

First Presbyterian Church, Wilmington, NC

87.7 WEDDING POLICY

Statement on Christian Marriage: Weddings at First Presbyterian Church are a Service of Worship and include most of the elements found in any worship service in this church. Therefore, wedding policies shall follow the criteria established by the Book of Order. We believe that Christian marriage is a covenant between two people who are in covenant with God. Deviations from this policy require Session approval.

Who may marry here:

- Members of First Presbyterian Church. Member fees apply; however, if the member has belonged to the church for less than one year, then non-member fees apply.
- Children or grandchildren of members of the First Presbyterian Church may marry here. Member fees apply. Non-member fees apply if the member has belonged to the church for less than one year.
- Members of other PCUSA churches may submit an application with a letter of recommendation from their pastor. Non-member fees apply.
- All wedding applications submitted to First Presbyterian Church, both member and non-member must receive Pastoral and Session approval.

Scheduling

- Only one wedding may be scheduled in the same weekend. Weddings may be scheduled Friday or Saturday.
- Only one non-member wedding per month is permitted
- Weddings or rehearsals may not be scheduled at the follow times:

Sundays, unless it is part of regular Worship Service, Saturday before Palm Sunday through Easter Sunday, the Fourth of July, Thanksgiving Week, Christmas Week, or New Years Day, during Azalea and Riverfest, or any day when the Church is closed.

Officiating Minister:

A member of the clergy staff of First Presbyterian Church conducts all weddings. You may ask any one of them to conduct the service; however, this request is subject to scheduling constraints.

Any visiting minister may assist only by invitation of the Session. Guest ministers are not normally compensated by the church.

Pastoral Meeting and Counseling

Upon receipt of notification from the Church of approval, the couple shall contact the appointed Clergy to arrange a meeting to discuss the meaning of Christian marriage, plan the order of worship and establish a pastoral relationship. Professional premarital counseling by a licensed clinician is also highly recommended. Pastors can provide referrals.

Music

- The Director of Music shall provide music at all weddings. A guest organist requires approval from the Director. In the event the Director of Music is not available, he/she will assist in securing an organist.
- The selections of music either sung or played shall be appropriate to the sacred nature of the wedding service of worship. The Director of Music shall have final approval of all music.
- The Director of Music shall hire all additional musicians. Requests for specific soloists/instrumentalists may be made during the music consultation and shall be subject to approval. All extra rehearsals must be arranged with the organist and are subject to extra fees.

Wedding Coordinator

- One of First Presbyterian Church's wedding coordinators and an assistant, as needed and at the discretion of the lead coordinator, will be required for all weddings. This coordinator will assist with all details concerning the wedding and the wedding party for the rehearsal and the wedding. The wedding coordinator ensures the policies and procedures of First Presbyterian Church are enforced.
- Outside consultants will work under the direction of the First Presbyterian Church's Wedding Coordinator and must adhere to all policies and procedures.

Decorations

Flowers are not required for weddings. Because the furnishings and appointments of the Sanctuary and the Chapel form a beautiful and dignified setting of reverence for God and quiet elegance, simplicity of decoration is required. Wedding Coordinators can offer guidance.

- Floral decorations for weddings shall be limited to one or two flower arrangements displayed in vases on pedestals, or to either side of the Communion Table. No flowers shall be placed on the Communion Table, which remains in the central position in the Chancel.
- Only the candlesticks/candelabras or flower containers belonging to First Presbyterian Church may be used.
- Reserved pew markers must be secured without tape, tacks, staples, adhesive or nails as to prohibit damaging the pews.
- No decorations may be hung inside the church building and no nails or screws may be used inside or outside of the building.

Flowers should not impede the movement or sight of worshippers or

Leaders. The final authority for interpreting and applying this policy to any particular worship service is the minister in charge.

Approved by Session August 5, 2026

Photography and Videography

- All photographers and videographers work under the direction of the wedding coordinator. A signed copy of the policies form must be on file in the church office before a photographer/videographer may work at First Presbyterian Church.
- Flash photography is disallowed in both the Sanctuary and the Chapel during the worship service. Photographers will remain outside of both the Sanctuary and the Chapel during the entire wedding service.
- Videography is only permitted from the balcony in the Sanctuary. No additional lighting or microphones are allowed. The use of videography in the Chapel is prohibited.
- A streamed recording of the wedding will be available on line for two (2) months. A link to download the event is easily shareable if someone wishes to keep the files for themselves. The church office will assist with this process.

Receptions

If a church reception is planned, arrangements must be made with the church office to use the church facilities, equipment or personnel. The services of the church sexton must be utilized for any church reception.

Other Items to Observe:

- Unity candles and aisle runners are not permitted
- Smoking and alcoholic beverages are not allowed in the building or on any church properties.
- No scattering of rose petals, potpourri, rice, confetti, glitter, birdseed, bubbles or anything else is allowed on the church properties.

- A guest register is not permitted at the wedding service because of the limited space in the Narthex.

License and Fee Check

No later than two (2) weeks prior to the wedding rehearsal, a check covering the wedding fees, made payable to First Presbyterian Church, must be brought to the church office with the marriage license.