

Notes

Your Wedding

at

Prairie Avenue Christian Church
(Disciples of Christ)



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Decatur, Illinois 62521
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*“Love one another as
I have loved you.”*
John 15:12



Notes

Introduction

The marriage service is sacred, and one of the most beautiful of all the services of the church. It is never a social event, but is always a worship service in which two persons, in the company of their relatives and friends, commit their lives to each other under the blessing of God and are united in holy wedlock.

It is the desire of Prairie Avenue Christian Church to make your wedding a memorable event, beautiful and spiritually meaningful. It is to this end that the following suggestions and policies are made.

- Prairie Avenue Christian Church

It is not the policy of the church to look upon weddings as a source of revenue. There are some fees, however, that we are obliged to pass on to the wedding couple. All fees should be paid on the day of the wedding rehearsal. Please pay the organist, the custodian and the church separately. You may check with the church office to get names.

Please mark the items which apply to you:

- Damage deposit (refundable) \$100.00
 - Sanctuary Rental (for non-active members) \$75.00
 - Fellowship Hall rental for reception \$75.00
 - Clergy - This fee is for non-members and covers the costs of counseling sessions, time in planning the ceremony, rehearsal and wedding time and paperwork. This fee may be included with the payment of other wedding costs on the day of the wedding rehearsal. \$200.00
 - Clergy fee for members Donation
 - Organist for service and rehearsal. \$200.00
 - Custodian for service. \$100.00
 - Custodian for reception. \$75.00
 - Parlor rental for parlor wedding ceremony (for non-active members) \$25.00
 - Candelabras fee (includes candles) \$10.00
 - Aisle candles fee \$20.00
 - Receptions in the Fellowship Hall must be served by the Social Committee of the church. The charge for serving the reception will be \$50.00 for the first 100 guests, and \$5.00 for each additional 25 persons, or fraction thereafter. You must contact the Church Secretary to make arrangements for receptions, candelabras and aisle candles. \$ _____
- TOTAL** \$ _____

All fees are payable to the office on the day of the wedding rehearsal.

Agreement

We have read the Wedding policies of Prairie Avenue Christian Church and agree to the conditions and costs listed.

_____ Bride _____ Groom

_____ Date



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Setting the Date

When you have decided to be married, you should do the following as early as possible:

- ☞ Decide the date and time for the wedding and call the minister at the church office (217)428-3327. Reserve the sanctuary (or parlor, if you prefer) and make an appointment when both the bride and groom can come in for a conference with the minister.
- ☞ If the reception is to be held at the church, this must also be scheduled as early as possible with the Social Committee chairperson. See page 5 for more details.

Counseling with the Minister

The couple will be expected to meet with the minister three times, for approximately one hour each. The initial appointment will be counted as one of these meetings, and the minister will decide at the end of that appointment if he/she can perform the wedding.

Attendance at Worship (Non-Members)

Non-church members wishing to be married at Prairie Avenue Christian Church must attend the worship services at least two times prior to the wedding. (Worship begins at 9:00 a.m. or 11 a.m. on Sunday morning.) The purpose for this requirement is that the wedding in the church is for those who desire to have the presence of God and Jesus Christ in their lives. If there is no ongoing desire for this, there is not much reason to have the wedding in the church. Being in church, therefore, does three things. It says to the church that the couple is interested in more than the facility, it helps the couple be familiar with worship, and it exposes the couple to the community of faith doing one of its most important things, which is worshipping God.

Minister

It will be expected that the minister of the church will officiate at all weddings. However, when it is the wish of the bride or groom to invite another clergy to participate in the ceremony, they should make this known to the Prairie Avenue Christian

A Special Note on Alcoholic Beverages and Smoking



- ♥ Anyone in the wedding party who is intoxicated will not be allowed to participate in the wedding.
- ♥ Smoking is not permitted in the church building.
- ♥ Alcoholic beverages are not allowed on church property. Violation of this rule will result in the IMMEDIATE CANCELLATION of the wedding.

Damage Deposit

A damage deposit of \$100.00 must be paid on the day of the wedding rehearsal, to cover any minor damage to the church or any extra custodial fees accumulated due to disarray left by the wedding party. Any damage to the church building or its contents above the amount of the deposit will be billed to the couple. The deposit will be refunded if there is no damage or extra custodial fees.



Rice and Birdseed

Under no circumstances are rice or birdseed to be thrown inside the church building! It is strongly urged that rice and birdseed not be used at all in the wedding. It is extremely difficult to clean up, and can be a hazard, especially to older people, because it rolls under one's foot.

Decorations

You are welcome to decorate the sanctuary in a tasteful manner. The ministers will have final determination as to the acceptability of decorations. Care must be taken of the furnishings, to avoid damage by use of nails, wires or candles. Tape, nails or thumb tacks are not to be used on any of the pews or other furnishings. Nothing should be secured to the ends of the pews.

Flowers or other decoration should not be so elaborate that the Communion Table be obscured. No decorations may be placed on the Communion Table. Only communion emblems (when used as part of the wedding ceremony), the Disciples of Christ chalice, a Unity Candle or parents' roses may be on the communion table.

