

Wedding Policy

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Latrobe, PA

The wedding service is an act of worship on the part of all those gathered to offer thanks and praise and to ask God's blessing on the couple's life together. As in all worship services, **God is the central focus**. The service of marriage is a celebration of God's gifts of life and creation. As with any worship service, the people in attendance are not just spectators, but an active congregation participating in the celebration and representing, to the couple, the presence and support of the Church. This policy is therefore set in order to ensure the reverence and dignity of the celebration.

1. As a Christian Community, we "accept the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life." (*Prince of Peace Constitution* *C2.03.) Therefore, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church only conducts marriages that join one man and one woman who intend to enter into the covenant of marriage together.
2. Weddings should be scheduled with the pastor as soon as possible. Receptions should not be scheduled prior to scheduling the wedding with the pastor, as the pastor cannot guarantee the church's or the pastor's availability for the day you would like. A rehearsal for the wedding will be scheduled during the initial premarital consultation. **No weddings will be scheduled during the season of Lent.**
3. Each couple must complete a time of premarital counseling with the pastor. The pastor will determine the length of the counseling and the number of sessions after the initial consultation with the couple. Attendance at a Pre-Cana or other premarital event of the pastor's choosing may be required of the couple at the expense of the couple. If the pastor requests that the couple attend a premarital event, the couple must attend or the pastor cannot perform the wedding.
4. The organist of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church shall play for all weddings unless other arrangements are negotiated between the organist of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church and the couple. The organist agrees to provide music for the ceremony. The couple must purchase any special music requested by the couple not in the organist's repertoire. Music will be played up to 1/2 hour before the ceremony, beginning with the arrival of the first guest and following the recessional until all seated guests have exited the sanctuary; The organist will attend the rehearsal.
5. Music for the service is to be appropriate for a worship service. **No Secular Music** may be used. Special songs and music are more appropriate for the reception rather than the wedding service. The pastor in advance of the rehearsal must approve of the use of prerecorded music. The pastor and/or organist will have final say in all music that is used.
6. All ceremonies and readings must be approved by the pastor in advance of the rehearsal. Some readings, ceremonies and traditions are inappropriate for a worship service and should be saved for the reception.
7. The pastor of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church shall preside at all weddings in the church, unless approval is given by the pastor **and** the Congregation Council of this church and in some cases the Bishop of this synod. Other pastors may be invited to **assist** in a wedding only after the pastor of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church has been contacted and approval is given.
8. Holy Communion may be celebrated during the wedding. All baptized Christians are invited to receive the Sacrament. When Holy Communion is celebrated, it is offered to the entire congregation, not just the couple and wedding party alone. Holy Communion will not be celebrated when either the bride or the groom is not baptized. The bread and wine may be made or purchased by the couple or provided by the congregation.
9. Decoration of the church shall be done in consultation with the pastor. The furniture in the Church (i.e. the altar, lectern, chairs, brassware, baptismal font, crosses, etc...) may not be moved, rearranged or altered without the consent of the pastor. The use of tacks, nails, tape, staples, etc... is prohibited on any of the pews or walls of the church. The use of floor runners is not permitted in the church as they are a risk for tripping and injury.

The color of the paraments shall either be white or the color of the day or season. The paraments may not be changed to coordinate with the choice of dress color.

Floral arrangements, candelabra, etc. placed in the altar area, may not obstruct the view of the altar or detract from the altar area. **No artificial flower arrangements may be placed on the altar or the shelf behind the altar.** The pastor shall have the right to have removed or altered any object(s) that are in contrast to this guideline.

10. Rules for photography and videography are attached as an addendum to this document and must be given to the photographer(s) and videographer(s) before the day of the wedding. The photographer(s) and videographer(s) may contact the pastor with any questions or concerns prior to the day of the wedding.

11. The bride and groom are responsible for obtaining a marriage license issued by any county in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The license is to be given to the pastor no later than one week prior to the wedding. The pastor **CANNOT** perform a wedding without a license.

