

## **First Presbyterian Church of Gulfport Wedding Policy**

***Genesis 2:24 (English Standard Version) “... a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”***

We, as your Church family, want to congratulate you on your upcoming wedding and wish God’s blessings on your life together. May your relationship be guided by God and enriched as you commit yourselves to each other in marriage.

Marriage is a divine institution—“a gift of God for the well-being of the entire human family.” We know that because of your desire to marry in our Church, you realize that your wedding is a sacred event—an act of worship.

The policies that follow are intended to guide you as you make preparation for a most memorable, joyous and truly blessed wedding.

The Session of First Presbyterian Church of Gulfport has adopted certain policies concerning weddings conducted in the Church. All weddings proposed to be held using the facilities of the Church are subject to prior approval by the Session. Any deviation from these policies must be approved by Session.

### **Applying to be Married at FPC Gulfport**

As soon as you have made the decision to be married at FPC the “Application to be Married” is to be completed, signed and returned to the Church office with a \$200.00 deposit. It is important to make application as early as possible in order to reserve your chosen date and time on the Church calendar. There will be NO non-member weddings.

Weddings will not be performed on holiday weekends: Palm Sunday, Easter, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and Vacation Bible School weekends.

As an ordinary procedure, the couple will receive pre-marital counseling from one of the pastoral staff of FPC, Gulfport. The Session will not act to approve a wedding until a FPC pastor has met with and counseled the bride and groom.

### **Facilities/Ceremony**

The wedding ceremony is a worship service of the Church and as such will be performed in accordance with the Holy Scriptures, The Westminster Standards, and the Book of Church Order.

The areas of the Church which may be used for weddings and receptions are the Sanctuary, Gym, Kitchen, Courtyard and/or Foyer (Please see the FPC Gulfport Facilities Use Guideline and Kitchen Policy).

Those using the facilities shall restore the facilities to normal conditions. Items and furnishings should not be moved or removed from the sanctuary without approval from the Church Administrator.

The ceremony should normally be conducted by the pastoral staff of FPC Gulfport. The Session, however, may approve the service being conducted by another minister. The guest minister conducting the ceremony and any participating guest minister shall be a male of an evangelical faith.

### **FPC Wedding Coordinator**

After your application has been submitted and approved, the FPC Wedding Coordinator will be selected by you from an approved list of coordinators. FPC's Wedding Coordinators are members of the church who have been given authority by the Session to oversee your wedding activities at the Church. They are familiar with all of the facilities of the church and policies of FPC. If you also choose a personal Wedding Director, she/he must meet with the FPC Wedding Coordinator before the wedding rehearsal. The FPC Wedding Coordinator will retain authority to make final decisions and will be present during the rehearsal and wedding. See the attached Wedding Coordinator Policy.

### **Decorations**

Please treat our facility with great care, (no nails, tacks, pins, or tape can be used to attach decorations to church walls or furnishings.) Aisles may not be blocked with decorations. Consult with the FPC Wedding Coordinator as to placement of decorations, including candles. If the couple wish to donate a flower arrangement to the church, that would be appreciated. Please notify the church secretary of this as soon as possible in your planning. All decorations should be removed from the church premises immediately following the wedding service.

### **Christmas Wedding**

No church decorations can be removed—you may add to, such as candelabra—but no wax candles can be used.

### **Reception**

Small receptions, up to 150 people, can be held in the foyer. Our gym is available to use for larger receptions. We have two restrooms and a small kitchen in the gym.

Clean-up must be done after the reception in the church and/or the gym.

### **Dressing Rooms**

The bride and her attendants shall use our young couples Sunday school room. Mirrors will be placed on the inside of the two closet doors for their use. Hanging racks will be provided for dresses. Consult the FPC Wedding Coordinator about receiving the dresses to be worn. The groom and his groomsmen shall use the adult Sunday school room.

Please leave the dressing rooms in good order after the wedding. All personal items should be removed from the church immediately following the service.