Saturday Weddings

The church office is always closed on Saturday, and the building is normally closed. It will be opened four hours before the wedding. Brides should notify florists or others who will be making deliveries.

Wedding Bulletins

Wedding bulletins may be used by a bride and groom, if they desire. As the wedding is a worship service, congregational participation through hymns, litanies or unison prayers is encouraged. Having a bulletin helps this process. The church office can type and copy the inside of the bulletin. Or the secretary can design a personalized bulletin for you. The couple would provide the paper and then pay the church the price of the ink cartridge per 200. (They normally run about \$35.) Contact the Church Secretary if you are interested in this service.

Church minister, who will join the bride and groom in extending the invitation to the guest minister.



Organist and Music

Only our church organist can play for weddings. The customary organist's fee is \$200.00. Please let the church secretary know right away if you want the organist.

Couples should be reminded that the soloists they select should be of experience and ability, in order to present the message of music adequately. A soloist is expected to schedule a rehearsal with the organist. The church office has a list of soloists if needed.

Since the wedding is a worship service, all music must be appropriate as an offering to God. The minister from PACC has the final say as to the appropriateness of all music for weddings.

Facilities

Weddings are held in the Sanctuary (seating capacity of 225), or the Parlor (for small weddings, if the couple prefers). The minister is very reluctant to conduct weddings in other places (e.g., in a home, park, etc.). A reception may be held in the Fellowship Hall, with Social Committee of the church serving the reception. A schedule of fees for building rental and receptions is listed on page 10.

The Marriage Ceremony

The church views the wedding ceremony as a sacred rite to be conducted with all the dignity and refinements of a service in the house of God. The marriage service traditionally used by the minister has been compiled from various traditional sources, all in keeping with the highest standards. However, if the bride and groom wish to work with the minister in writing their own ceremony, or even their vows, the minister will be happy to do this. The writing of a ceremony must be done in consultation with the minister.



The Rehearsal


For weddings where there is music and a bridal procession, it is necessary to have a rehearsal. This is usually arranged for the evening before the ceremony. Allow 45 minutes for the rehearsal. The bride and groom should be present, their parents, their attendants and ushers. No one else should be in attendance. The minister is in charge of the rehearsal.

Legal Papers

Here are the “steps to the altar” required by the State of Illinois:

- ♥ The County Clerk will issue the marriage license immediately, but it will not become valid until the next day, and will remain valid for 60 days. For a wedding at Prairie Avenue Christian Church, the license will be secured in Macon County.
- ♥ A boy or girl 18 years of age may obtain a license without the parents’ consent. Between the ages of 16 and 17, parents’ consent (both parents) must be obtained. Parents must appear in person, or in special notarized form supplied by the County Clerk’s office may be used. (Exception: Parents residing out of the county or out of state may go to their own court house and obtain a statement of consent, which will be accepted by Macon County officials.)
- ♥ After the wedding ceremony, only the best man, the maid of honor and the minister need sign the wedding certificate. After the original license is properly signed, it is sent back to the County Clerk by the minister.
- ♥ The minister requires that you mail or bring the license to the church office three (3) working days prior to the wedding so that he or she may complete the paperwork before the ceremony.

Photographs

 6 Because photographers creeping about and flashes going off are distracting to this religious ceremony, no photographs may

be taken while the ceremony is in progress. Exceptions to this are time exposures, which may be taken from the narthex or balcony; and flash pictures, which may be taken during the processional and recessional. Most commercial photographers understand this rule and are cooperative. The bride and groom should inform guests with cameras of this rule. The ministers will be glad to cooperate with you for photographs before or after the ceremony. The wedding party may gather on the chancel after the ceremony for the purpose of taking pictures. Videotaping may be done only from the back of the sanctuary, the balcony, or the corner of the chancel. In any event, the videotaping must be done from a stationary position and in an unobtrusive manner.



Candles and Aisle Runner

The Social Committee of PACC has candelabras and aisle candles available for use during weddings. To arrange for the Committee to provide these, contact the church Secretary. The cost for the candles for the candelabras is \$10.00, and the cost for the aisle candles is \$20.00. Both of these fees are payable on the day of the wedding rehearsal.

Any other candles used should be of good quality and driplless, to protect the carpet. Even with driplless candles, plastic protection for the carpet must be used.

The use of the white runner originated to keep the bride’s dress clean. Since the carpeting in the church is well kept, the only reason for a white runner is tradition. If a couple desires one, they should make arrangements to rent a runner from the florist who will deliver and place it at the time he/she brings the flowers. (The length of the aisle, from the base of the chancel steps, is 51 feet, 6 inches.) Candles can also be secured from the florist.

Dressing at the Church

A room is available for the bridal party to dress, if desired. While the church will make every reasonable effort to protect personal items (wedding dresses, purses, flowers, gifts), the church cannot do more than this and is not liable for such items if lost, stolen or damaged.

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