12. As with any event held in a church, the conduct of the wedding party and the congregation should be held in highest regard. Vulgar language and demeaning talk will not be permitted at any time. Smoking is not permitted in or within 20 feet of the building. Alcohol is not permitted anywhere on church property. The pastor reserves the right to remove from the building any disruptive, rowdy, or intoxicated people, either at the rehearsal or the wedding.

13. Rice and confetti **may not** be thrown on church property. Bubbles, birdseed, etc. may be used, provided that they are kept outside of the church building and do not cause any unnecessary mess that requires extra cleaning to the church property.

14. Fees assigned for weddings held in the church

The fee for the use of the building: there is no fee for members of the congregation. There is a fee of \$100.00 for those who are not members of the congregation.

The cleaning of the church is the responsibility of the congregation's custodian. The following stipend is the **minimum** to be paid to the custodian: \$35.00 for the use of the worship area only or \$50.00 for the use of any other area of the church and the worship area.

The minimum fee for the Congregation's organist is \$100.00. If a soloist is used, an additional \$30.00 fee will be charged. These fees must be paid in **CASH** directly to the organist.

The pastor's fee is \$200.00 for those who are not members of the congregation. This fee is to be paid directly to the pastor. This includes the time spent with the couple during pre-marital counseling. This is no fee for members of the congregation, but you are invited to offer the pastor an honorarium.

If bulletins are printed for the couple by the congregation, the fee for the secretary is \$25.00 to be paid directly to the secretary. The couple will reimburse the congregation the total cost of copying the bulletins.

The fees for the use of the congregation's Fellowship Hall and Kitchen for wedding rehearsal dinners and receptions are subject to the Building Use Policy of the congregation. Please request a copy of the policy from the pastor if you are interested in using the Fellowship Hall and/or the Kitchen.

All fees must be paid prior to the rehearsal. If the applicable fees are not paid prior to the rehearsal, then the pastor will not be permitted to proceed with the rehearsal or the wedding.

15. The church is not responsible for loss, theft, or damage to personal items, such as wedding dresses, clothes, purses, silverware or glassware brought to the church for use during the wedding. The church will make every reasonable effort to assist the wedding party in protecting such property.

16. Two copies of this agreement are to be signed by the couple at the initial premarital consultation and approved by the pastor. The couple shall retain one copy and the second shall be kept on file at the church.

Approved by the Congregation Council on September 9, 2008
Amended by the Congregation Council on December 15, 2009
Amended by the Congregation Council on October 18, 2011

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
Photography and Videography Wedding Policy Addendum

Photographers and Videographers should be mindful of the nature of the day and not interfere with the wedding service in anyway. If you have questions and/or concerns about anything in this policy addendum, please feel free to call the pastor at 724-537-7273.

Photography

1. All pre-service photography must be completed fifteen (15) minutes prior to the scheduled time of the wedding. This will ensure that no one is rushed and the wedding will begin on time.
2. No flash photography will be allowed during the service after the bride is given away to the kiss of the couple at the end of the service. You may use flash for those two events of the service, but nothing in between them.
3. Non-flash photography is permitted during the service, provided that it is done from the back of the church and without inconveniencing any of the guests due to excess movement or noise.
4. Please extend the pastor courtesy of taking any pictures that would include the pastor first. The pastor is willing to recreate any part of the service that you would like so that you have an actual portrayal of the events of the day.
5. If you need a piece of the furniture in the sanctuary moved or changed for post wedding pictures, please inquire with the pastor if it may be moved before moving it.

Videographers

1. Videoing a wedding is an important part of the day and the pastor wants to make sure that your video work meets the quality that you like to give to those who hire you.
2. Video taping should be done discreetly and not inconvenience any of the guests or obstruct their view during the wedding.
3. One (1) stationary camera and operator may be placed in the front of the church. This must be done in consultation with the pastor.
4. You may have up to two (2) moveable cameras in the back of the church, but they must stay behind the back pews and never move down any of the aisles.