



Wedding Policies

This is a wonderful and exciting time for you, your fiancée, and your families! The staff and members of Highland Presbyterian Church are happy for you and want this wedding ceremony to be a cherished memory for all of you. These guidelines have been written with that purpose in mind and to help you understand what we hope to achieve in assisting you in this important event. --From Highland's Pastors

The constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA) states:

“Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publically witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.” (Book of Order W-4.9001)

A Christian marriage is a special service of worship that focuses upon marriage as a gift of God and as an expression of the Christian life. At Highland, we are serious in helping couples be faithful to this end. These guidelines are intended to assist as you begin to make arrangements for your wedding service. Be sure to read them carefully. It will answer many of your questions, but it will probably raise just as many. There are a variety of options within our structure, and we want you to choose whatever will be the most meaningful for you. We look forward to meeting with you and your soon-to-be spouse! Know that from our initial contact, you both will be in our prayers.

GUIDELINES

In these guidelines, MEMBER refers to the **bride, groom, or parent** who is a member of Highland Presbyterian Church and will be responsible to see that these guidelines are met and requirements fulfilled

PROCESS

The **first step** after reading this manual is to contact the church Facility Use Coordinator to inquire about a proposed date for the wedding on the church calendar.

- Members can secure a date on the church calendar at any time in the future.
- Non-members are limited to nine (9) months in advance of the wedding day. The date will be secured when the wedding building charge (\$1,000) is received.

The Facility Use Coordinator will contact the ministerial staff about the requested date, secure the date with the available minister and will respond with this information to the wedding couple.

The **second step** is to contact the officiating minister as soon as possible to plan the date for the first appointment of mandatory premarital counseling and planning of the wedding service.

Under normal circumstances, three (3) meetings are necessary between the minister and the couple.

Third step - After the date is confirmed by session, the Facility Use Coordinator will issue an Agreement noting fees that must be paid within 30 days in order to secure the reserved date.

PASTORAL SERVICES: It is important to note that one of the ministerial staff of Highland will officiate or assist in officiating at all marriages held at Highland. Guest Pastors may also participate at the invitation of the Highland Pastor.

Since it is a worship service, the planning of a marriage service is the responsibility of the Pastor. Even though special requests can be made, the final decision about the nature of the service rests with the Pastor.

MUSIC: Music has always been a part of the wedding ceremony, not for entertainment, but for worshipful offerings to God's glory. All music played or sung must be chosen in context of worship, giving expression to God's place in this event. A conference with the Highland's organist should be arranged at least two (2) months in advance of the date set for the ceremony. The Organist along with the officiating minister will suggest and guide the selection of appropriate music for this service of Christian worship.

If the church organist is playing the music for the wedding, confirm with him/her all musical selections to be used prior to listing them on the "Information and Arrangements" form.

If another organist is to play, they must be familiar with a pipe organ and have the approval of the Church Organist and present a list of music that is to be played for the wedding at least **one (1) month** prior to the wedding.

CUSTODIAL SERVICES: The services of a Highland Sexton are required. The Facility Use Coordinator is to be contacted prior to the service to make necessary arrangements for the wedding services. The wedding couple will coordinate all facilities details with the Sexton.

THE WEDDING REHEARSAL: A wedding rehearsal is normally conducted the evening before the wedding. The Officiating Minister oversees the rehearsal. Generally, the rehearsal lasts approximately 45 minutes and should not last more than one hour. You are encouraged to be prompt. Normal hours for rehearsal are 5:00 p.m. or 6:00 p.m.

DECORATIONS: Wedding decorations need not be excessive. The natural beauty of the sanctuary and its worshipful nature is sufficient for a proper wedding setting. The intention of decorations is to help convey a worshipful attitude so that those present might experience the meaning of marriage. The florist and/or wedding couple will be responsible for delivering the flowers and decorating the Church. Every precaution should be taken that no permanent damage is done to the Chancel or to any furniture. If you intend to use a unity candle, either you or the florist must provide the three candles necessary. Pew markers are also the responsibility of the florist.