## **Music**

Since the wedding ceremony is a worship service of the Church, it should be conducted in a reverent manner with music choices considered in keeping with the occasion of worship. It will not be modern popular music but will be sacred or traditional wedding music. There are many beautiful selections available for weddings. Our Music Director will be happy to help you with selections that are in line with FPC's overall policy on music appropriate for worship services. All arrangements concerning music for the wedding must be made by the families of the wedding participants. The Church is not responsible for the music. It is your responsibility to contact the Music Director concerning your wedding music at least eight weeks or more prior to the wedding date. She will be happy to schedule a consultation to discuss all of the music details to make your wedding ceremony a beautiful occasion.

Our Music Director can help in assisting with musicians for the ceremony if needed. Pre-recorded music on CD/tapes is not recommended. Live music is strongly encouraged. If CD/taped music is to be used, the Music Director must approve the recording at least two weeks before the wedding in case other arrangements need to be secured. If someone other than the Church organist is requested, the Music Director must approve that person. Qualifications may be submitted to the Music Director for guest musicians at least eight weeks prior to the wedding.

The fees for musicians are not included in the church wedding fee. Any fees for the service of the church organist and/or guest musicians will be negotiated between those parties and is the sole responsibility of the bride and groom to compensate the musicians.

All musicians are expected to be at the rehearsal and to play/sing the selections for the wedding day. The wedding day is not the time for rehearsing at the last minute.

Music that must be composed/handwritten by the Music Director is available for an additional fee.

The hymnals may be used during the service, and must remain in the pews when not in use.

The Clavinova may not be used by anyone other than the Music Director unless specific instructions are given to any guest musician prior to the rehearsal date.

The Clavinova may NOT be moved by anyone other than the Music Director, Church Administrator, or our sound technician. It is a very expensive piece of equipment that has to be moved carefully.

All musicians/soloist/instrumentalist must be rehearsed and ready with any sound technicians by the time of the rehearsal. There is not time to practice and have sound checks once the rehearsal has begun.

## **Sound**

You will need to secure one of our sound technicians for your wedding. This person MUST be a member of the Audio Team of FPC, Gulfport and trained to use our equipment. They will be available at the rehearsal as well as one hour before the start of the wedding. Fees must be paid to the sound technician before the rehearsal.

All sound checks must be scheduled before the rehearsal and at least one hour prior to the wedding ceremony. No sound checks will be made after that.

### **Photography**

Your wedding is considered a worship service of the Church, therefore, nothing should distract you or your guests from the worship service. The church grounds and reserved facility are available for photographs. If you desire an appointment to have bridal portraits made in the church facility or on church grounds, please make arrangements with the pastor's secretary or Church Administrator. No photographers or videographers are allowed on the platform or in front of the wedding party during the wedding ceremony. Cameras with flash bulbs are not to be used in the sanctuary from 30 minutes before the ceremony until the end of the wedding ceremony (Benediction). Video cameras may be discretely set up, only in designated areas, and turned on if you wish. The videographer/photographer may set up in the sound booth, provided they are not in the way of our sound technician. At no time during the wedding ceremony is the photographer/videographer to be in the sanctuary.

All pictures taken before the ceremony must be discontinued at least 30 minutes before the service begins.

It is the wedding party's responsibility to go over the church policies regarding photographer/videographer policies with those involved in the church ceremony.

### **First Presbyterian Church of Gulfport Wedding Fees**

Deposit:	\$200.00 due at time of application. This fee is refundable after a facility inspection by the Church Administrator finds the facility clean and undamaged.
Sanctuary use	Free
Gym:	\$20.00 per hour
Custodian:	\$150.00 for Sanctuary cleaning \$100.00 for Gym
FPC Wedding Coordinator:	\$300.00
Music:	To be determined between the applicant and the musician(s)/Music Director
Minister:	To be determined between the applicant and the Minister(s).
Sound Technician:	\$100.00

## **First Presbyterian Church of Gulfport Wedding Coordinator Policy**

### **Duties**

First Presbyterian Church of Gulfport has Wedding Coordinators that act as the liaison between the church and the bride and groom to be. Each bride and groom will have the freedom to choose one (1) Wedding Coordinator to Direct the Wedding based on availability of the individual.

