

St. Andrew Presbyterian Church
Wedding Policy
Adopted May 17, 2017

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage involves a unique commitment between two people, traditionally a man and a woman, to love and support each other for the rest of their lives. The sacrificial love that unites the couple sustains them as faithful and responsible members of the church and the wider community.

Book of Order W-4.9001

In civil law, marriage is a contract that recognizes the rights and obligations of the married couple in society. In the Reformed tradition, marriage is also a covenant in which God has an active part, and which the community of faith publicly witnesses and acknowledges.

Book of Order W-4.9002

A. Who may be married at St. Andrew?

It is the policy of St. Andrew Presbyterian Church that the gift of marriage is open to any couple who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and who commit to living out marriage in a life of discipleship. We welcome both members and non-members to celebrate their wedding at St. Andrew.

B. The discernment process for those contemplating Christian marriage

All couples wishing to be married at St. Andrew must meet with one of our pastors. The pastor will lead the couple through a discernment process to ensure that the couple is ready to commit to one another, and most importantly, is ready to stand before God and make a lifelong commitment to Christian marriage. Before planning a wedding celebration, a pastor will evaluate whether the couple fully understands and embraces the nature of the marriage covenant. Our hope is that this process will strengthen the couple's relationship to one another, with the Christian community, and with God.

- The discernment process may begin as early as one year, but no later than four months, prior to a proposed marriage date.
- Those wishing to begin the process of discernment must first complete an application. When the application is returned to the church office, a *tentative* date for the wedding may be placed on the church calendar. **This date should not be publicized, nor invitations be sent until approval has been given by the pastor.**
- The pastor may refer the couple to a counselor to help the couple prepare for marriage, or the pastor may conduct the counseling. If counseling is not conducted by the pastor, the couple must give permission for the counselor to provide a report to the pastor.

C. The wedding celebration and worship service

In a service of marriage, the couple marry each other by exchanging mutual promises. The teaching elder witnesses the couple's promises and pronounces God's blessing upon their union. The community of faith pledges to support the couple in upholding their promises; prayers may be offered for the couple, for the communities that support them, and for all who seek to live in faithfulness.

Book of Order W-4.9004

D. Ministerial Leadership

A pastor of St. Andrew, allowing for freedom of conscience, will conduct all weddings, unless other arrangements are approved by the session and facilitated by the pastor. The invitation for another pastor to participate in or conduct a wedding at St. Andrew must come from an installed pastor of St. Andrew.

E. Order of Service

The pastor must approve the order of service. All parts of the ceremony should be appropriate for Christian worship. The liturgy of *The Book of Common Worship* (1993) is preferred.

F. Recognition of Civil Marriage

A service of worship recognizing a civil marriage and confirming it in the community of faith may be appropriate when requested by the couple. The service will be similar to the marriage service except that the statements made shall reflect the fact that the couple is already married to one another according to the laws of the civil jurisdiction.

Book of Order W-4.9005

Though a civil marriage is legally binding, a Christian wedding celebration is a covenant with God that reaches far beyond the legal system. We recognize the importance of affirming this commitment before God and celebrating in fellowship with the Christian community. Legally married couples who wish to solemnize their marriage within a Christian context will work through the discernment process with the pastor as described above.

G. Music

Music is integral part of the worship and prayer offered during the marriage ceremony. Accordingly, the music that accompanies the service should be appropriate to Christian worship. The congregational singing of hymns is encouraged. Couples will be expected to discuss music selections ahead of time with the Director of Music Ministries and the pastor.

H. Musicians

Alongside the pastor, the Director of Music Ministries serves the couple in helping lead Christian worship at weddings, and shall ordinarily play for all weddings. When meeting with the Director, the couple may discuss the use of guest musicians during the service who may be invited to participate in the wedding. The Director of Music Ministries will offer direction to all guest instrumentalists and vocal soloists. If the Director of Music Ministries does not participate in the

wedding service, the director will provide to the couple a list of approved organists/musicians who will consult for and play in the wedding.

I. Symbols and Decorations

The baptismal font, communion table, paschal candle, and pulpit are symbols of faith. They may not be moved from the plain view of the congregation or obscured by flowers, candles, or other decorations. Flowers may not be placed on the communion table. The placement of flowers, candles, or other decorations must be approved by the pastor.