Highland has the following items available for your use:

- One pair of wrought iron candelabrum
- Candlesticks for the end of the pews (14)
- One pair of brass flower vases
- A room for the bridal party to dress

If the flowers from the wedding are to be left for the Sunday worship service, please inform the church office, one (1) month in advance.

PHOTOGRAPHY and VIDEO GUIDELINES

1. No flash photographs are to be taken in the sanctuary during the service. The service begins with the first note of music played. The service ends after the Benediction is proclaimed. Flash photographs of the bridal couple maybe taken during the recessional.
2. The photographer/videographer is not to interrupt the flow of the ceremony. They are to remain stationary and cause no distracting noises.
3. During the service, the photographer is not permitted near the chancel area. Both photographer and videographer may be located near the back of the sanctuary.
4. Furniture or decorations are not to be moved at any time by the photographer or videographer.
5. Photographers/videographers must be properly attired for a wedding.
6. The church will appoint an Audio Technician if necessary. No one is permitted to use church equipment unless appointed by the Facility Use Coordinator.
7. It is the responsibility of the wedding couple to make their guests aware of these photography/video standards.
8. It is the pastor's prerogative to stop the service if the photographer or videographer is distracting from the worship service.
9. If the photographer/videographer does not comply with these guidelines during the service, he/she will not be allowed to work any future weddings at Highland.

WEDDING BULLETINS: Though not necessary, many couples opt to have a bulletin that lists the order for worship and the participants in the wedding service. Samples are available for review. The couple is responsible for having these programs printed. The couple shall provide the officiating minister with a copy of the wedding bulletin for approval prior to printing.

THE WEDDING LICENSE: You are required to have a license. This license must be brought to the Church and given to the Officiating Minister no later than the night of the rehearsal. If you are planning to secure a license in Lancaster County, you can receive information about the procedure by calling 717-295-3522. You must go to the Lancaster County Courthouse, 50 North Duke Street, Lancaster to apply for your license. Both parties must be present. There is a three (3) day waiting period after your application is submitted. Either party may pick up the license afterward. The license is valid for sixty (60) days. There is a cost for the license and it must be paid in cash. If you have been married before, a copy of your divorce decree or the date of your spouse's death must be presented.

FACILITIES:

- Highland's Sanctuary is available for all weddings.
- The Chapel/Choir Room is available for weddings of up to 75 guests.
- A dressing room is available for the bridal party's use.
- **NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ARE PERMITTED ON THE CHURCH PREMISES**
- **HIGHLAND IS A SMOKE-FREE ZONE. NO SMOKING IS PERMITTED ON THE CHURCH PREMISES.**
- ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES MUST BE "**SILENCED**" PRIOR TO THE SERVICE.
- The use of rice or birdseed is prohibited. Since loose rice or birdseed on the floors of the church or on the steps can be hazardous, we are unable to permit their use. Any special celebratory activities must receive prior approval.

WEDDING COSTS:

The following is a remuneration schedule for weddings at Highland Presbyterian Church. Checks should be made payable to the individuals and delivered to the minister prior to the rehearsal.

For Ministers

Ministers will officiate up to 3 counseling/planning sessions, rehearsal and wedding service. For Highland Church Members an honorarium of their choice will be appreciated. For NON-Highland Church Members a remuneration of **\$600** will be accepted.

For Staff

Organist	\$150
Soloist	\$150
Audio/Video Technician	\$ 75
Sexton - Sanctuary Wedding	\$150
Sexton - Sanctuary Wedding & Reception	\$200

Facility Fees

Highland Church Members are not charged any fees for usage of any part of the building. NON-Highland Church Members are charged **\$1,000** for use of the building. This charge is due in order to secure the date. Payment of this fee should be sent directly to the church office and made payable to: Highland Presbyterian Church.

Candles

Highland Church will provide candles, to be reimbursed through the church office:
For the Candelabrum - \$50 For the Pew Candles - \$75

CONTACT:

Highland Presbyterian Church
500 East Roseville Road
Lancaster, PA 17601
717-569-2651
717-569-3941 fax
www.highlandpc.org

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