1. Meet with the bride and family to go over the necessary rules and guidelines of the church regarding marriage ceremony, marriage counseling, music, decorating, photography, and fees.
2. The Wedding Coordinator will schedule a follow up meeting two weeks prior to the wedding with the bride to finalize the rehearsal and wedding ceremony arrangements. The objective of this meeting is to organize the order of the service and ensure that the rehearsal lasts no longer than one hour.
3. The Wedding Coordinator will arrive 45 minutes prior to and be present at the rehearsal.
4. The Wedding Coordinator will wear a name tag to be easily identified.
5. At rehearsal, the Wedding Coordinator will rehearse the entire ceremony with the wedding party.
6. Upon the conclusion of the rehearsal, the Wedding Coordinator will lock up the church.
7. The Wedding Coordinator will arrive as needed prior to the wedding and be present during the wedding to assist the wedding party and the minister. She will stay up to one hour after the wedding for any necessary pictures and to make sure the church is in proper order and locked.
8. The Wedding Coordinator will prepare changing rooms for bride and bridesmaids as well as the groom and groomsmen.
9. Wedding Coordinators will coordinate arrival times with florist, caterer, photographers, videographers, and musicians. Coordinator will ensure that the facility is ready for the ceremony.
10. The Wedding Coordinator will unlock the church the day of the ceremony to let in the florist, photographer, etc. It is the responsibility of the bride and/or groom to designate a person to stay and supervise the decoration of the church by the florist.
11. Wedding Coordinator will be available for no more than three personal consultations to aid in the planning of the ceremony, as well as telephone calls and/or emails.

# APPLICATION TO BE MARRIED AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF GULFPORT

All applicants must be a member of First Presbyterian Church of Gulfport. We believe that a wedding ceremony should be conducted, in its entirety, in the spirit of a worship service. Therefore, the rehearsal and the ceremony should be dedicated to the worship of God in Christ Jesus. If you concur, please complete the following information.

FULL NAME OF BRIDE \_\_\_\_\_

PRESENT ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: HOME \_\_\_\_\_ (Street) CELL \_\_\_\_\_ City BUSINESS \_\_\_\_\_ State Zip

BRIDE'S CURRENT MARITAL STATUS \_\_\_\_\_ Single (i.e., not previously married)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Widow/widower  
\_\_\_\_\_ Divorced (if divorced, please indicate grounds of divorce below)

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FULL NAME OF GROOM \_\_\_\_\_

PRESENT ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: HOME \_\_\_\_\_ (Street) CELL \_\_\_\_\_ City BUSINESS \_\_\_\_\_ State Zip

FUTURE ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ (Street) City State Zip

GROOM'S CURRENT MARITAL STATUS \_\_\_\_\_ Single (i.e., not previously married)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Widow/widower  
\_\_\_\_\_ Divorced (if divorced, please indicate grounds of divorce below)

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MINISTER CONDUCTING THE CEREMONY \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS (if not FPC of G) \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ (Street) CELL \_\_\_\_\_ City CHURCH \_\_\_\_\_ State Zip

WILL THE RECEPTION BE HELD IN THE GYM OR FOYER? \_\_\_\_\_

DAY AND DATE OF THE REHEARSAL \_\_\_\_\_ TIME \_\_\_\_\_

DAY AND DATE OF THE WEDDING \_\_\_\_\_ TIME \_\_\_\_\_

WEDDING APPROVED BY SESSION ON \_\_\_\_\_

Final approval of a wedding will be at the discretion of the First Presbyterian Church of Gulfport Pastor upon completion of premarital counseling.

We have read the wedding policy of First Presbyterian Church of Gulfport and agree to comply with all the policies and fees.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bride Groom

PLEASE TURN THIS FORM IN TO THE CHURCH OFFICE WITH YOUR \$200.00 APPLICATION FEE.

Approved by the Session of First Presbyterian Church of Gulfport on 11/15/12

**First Presbyterian Church of Gulfport  
Approved Wedding Coordinators**

Sally Sullivan - 229-6225

Gail Theiler - 424-6380

Regan Foster - 206-0044

Melinda Jones - 239-6926