

CORINTH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH WEDDING POLICY

We are pleased that you wish to be married in Corinth Presbyterian Church in Parker and take this opportunity to acquaint you with our policies so that your wedding ceremony will be a meaningful worship service. The church is guided in the formulation of these wedding policies by the *Directory for Worship* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

A Christian marriage and family is a gift of God. It is possible to have a civil ceremony. Your decision for a church wedding presupposes your faith commitment and implies that you desire to found a Christian family, blessed by God and active in Christ's Church.

In the Presbyterian tradition, the wedding is more than a social contract; it is performed as an act of worship and reflects a religious covenant. Certain understandings undergird and influence the way a wedding is conducted in the Church, and distinguishes the Church wedding from a secular ceremony.

The Christian marriage ceremony is a service of worship before God. As such, reverence is expected on the part of all present. In the wedding ceremony, we gather in the presence of God

- to give thanks for the gift of marriage,
- to witness the joining together of wife and husband,
- and to ask God's blessing so that they may be strengthened for their life together and nurtured in their love for God.

In marriage, husband and wife are called to a new way of life, created, ordered, and blessed by God.

Our policies and suggestions are based on experience and are intended to make your wedding a special and joyful event. We also honor our obligation to watch over our historic church building.

WHO CAN BE MARRIED AT CORINTH?

Arrangements for weddings at Corinth Presbyterian Church are made by contacting the pastor. It is assumed that one of the partners is a professing Christian. If the persons requesting to have their wedding at Corinth Presbyterian Church are not members of the church, the question will be raised as to why the wedding is not taking place where one of the partners is a regular worshiper. There are several valid answers to that question. In a Christian wedding service, vows will be made that require an ongoing relationship with God. Applicants should be prepared for a thoughtful discussion. The pastor will meet with the couple to discuss the service, the legal requirements of the state and the policies for use of the church property.

WHO CAN PERFORM THE MARRIAGE?

The pastor of Corinth Presbyterian Church shall be the officiating minister at all weddings held in the church unless other arrangements are made. Others may be invited to participate as leaders in the service at the discretion of the pastor. Should a couple desire that a visiting minister officiate at the ceremony, the visiting clergy must be approved by the Session (church governing board) and invited to participate by the minister of Corinth Presbyterian Church.

It is expected of all couples being married in Corinth Presbyterian Church that they counsel with the minister in preparation for marriage. If a minister outside of Corinth Presbyterian Church is to do the service, the couple will be expected to counsel with that minister. It is the responsibility of the couple to schedule these sessions. The couple should contact the minister at least one month in advance of the wedding date.

SCHEDULING YOUR WEDDING

When a couple wishes to be married at Corinth Presbyterian Church, a reservation must be made as early as possible.

Weddings are not permitted:

- on the Saturdays before Palm Sunday
- on the Saturday before Easter
- on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day

Weddings for non-members must be approved by the Session and will be scheduled no less than two months and no more than six months in advance.

- Check with the pastor about the availability of your desired date on the church calendar and on the pastor's calendar. Dates for weddings and rehearsals will not be confirmed except through the pastor.
- Complete the Wedding Information Form with as much detail as you have.
- Submit the fee with your application in order to hold your desired date.
- Call for an appointment with the pastor to discuss your plans. Review the wedding policy with the pastor. Further appointments as needed will be made at your first conference.

BUILDING USE

We do not have any janitorial services. Therefore, we ask that someone be designated to remain after the wedding to be sure that the church is ready for Sunday morning services. Please include the name and telephone number of this person on your application or give to the pastor or attending church officer not later than the rehearsal.

THE REHEARSAL

The officiating pastor will direct the rehearsal and the marriage service. Wedding coordinators, bridal consultants, musicians, and all other participants are under his/her direction. The rehearsal is important because it sets the tone for the marriage service itself. Rehearsals are scheduled for one hour, usually the day before the marriage service.

All members of the wedding party should be present at the rehearsal. Only the wedding party and parents (those actually involved) should come to the rehearsal. Extra people complicate the rehearsal process.

