



Weddings

at first presbyterian church

First Presbyterian Church
820 Colonial Avenue, Norfolk, VA 23507
www.fpcnorfolk.org



Congratulations!

We are delighted that you have chosen to be married at First Presbyterian Church (FPC). We want your wedding to be a holy, reverent, and beautiful event that you, your families and your friends will remember and cherish for years to come. Please read the information included and let us know what questions you have and how we can help you design a day that reflects your personalities, love for one another, and commitment to God as husband and wife.

We are excited to be part of your special day!

What to Expect

A wedding is one of the happiest and holiest moments in life. It is the time when both the social world and our faith tradition affirm and acknowledge the love that two people share. Marriage is not only a civil contract between a man and a woman, it is a gift that God has given to us for the joy and wellbeing of the entire family.

For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live together lives of discipleship in covenant with God and before God. This covenant is grounded in God's promise to be our God and in His claim-

ing us as His people. God's covenant is one of love and grace, of commandments and responsibilities. In a Christian marriage ceremony, the bride and groom make a lifelong commitment to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

To assist in planning for your wedding ceremony and to ensure the sacredness of the service itself, the Session, the governing body of FPC, has put together the following guidelines for couples planning a Christian marriage in this church.

SET A DATE

To get started on securing your date follow these steps:

- 1. Contact our church coordinator,** Rachel Bender via email rachel@fpcnorfolk.org to check the availability of your preferred date and to start the process. We recommend that you schedule as early as possible - many people schedule 6-12 months in advance.
- 2. Contact one of our pastors.** Our Senior Pastor is Reverend Jim Wood (jim@fpcnorfolk.org) and our Associate Pastor is Reverend Valena Hoy (valena@fpcnorfolk.org). You can reach them by calling the church at (757) 625-1697 or via email. As a courtesy, we ask that you contact a FPC pastor first, even if you intend to ask a pastor from another church to officiate. Outside pastors may officiate only at the invitation and under the authority of an FPC pastor.
- 3. Sign the Wedding Reservation Form and Return it to the Church Office.** Both the bride and groom sign the reservation form and submit with a fee of \$50.00. *Please note that the \$50.00 reservation fee is non-refundable and does not apply to any other fees. In signing the Reservation Form, you are agreeing to abide by all policies set forth by FPC and its Session.*

Receipt of your reservation form and fee will secure your wedding date on the church calendar.

Please note that no weddings are permitted to be performed on the following days:

- Any Sunday
- Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day
- During Holy Week (Palm Sunday Weekend through Easter Weekend)
- Fourth of July

***Any dates in the month of December will need to be approved by the pastoral staff.**

PREMARITAL COUNSELING

Prior to your wedding, your officiating pastor will meet with you as a couple for several premarital counseling sessions. These conferences provide an opportunity for you and the pastor to become better acquainted, discuss the meaning of marriage within the Christian context, and to plan the marriage ceremony. If you are using a pastor from another church, premarital counseling is still required.

PLANNING THE WEDDING

It is the pastor's responsibility and commitment to ensure your ceremony is a holy and reverent event. Therefore, all portions of the church wedding ceremony, including music selection and order of worship, must be approved by the pastor.

Our Wedding Coordinator will help you with all other elements of the ceremony and with the use of the church facility. The Wedding Coordinator is required for all weddings at FPC and a Mistress of Ceremonies is not necessarily needed. Once your wedding has been scheduled, the Wedding Coordinator will begin communicating and working with you six to eight weeks before the wedding. She will assist, answer any questions, and be present for your rehearsal and ceremony. Her participation and direction is designed to help combine your personal taste with our church policies and to relieve you of any worry so that you can enjoy your wedding day!

WEDDING MUSIC

Our church organist, Benjamin Garner, will play for all weddings. He's an extraordinary musician and will help you create an atmosphere of worship, joy, and elegance for your ceremony. He is also responsible for approving all arrangements for music, musicians, and soloists for the ceremony and will be happy to help you with music selection. Should you decide to include a soloist in your ceremony, there will be a soloist's fee and an additional charge for rehearsal time with Benjamin prior to the wedding. *(Please see 'Payments and Fee Schedule' for specific fees.)*

You have the option of 30 minutes of pre-nuptial organ music on the wedding day. When selecting music for your church wedding, it is important to remember that the ceremony is a service of worship. Music is an integral part of the liturgy and, as such, it should glorify God and edify all participants. For the church service, music with a secular association - Broadway tunes, ballads, popular, and sentimental favorites - are not allowed.

Please contact Benjamin Garner at benjamin.garner@gmail.com to discuss musical selections.

WEDDING ACCESSORIES

The following accessories are available for use:

- 4 seven-branch wrought iron candelabras
- 2 round wrought iron candelabras
- 12 window candle holders
- Unity candle stand and 2 tapers

Please let the Wedding Coordinator know in advance if you would like to use any or all of the accessories. The Church will furnish candles for the candelabra, but the couple must furnish the unity candle.

FLOWERS & ARRANGEMENTS

In keeping with the reverence of the service, we ask that flowers and decorations not be unduly elaborate or ostentatious. We request that you discuss the decorations with the Wedding Coordinator. Cloths, tracking or flower petals are not allowed in the aisle.

The Wedding Coordinator will need to know the arrival time of any floral arrangements or accessories to ensure that the vendor will be able to get into the building.

The Sanctuary will be decorated for the Advent season, including fresh greenery and poinsettias for all December weddings. This may also apply to late-November weddings, depending on the number of Sundays in the month of December. These decorations may be used free of charge by the wedding party; however, additional floral arrangements are discouraged and the Advent decorations may not be removed.

