assuring that all candles have been extinguished, programs cleaned up from pews, etc.

Marriage License

1. It is recommended that the marriage license be brought to the church office during the week prior to the wedding. However, bringing the license to the rehearsal is acceptable.
2. The license will be signed by the officiating minister on day of the ceremony and will be returned to the church office.
3. The church secretary will make a copy of the license for the church records and will forward the license to the appropriate Probate Court.

Organist

1. Contact church organist as soon as possible to confirm availability and to schedule a consultation.
2. The Covenant organist has the responsibility of approving a guest organist, or any other musicians including soloists.
3. Fees are listed on the fee schedule page.

Music

1. Your wedding is a service of worship before God. The music selected should reflect the type of music that would be suitable during a Sunday morning worship service. Secular love songs are more appropriate for the wedding reception or rehearsal dinner.
2. The presiding organist will assist you in selecting appropriate music.
3. It is the responsibility of the bride/groom to consult independently with instrumentalists or soloists. Soloists or instrumentalists can add to, or detract from, your wedding ceremony; choose them carefully. The organist is not available to teach music to soloists or instrumentalists. The couple shall make independent financial arrangements for such musicians.
4. All musical selections require the approval of the church organist and/or the officiating minister. If selected pieces are not in the musician's library, the wedding couple is responsible for providing original copies for use in a timely manner.
5. Practice time with the organist and other musicians prior to the wedding rehearsal must be arranged well in advance. See fee schedule for hourly rehearsal rate with additional musicians.
6. Any additional soloists or instrumentalists must arrive at least ½ hour prior to the service start time.

Rehearsal

1. The rehearsal will be a maximum of one hour long and must start and stop on time.
2. All persons involved in the ceremony are to attend the rehearsal.
3. *Prior to the rehearsal*, decisions must be made with the wedding coordinator concerning the placement of the bridesmaids and groomsmen (we recommend the tallest on the outside so that everyone can see), how the bridal party will enter the sanctuary, how many relatives are to be seated formally by the ushers, where step-parents should be seated, etc. The bridal couple must decide if they will kneel during the prayer following the exchange of rings.

Flowers/Candles/Decorations

1. The communion table should not be moved with the exception of moving the table 1-2 feet back, if necessary, to accommodate the wedding party during the exchanging of vows.
2. The bride will inform the florist that decorations should be in place three (3) hours prior to the wedding hour.
3. The bride should inform the florist that arrangements must be made with the office for entry into the sanctuary.
4. Flowers are not to be placed on the communion table.
5. If church containers are used, they are not to be removed from the church and will be placed in the Sacristy at the conclusion of the service and photo session.
6. Flowers may be left for Sunday worship as a way to share your wedding with the congregation. However, flowers not scheduled to be left must be removed following the ceremony in order that the sanctuary can be prepared for Sunday morning worship.

Flowers/Candles/Decorations cont.

7. The candles on the reed ledge, symbolic of the light of Christ, are to be lit during the wedding.
8. Only dripless candles may be used in the chancel.
9. Aisle candles must have a hurricane globe for safety. Padded holders for the pews must be used to protect the wood from damage.
10. Florist must return to pick up all items that were provided for the wedding in order that the sanctuary is ready for Sunday morning worship.
11. Only artificial rose petals may be thrown by the flower girl inside the sanctuary. Real flowers create slipping hazard and create cleaning difficulties.

Seasonal Decorations

1. Although the dates vary from year to year, seasonal dates include the beginning of Advent through Epiphany. Once the church Christmas decorations are in place, they will not be moved until after Christmas day.
2. The Chrismon tree stays in place through Epiphany. The Wedding Committee can approve additional decorations for the wedding.

Photography/Videotaping/Recording

1. Flash photography will not be allowed in the Sanctuary during the service once the wedding service has begun with the organ prelude.
2. Photographs may be made in the narthex and the sanctuary preceding the ceremony.
3. The wedding party may return to the chancel area after the ceremony for as many pictures as they wish.
4. Videotaping is permitted with the camera from the balcony or behind the pulpit or lectern. Setup must be completed prior to the service with the equipment and operator hidden from the congregation's view.
5. The church's audio equipment is available to record the ceremony, if desired.
6. Photographers must refrain from cell phone use from all locations ½ hour prior to the service start time.

Dressing Rooms

1. Rooms are available for the convenience of all members of the wedding party.
2. The church cannot guarantee security of these rooms and cautions all persons that it cannot be responsible for valuables left in these rooms.

Reception (if held at Covenant)

1. The bride must make all arrangements with a caterer.
2. Tables and chairs are available for your use in the Fellowship Hall. Setup is the responsibility of the bridal party.
3. Furniture in the parlor may be moved with the approval of the Wedding Committee.
4. No alcohol or smoking will be allowed.
5. Birdseed or rose petals may be thrown outside the building. Rice is not permitted.
6. If used, the Fellowship Hall, Parlor, kitchen or parlor kitchen must be left clean following the wedding.
7. Clean up is the responsibility of the bridal couple's families. Food must not be left in storage or on counters. All garbage is to be placed in the dumpster at the rear of the church, by the Aumond Rd. parking lot.
8. Custodial Clean Up service is available. See fee schedule.