Please make every effort to have everyone at the church at the scheduled time. Proper and conservative dress is expected. No rehearsal or wedding will be conducted when any member of the wedding party is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Prior to the rehearsal the bride and groom should give some thought to the order in which their attendants will stand and which ushers will escort the mother of the bride, the mother of the groom, and any grandmothers. Photographers are welcome if they wish to attend.

WHAT TO BRING TO THE REHEARSAL:

- The marriage license
- Fees
- Prayers (These are prayers that the Corinth Presbyterian Church pastor requires the couple to write for one another. They will not be used in public. The prayers are kept in the pastor's files. The prayer may be short, but must be addressed to God on behalf of the spouse to be.)
- A list of photographs, if any are to be taken after the ceremony. It is courteous to place pictures of the pastor early on the list.
- Good humor!

If there is to be a rehearsal dinner and you desire that the pastor attend, an invitation should be extended by mail.

OTHER GUIDELINES

MUSIC

Music is always important at a wedding service. Music accompanying the ceremony should direct attention to God who sanctifies marriage. Special care should be taken to assure that the music chosen is suitable and reverent. “Popular” music is rarely appropriate for a service of marriage. The wedding reception is a more suitable setting for contemporary, pop, country and western and secular music selections that are meaningful to the wedding couple.

There is a great variety of suitable music but many couples are not familiar with what is available. The church organist will be happy to help you discover music that will be appropriate both for the service and for you and will add to the very special nature of your wedding. No decisions about the music to be used should be made prior to your conference with the minister. The minister shall review and approve all music for wedding services. All the music used in the ceremony shall be agreed upon in conference prior to the service.

If organ music is desired, the church organist will be consulted to see if he/she is available and will be compensated at a rate on which he/she and the participants agree. If the church organist is unavailable on the wedding date, he/she may be able to recommend a substitute organist to the wedding party. It will be necessary to arrange a conference time between the two organists for the purpose of reviewing proper operation of the organ and/or electronic piano. Instruments other than the organ and piano may be used provided that the music presented is suitable for a service of worship

FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) *Directory for Worship* states that “*Flowers, decorations, and other appointments should be appropriate to the place of worship, enhance the worshiper’s consciousness of the reality of God, and reflect the integrity and simplicity of Christian life.*” Floral and other decorations should not be so large as to obscure or change the basic character of the church’s architecture: pulpit, baptismal font, communion table, chancel area or cross. The sanctuary is expected to look like what it is – a Christian church. No floral arrangements or other decorations shall be placed on the communion table, and it shall not be removed from its present location.

No adhesive tape of any kind is to be used in decorating. Only drip-less candles may be used. Decorations which require the use of pins, tacks, nails, screws, staples, or adhesives which may mar the furniture, walls, or floors must not be used. Nothing but bouquets or bows may be used on the ends of the pews and they can only be attached with wrapped wire or ribbon. In all cases, safety of decorations shall be of paramount consideration.

The bridal party shall be responsible for any damage done by the florist and his/her equipment. Protective material must be placed under each candelabra or single candle. Plants or floral arrangements, whether real or artificial, will be placed in trays.

Flowers, decorations and candelabra should be removed from the church shortly after the wedding party leaves the building. Donations of flowers to the church suitable for Sunday worship are gratefully received.

SEATING

The sanctuary has 18 pews. Seven (7) people can comfortably be seated in each pew for a total of 126 seats. If 8 people are seated in each pew, the total is 144. Chairs can be rented for seating in the side extensions but aisles for passing must be left. Chairs to seat 60 can comfortably be added bringing the maximum total seating to 204. If you anticipate more than that, do not plan your wedding for Corinth Presbyterian Church.

PHOTOGRAPHY / VIDEOTAPING

Pictures are always popular at weddings, and some thought in advance will pay big dividends. Couples frequently find that posing for numerous formal pictures after the service consumes a great deal of time which they would rather be spending with their guests at the reception. If pictures are to be taken prior to the service, sufficient time must be allowed and the florist must be advised so that the decorations will be in place at the proper time. We encourage couples to discuss picture arrangements in advance with their photographer to determine how much time will be needed. If formal pictures are to be taken after the service, those including the pastor should be taken first.