If you would like for your floral arrangements to be used for worship services on Sunday after your wedding, please contact Rev. Valena Hoy at valena@fpcnorfolk.org at least three months prior to your wedding preferably when the wedding date is decided.

PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO

We know that a beautiful wedding album to cherish throughout your marriage is important to you! However, we want to reiterate that the wedding is a worship service, and we also want everyone, including the wedding party and the guests, to be present and fully enjoy each moment. Therefore, no flash photography may be taken during the service. Specifically, this means from the end of the Processional to the beginning of the Recessional.

Non-flash pictures are permitted from the back, if they do not intrude into the ceremony.

Video recording of the service is also permitted providing it does not interfere with the worship experience. Camera locations are fixed in the Sanctuary. Discreet remote control taping may be approved in the rear of the church. Audio feeds from the PA system for this purpose may be available in the Sanctuary. If you plan to use this service, please be sure to check with the Wedding Coordinator well in advance to secure a member of our AV team.

Pictures of the wedding party can be taken before the ceremony or by reassembling the wedding party at the conclusion of the wedding. If you plan to take the pictures before the wedding, please be sure to leave enough time to have everything wrapped up thirty minutes prior to the start of the ceremony.

We ask and suggest that photography following the service be limited to thirty minutes. Please plan ahead with your photographer the exact sequence, types, and number of photographs you'd like to take to help things run smoothly and get you and your guests to the reception in a timely fashion.

If you have any questions about the policies, available services, or anything else about wedding photos, just let the Wedding Coordinator know. Please provide your photographer and videographer contact information to the Wedding Coordinator, so that they can receive our policies before the wedding day.



Scheduling

REHEARSAL

The wedding rehearsal typically takes place the evening before the wedding. Once everyone is assembled (please have everyone there on time!), the pastor and Wedding Coordinator will walk the wedding party through the ceremony. Things to note:

- Remember to bring your wedding license, if you have not already given it to the pastor
- You may want to bring your programs with you to the rehearsal and leave them at the church (one less thing to worry about on your wedding day!).

WEDDING DAY

It's finally here! When you arrive at the church, the bride and her attendants may dress in the Armstrong Chapel. The Chapel is equipped with a sewing kit, and a few necessities. Please remember to assign someone from your wedding party (or a helpful aunt, friend, or cousin) to make sure any clothing and personal items brought into the Chapel are not left behind. Everything that comes in must be taken out before the wedding party departs the church.

The groom and his attendants typically arrive dressed for the wedding and will have use of our Staff Conference Room upstairs to make any final adjustments.

Ushers/groomsmen will begin seating guests no more than 30 minutes prior to the start time of the wedding.

Grandparents and special guests should be in the Narthex at least 10 minutes before the wedding.

If you choose to provide a guest book at the ceremony, a stand is available. Please designate a friend or family member to oversee this book and take it to the reception. If the Narthex gets overly crowded, the Wedding Coordinator may close the book in order to get guests seated so the ceremony can begin.

Enjoy your day!

For a Successful Day

DO:

- Read this booklet carefully
- Schedule early
- Choose appropriate music
- Consider adding hymns that the congregation can sing together
- Remember to bring your unity candle (if you decide to use one)
- Be on time
- Arrive dressed (groom and groomsmen)
- Arrive with hair and makeup in place (bride and bridesmaids)

PLEASE DON'T:

- Forget to tell your photographer and guests about the photo and video policies
- Use nails, tacks, or tape on any wall, woodwork, pews, or carpet. Decorations that will mar the pews, walls, carpet, floors, or other property of the church are not permitted.
- Drink or smoke on church property
- Forget to submit all fees two weeks prior to the rehearsal



Payments & Fees

All fees are to be paid two weeks prior to the rehearsal. If there is no rehearsal, fees must be received at the church two weeks prior to the wedding. Please make checks payable to First Presbyterian Church. Fees are subject to change within 90 days prior to the wedding. Please see the following fee schedule for Sanctuary weddings.

Wedding Fee Schedule*

Church Sexton (includes 6 hours)	\$ 180.00
Wedding Coordinator	\$ 350.00
Organist	\$ 350.00
Facility Fee	\$ 500.00

Pastor

It is customary that an appropriate honorarium be given to the officiating pastor and the assisting pastor. If neither the bride nor the groom, nor their parents are members of First Presbyterian Church, the fee for the pastor is \$350.00. Checks should be made payable to the individual pastor.

Church Sexton

The Sexton's time includes set-up before rehearsal and facility clean up after the wedding. If the time required is in excess of the allotted time (i.e. florist clean-up delays), there is an additional charge of \$40.00 per hour.

Organist

The organist fee includes a thirty-minute consultation prior to the wedding, and it includes the rehearsal and wedding. Additional consultations or rehearsals with vocal musician (soloist) or other instrumentalist are \$50.00 per-half hour with a half-hour minimum.

Wedding Coordinator

The Wedding Coordinator will meet with the couple after the date is scheduled with the church. If either the bride or groom lives out of town, the Wedding Coordinator will be available for a meeting when it is convenient the couple. At this meeting all items regarding the church will be decided. The Wedding Coordinator will adhere to the policies of FPC and ensure that the ceremony happens flawlessly. The Wedding Coordinator will run the rehearsal which will last approximately 45 min if all arrive on time. She will be your go-to on the day of the wedding.

*Should you choose to have an outside wedding coordinator/event planner, it is our church policy that the FPC Wedding Coordinator oversees and has the final approval of all activities within the church.



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