Decoration of the sanctuary will be at the expense of the wedding party. In keeping with the simplicity of this place of worship, and to avoid conspicuous displays, decorations should not be elaborate. The following stipulations apply:

- Tacks and nails may not be driven into church property and tape may not be used due to the risk of damage to painted surfaces.
- Dripless candles must be used and care should be taken that candles not be allowed to drip on the furniture or floor.
- Flowers used for weddings must be removed immediately following the service. Couples who wish to provide flowers for Sunday worship should contact the church office in advance of the wedding rehearsal.
- No rice or birdseed may be thrown in the building or on church property.
- All properties of florists, caterers, or other persons employed to assist with the wedding must be removed immediately after the wedding.

J. Photographs and Video Recording

- Flash photos may be taken in the sanctuary before or after the service by arrangement.
- Photographs and video are permitted by a professional photographers/videographers during the marriage service.
- Photographers and videographers should contact the pastor prior to the wedding day to review the policies and procedures for photographing weddings at St. Andrew. It is the couple's responsibility to have photographers and videographers arrange a consultation with the pastor at least two months in advance of the wedding. Couples are strongly encouraged to ensure this consultation take place before agreeing to specific photo/video services or packages.
- Permission from the pastor is required to use electronic equipment such as video recorders. The use of such equipment must not distract from the service of worship.

K. Rehearsals

If a rehearsal is held, the pastor shall be responsible for leading the wedding rehearsal.

Rehearsals for Saturday weddings will ordinarily take place on Friday at 5:30 p.m. "Wedding consultants" or other persons playing a supportive role shall be under the direction of the pastor.

L. Wedding Coordinator

All weddings require a wedding coordinator provided by the church. The wedding coordinator will meet beforehand with the couple to review all parts of the wedding service, act as a liaison with the church in scheduling and reserving rooms, facilitate the wedding rehearsal under the

direction of the pastor, open the facilities on the day of the wedding for use by the wedding party, set up the preparation rooms for the couple's wedding parties, and help coordinate wedding steps the day of the wedding.

M. Intoxicants

No one, including the wedding couple, under the influence of alcohol or any other intoxicant shall be allowed to take part in the rehearsal or the marriage service. The minister has the prerogative of canceling both rehearsal and wedding if this restriction is not observed.

N. Receptions

If available, the multipurpose room, atrium, and kitchen may be used for receptions. This includes use of dishes, flatware, etc. No alcoholic beverages may be served on church property.

O. Custodial Services

The custodial fee is included in the fee for use of the sanctuary. It is the responsibility of the wedding party to provide servers for the reception. The custodial staff of the church is not responsible for serving food, washing dishes, or other catering tasks.

P. Dressing Rooms

Designated rooms may be used for dressing by the bridal party, but they must be reserved through the church office. The wedding coordinator may assist in finding additional space on the day of the wedding, as necessary.

Q. Security

If requested by the wedding party, the wedding coordinator will lock dressing rooms during the service. Overnight storage on church premises of any property, including food and serving dishes, is discouraged. St. Andrew is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen property.

R. Fees and Honoraria

- The conducting of weddings for church members is an expression of the pastor's ministry to the congregation. No honorarium is expected from church members. A suggested honorarium from non-members is \$250. This is not a fee for services, and no couple shall be denied the services of the pastor because of inability to provide an honorarium.
- The fee for the use of the sanctuary for non-members is \$\$\$\$
- The fee for use of reception space is as follows:
 - Multipurpose Room & Kitchen: \$\$\$ for non-members, \$\$\$ for members
 - Atrium & Kitchen: \$\$\$ for non-members, \$\$\$ for members
 - Multipurpose Room, Atrium, & Kitchen: \$\$\$ for non-members, \$\$\$ for members
- There is no fee to members for the use of the sanctuary. The fee to members for custodial services is \$\$\$.
- A deposit of \$\$\$ shall be submitted with the wedding application. This deposit does not guarantee approval of the wedding, and will be returned if the wedding is not approved or is cancelled no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled date.

- The balance of fees shall be submitted 30 days prior to the wedding.
- In most circumstances in which the pastor does not conduct the pre-marital counseling, there will be a fee which shall be paid directly to the counselor.

Summary of Fees and Honoraria

Service	Members	Non-Members
Pastor of St. Andrew	none	\$250 (suggested)
Organist	\$175	\$250
Wedding Coordinator	\$150	\$200
Custodial Sanctuary		
Reception Space	see above	see above
Counseling Fees	arranged with counselor	arranged with counselor
A/V Tech	\$50-\$75	\$100-\$125