Flash photographs are not to be taken during the ceremony except at the beginning of the processional and during the recessional. Available light photos and video may be taken from stationary positions at the back of the church during the ceremony.

At no time during the processional, the ceremony itself, or the recessional may a photographer or video camera operator occupy any position in the sanctuary forward of the front pew.

It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to see that their photographer understands and abides by these requirements.

BULLETINS

Sometimes a couple wants a printed order of worship, particularly if there are hymns. This can be done in consultation with the pastor. The church does not prepare wedding programs. We can suggest sources for the publication of the bulletins, but the couple is responsible for the printing.

ETIQUETTE

Rice, wheat, confetti, sparklers, silly string, etc. are not permitted inside or outside the church at any time before, during, or after the wedding. Bird seed may be used outside the building only. Once birdseed has been thrown, no one may re-enter the building.

Alcoholic beverages are not permitted in or on Corinth Presbyterian Church property at any time (before, during, or after the ceremony).

Smoking and the use of tobacco products is not permitted in the church building.

Parking is permitted only in the paved parking area beside and behind the church. Church property does not extend beyond the paved area. No parking is permitted on the grass. The couple will be responsible for any damage to the sprinkler system caused by guests parking on the grass. If you anticipate a need for additional parking, contact the city of Parker to negotiate use of their parking lot.

All facilities are to be left in their original order and condition. All rented items, flowers (except those you have notified the church you will be leaving for the following Sunday), gifts, and trash shall be removed immediately following the service.

Ordinarily the pastor of Corinth Presbyterian Church will officiate at any wedding held at the church. When exceptions are made, an officer of the church will be invited to attend the rehearsal and the wedding. [The invitation should be addressed to the Clerk of Session, Corinth Presbyterian Church, 5609 East Parker Road, Parker, TX 75002].

WHAT ARE THE COSTS?

The cost for the use of the building is \$500. This is the fee regardless of whether or not there is a rehearsal. A damage deposit check of \$250 is also due at the time the church is reserved. The check will be returned if there is no damage as determined by the Corinth Presbyterian Church pastor or attending officer of the church.

The pastor's professional fee is \$200.

There is no charge for the use of the church if the bride, the groom, or the parent(s) of either has been an active member of Corinth Presbyterian Church for at least six months. For members of Corinth Presbyterian Church, there are no fees for the pastor's services. An honorarium may be given, the amount to be determined by the bridal couple.

OUTLINE OF A CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE CEREMONY

PRELUDE

SEATING OF THE PARENTS / FAMILIES

(MUSIC)

(LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES)

PROCESSIONAL

OPENING SENTENCES

STATEMENT OF THE GIFT OF MARRIAGE

WEDDING INVOCATION

DECLARATIONS OF INTENT

AFFIRMATION OF FAMILIES AND CONGREGATION

(MUSIC)

SCRIPTURE LESSONS AND MEDITATION

WEDDING VOWS

EXCHANGE OF RINGS (or other symbols)

PASTORAL PRAYER (and LORD'S PRAYER)

(MUSIC)

ANNOUNCEMENT OF MARRIAGE

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

RECESSIONAL

POSTLUDE

() optional

MARRIAGE LICENSE PROCEDURE

No wedding may be performed without a marriage license. It must be handed to the pastor no later than the wedding rehearsal.

The marriage license office nearest this church is the Collin County Clerk's office, 900 E. Park, Suite 140, Plano, TX. For complete information call 972-881-3025.

Requirements for a marriage license in the State of Texas are:

1. Valid driver's license.
2. Social Security number.
3. Fee of \$36 in cash.
4. Applicants must not be related by the whole blood, half blood or by adoption.
5. Applicants will be given an oath and must sign the application.
6. There is a 30-day waiting period for those who have been divorced in the State of Texas.
7. There is a 72-hour waiting period after the issuance of the license before one may be married.
8. A license issued in the State of Texas is valid in any county in the state for a period of 30 days.