

Reception

The Fellowship Hall (375+ capacity with seating for 200) is available for a wedding reception. Arrangements for a reception shall be made with the Pastor at the time the wedding is requested. For First Presbyterian Church members, punch bowls and cups are available upon request. Church custodians are required to be present at the reception for an additional per hour charge. NO Alcoholic beverages, confetti, rice, birdseed, bubbles, sparklers, or any other like substance, are permitted on the church property.

Associated Fees

Member

Officiating Pastor \$300

Organist \$250

Custodian \$125

Flower Petals \$25
+\$25/ hr. (if applicable)

Non- Member

Wedding Space \$1000

Reception Space \$1000

Officiating Pastor \$300

Organist \$250

Custodian \$125

+ \$25/ hr. (if applicable)

Flower Petals \$25

All fees are due one week prior to the wedding.

Checks should be made payable to the individuals whose names will be supplied by the Financial Manager.

Steps for Scheduling

1. After reviewing these guidelines, please complete the enclosed Wedding Information Sheet and submit to the Church Office.
2. Upon receipt, you will be contacted by the Pastor of First Presbyterian Church to review the completed form, guidelines, and discuss their availability and willingness to participate. The current Pastor of First Presbyterian Church is Rev. Dr. Peter A. Thompson (Senior Pastor), and he can be reached through the Church Office (434-384-6231) or directly by email (peter@fpcl.org).
3. Once the Pastor from First Presbyterian Church has reviewed the completed form and guidelines and confirmed their availability and willingness to officiate your wedding, they will submit a request for approval of your wedding to be held on church property at the next available Session meeting.

Please Note: A request from an active member of First Presbyterian Church, or immediately related family member who is an active member of First Presbyterian Church, must be submitted a minimum of one month prior to the requested wedding date. A request from a non-member must be submitted a minimum of six months prior to the wedding date.

4. Following approval by Session, the Pastor will be in touch to schedule further planning sessions. These planning sessions will be required to be attended by both *Bride* and *Groom* and will include: 1. A thorough review of logistics with Wedding Coordinators, Officiating Pastor(s), Organist, and Financial Manager (if applicable) and 2. Premarital Counseling and Celebration Planning (minimum of 3 sessions).

Well Wishes and Blessing

Your wedding is an important milestone that you will want to remember with pleasure for as long as possible. The Session joins you in prayer that God will provide you with wisdom as you reverently and thoughtfully plan your wedding. We are here to help support and encourage you as best we can. If you need anything or have questions, please call the church office (434-384-6231). ***We look forward to receiving your Wedding Information Form (enclosed) and celebrating with you in this joyous occasion.***



Wedding Guidelines

*Adopted by the Session of First Presbyterian Church of Lynchburg, VA
December 17, 2019*

WEDDING GUIDELINES FOR A CHRISTIAN WEDDING AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF LYNCHBURG

A wedding is a celebration of worship to God that honors the love of two individuals while being surrounded by their family and friends. We welcome the opportunity to share with you both the privileges and responsibilities involved in celebrating your wedding. Weddings are a ministry of First Presbyterian Church, and we will do everything we can to help make your wedding a sacred, beautiful, and meaningful event.

All wedding requests must be brought to the Session by an installed pastor of First Presbyterian Church. All weddings must be conducted in accordance with the guidelines established by the Session as found in the *Directory for Worship* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Only upon Session approval may a wedding be permitted on church property.

The following guidelines are for weddings celebrated on the property of First Presbyterian Church only. If you are interested in a wedding at another location and would like to speak with a pastor about officiating, please contact them directly and they will be glad to discuss further.

Use of Church Property

First Presbyterian Church is not a commercial wedding venue. As a ministry, wedding celebrations hosted at First Presbyterian Church have specific requirements and restrictions. Those requirements and restrictions are defined throughout the rest of this document.

Both members and non-members may submit a request for a wedding to be celebrated on the property of First Presbyterian Church. Please note that a request from a member of the church, or immediately related family member that is a member of the church, must be made at least one month prior to the wedding date, and a request from a non-member must be made at least six months prior to the wedding date.

The Sanctuary, Chapel, and Rose Garden are all available to serve as the site of a wedding. The Sanctuary can accommodate a maximum of 375 guests, the Chapel up to 50 guests, and the Rose Garden varies based on arrangement.

The church will be scheduled to open two hours prior to the start of the celebration. If more time is desired, please make your request clear on the Wedding Information Sheet. Additional custodial fees will apply for the property to be open more than two hours prior to the wedding. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted anywhere on church property. At the conclusion of the celebration, please arrange for someone to pick up all personal belongings of all those participating in the wedding party. First Presbyterian Church is not responsible for any personal belongings left at the church. Chairs and décor are not provided for a celebration in the Rose Garden.