Covenant Presbyterian Church

Wedding Fee Schedule

Sanctuary

Members – \$100.00

Fee is used to schedule and reserve the wedding date and includes cleaning costs of the sanctuary and parlor following the ceremony.

Non-members – \$375.00

Deposit – A non-refundable deposit of \$100.00 is required to schedule and hold the sanctuary for the wedding date. Remaining balance is due the week prior to the wedding. Fee includes custodial clean up service for use of sanctuary and parlor following the ceremony.

Fellowship Hall/Kitchen – Reception Use

Members – No charge for use of facilities. Families are responsible for thorough clean up after reception. Custodial service may be requested. Custodial Clean-up fees listed below. (Caterers will be responsible for cleaning up their supplies, etc.)

Non-members - \$150.00. Families are responsible for thorough clean up after reception.

Custodial service may be requested. Custodial Clean-up fees listed below.

(Caterers are responsible for cleaning up their supplies, etc.)

Parlor/Parlor Kitchen – Reception Use

Members – No Charge for use of facilities. Families are responsible for thorough clean up after reception. Custodial service may be requested. Custodial Clean-up fees listed below.

Non-members - \$100.00. Families are responsible for thorough clean up after reception.

Custodial service may be requested. Custodial Clean-up fees listed below.

Pastor

Members – while there is no stated fee for members, the bridal couple may wish to present an honorarium to the pastor in appreciation of his time spent in counseling, conducting the rehearsal and wedding.

Non-members - \$150.00

Organist

Standard fee - \$250.00 (includes consultation, organ practice time, rehearsal and ceremony)

Additional rehearsal fee - \$30/hr. (This fee is charged for hours required by organist to rehearse with additional musicians and is payable to the organist.)

Bench fee* - \$50.00 – This fee is paid to the host organist when a guest organist is invited to play for the wedding.

*In keeping with guidelines established by the American Guild of Organists' document 'Wedding Policy: A Guide for Churches and Synagogues', October 2002.

All extra musicians incur a separate charge. Music fees are payable at the rehearsal.

Checks are made payable to each individual musician.

Custodial Clean Up Services – Reception use

Members -Parlor and Parlor kitchen - \$25

-Fellowship Hall/Kitchen - \$100

Non-members -Parlor and Parlor Kitchen - \$50.00

-Fellowship Hall and Kitchen - \$100.00



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Statement of Vision

Celebrating Christ's love and Growing in Ministry





Wedding Application Form

Covenant Presbyterian Church
3131 Walton Way
Augusta, Georgia 30909
706-733-0513

Requested wedding date _____ Time _____

Requested rehearsal date _____ Time _____

Bride (full name) _____

Address _____

Home phone _____ Cell phone _____ Business phone _____

Church membership _____

Bride's father _____ Church membership _____

Bride's mother _____ Church membership _____

Groom (full name) _____

Address _____

Home phone _____ Cell phone _____ Business phone _____

Church membership _____

Groom's father _____ Church membership _____

Groom's mother _____ Church membership _____

Location of Reception:

Other local facility: _____

Fellowship Hall: _____ Parlor: _____

Requesting Custodial Clean Up Service: Yes _____ No _____
(See fee schedule.)

Caterer (if held at Covenant): _____

Presiding Pastor: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Assisting Pastor: _____ Phone: _____

Organist: _____ Phone: _____

Florist: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Time of Decoration: _____ Time of Pickup: _____

Will the flowers be left for Sunday services? _____

Communion: Yes _____ No _____

Please note: according to the "The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) - Book of Order", Directory for Worship, Sections W2.4009 and W2.4010, the Sacrament of Communion is not a private ceremony and must be made available to all who are attending the wedding ceremony.

Church Kneeler Use: Yes _____ No _____

Photographer: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Time of Photos: _____

Video Person: _____ Phone: _____

Wedding Party:

Total no. of Groomsmen: _____ Total no. of Bridesmaids: _____

Best Man: _____ Maid/Matron of Honor: _____

Ring Bearer: _____ Age: _____

Flower Girl: _____ Age: _____

Time for arrival of attendants at church: _____

Bride presented for marriage by: _____ Relationship: _____

A member of the Wedding Committee will contact you as soon as possible after the wedding date has been scheduled on the church calendar. Our coordinator will assist you through the remainder of the process with any matters pertaining to Covenant Presbyterian Church facilities, use of equipment, church personnel, decorum, etc. Wedding Committee members will be present at the rehearsal and at the wedding. The conduct of the ceremony will be under the direction of the minister performing the wedding and the Wedding Committee members. Outside wedding consultants will not be used to direct the ceremony.

(Signature of bride or groom - required)

FOR CHURCH USE ONLY

Name of minister _____

Name of Wedding Committee representative contacted: _____

Copies to: Pastors Wedding Committee Organist

Date of deposit: _____

Session approval date: _____