All Wedding Celebrations at FPCLY will include:

- **An installed Pastor of First Presbyterian Church:** Celebrating a wedding is one of many church ministries; therefore, you shall contact the currently installed Pastor of First Presbyterian Church to request your wedding to be hosted here. The current Pastor of First Presbyterian is The Rev. Dr. Peter A. Thompson (Senior Pastor). He can be reached through the Church Office (434-384-6231) or directly by email (peter@fpcl.org). If you desire to have a guest pastor assist with the service, this request must be made through the Pastor of First Presbyterian Church.
- **The Organist of First Presbyterian Church:** The Organist of First Presbyterian Church will ordinarily play for all weddings, but if he/she is unable to play for the wedding, he/she will secure an approved substitute. The Organist shall approve all special requests for music and musicians. Recorded music and amplified sound equipment are not permitted in the Sanctuary or the Chapel.
- **Two Wedding Coordinators:** Following approval of a wedding request, the pastor will submit the Wedding Information Form to the chair of the Wedding Guild (a group of committed church members who volunteer their time and passion). The Session has directed that two members of the Wedding Guild will be present at the rehearsal and the wedding to assist the Pastor, direct the placement of the wedding party, time the procession, and assist with any other related matters. If you are planning to hire

an outside Wedding Director/ Coordinator to help plan and organize your wedding weekend, they will be more than welcome to attend the wedding as a guest, but they will not be permitted to direct matters at the church. The two Wedding Coordinators from the church will facilitate the order of all events from the time the bridal party arrives at the church to departure.

- **Premarital Counseling/ Celebration Planning:** The Pastor asked to officiate the wedding will provide the opportunity for premarital counseling. Pending availability and any special relationship you may have with another pastor; the Pastor from First Presbyterian Church may also approve counseling to be done by another pastor or counseling service. Counseling may include a variety of marriage and relationship dynamics, including but not limited to spiritual beliefs, religious affiliation, marriage expectations, communication, and conflict resolution. The dates and times of the counseling sessions will be determined by the Pastor and you, the couple. At the conclusion of counseling, the Pastor will then work with you in organizing and developing the order of service for the wedding celebration. At First Presbyterian Church, a wedding is seen as an act of worship and the order of service will be structured in accordance with the *Directory for Worship* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Wedding Rehearsal

A wedding rehearsal shall be held on the day before the wedding date. We recommend the time of the rehearsal be the same time as the wedding so lighting and logistics can be arranged accurately. If you wish to request a different time, it should be set in consultation with the Pastor. The rehearsal will begin promptly at the appointed time. The couple is responsible for notifying all members of the wedding party of the rehearsal time. The rehearsal will be under the direction of the Pastor and two Wedding Coordinators from First Presbyterian Church. All items needed for the wedding celebration shall be present at the time of the rehearsal: officiating pastor(s), wedding party, programs, musicians, unity candle (if applicable), marriage license.

Marriage License

The Commonwealth of Virginia requires that a marriage license be obtained within 60 days prior to the wedding date. No wedding will be performed without a valid marriage license.

Wedding Programs

Printed wedding programs are the responsibility of the couple. The Pastor and Organist shall assist in the content of the wedding program. Programs should be brought to the church at the time of the rehearsal.

Flowers and Decorations

The worship spaces at First Presbyterian Church do not need elaborate decorations, so we ask that the florist you select consider these guidelines: The cross may not be removed or hidden by flower arrangements. Only permanent, oil-filled candles (provided by the church) are to be used in the Chancel. The use of nails, wires, tape or any other means of supporting floral arrangements that might damage the church or the furnishings is prohibited. It is our custom to use fresh floral decorations. Rose petals are allowed at an additional fee of \$25. The florist is asked to contact the Church Office to schedule times for decorating.

Photography, Video Cameras, and Cell Phones

At First Presbyterian Church, we recognize the importance of documenting such a special day and have set forth a policy to help achieve that goal while also honoring the sanctity of worship. **All photographers and videographers MUST talk with the Pastor of First Presbyterian Church that will be officiating the service at least one week prior to the wedding date.** As a rule, flash photography and/or special lighting of any kind is not allowed. All cameras and operators should remain as discreet as possible. All cell phones must be silenced during the service and cell phone camera use is discouraged. We ask that all couples include this note regarding cell phone use in the wedding program as a reminder to all guests.