

## WEDDINGS AT RIVERSIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

A Policy Statement  
Riverside Presbyterian Church  
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Riverside, Illinois 60546

Riverside Presbyterian Church Staff  
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Thank you for your interest in Riverside Presbyterian Church as the setting for your wedding. We look forward to including you as part of our ongoing wedding ministry. We are here to serve you. In order to help you plan your wedding, we ask that you proceed according to the following steps.

**Step 1.** Obtain a Wedding Packet of information from the Administrative Assistants in the church office. You may contact them in person during office hours, or by phone or e-mail. The packet may be picked up from the office or mailed to you.

**Step 2.** Schedule a face-to-face meeting with the Pastor. At this meeting you may clear your choice of wedding date with the Pastor's schedule and the church calendar.

**Step 3.** Read the policy Weddings at Riverside Presbyterian Church, complete and sign the information form, and submit the information form with your \$300 deposit to the Wedding Coordinator. **Your wedding is not officially on the church calendar until this step has been completed.**

**Step 4.** Schedule a conversation about your wedding music with the Minister of Music, Dr. Sally Sloane. This conversation may be by phone or in person. You need to do this even if you do not want organ music at your wedding. After hearing about the type of wedding you have in mind, Sally will inform you about the wide range of music options that are available to you. If Sally has scheduled a presentation of wedding music for couples planning to marry at RPC, she will inform you of that date. If you wish to bring in a guest musician, there will be a surcharge for the Minister of Music, as guest musicians usually involve more rehearsal time for the Minister of Music.

**Step 5.** Schedule a conversation - by phone or in person - with the Wedding Coordinator, Donna Ulrich. Donna will help you decide which sanctuary accessories you want for your wedding, and will complete the financial sheet for your wedding. Questions about any fees should be directed to Donna Ulrich.

## **A THEOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF MARRIAGE**

Marriage is a civil contract between a two people. For Christians, it is a covenant through which two people are called to live together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage, a commitment is made by two people, and is publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

In preparation for the marriage service, the Pastor asked to lead the service shall discuss with those wishing to be married: the nature and form of the marriage service, the vows and commitments they will be asked to make, the relationship of these commitments to their lives of discipleship, the resources of the faith and the Christian community to assist them in fulfilling their marriage commitments.

This discussion is equally as important in the case of a first marriage, a marriage after the death of a spouse, and a marriage following divorce. If the Pastor is convinced, after discussion with the couple, that commitment, responsibility, maturity, or Christian understanding are so lacking that the marriage is unwise, the minister shall assure the couple of the church's continuing concern for them and not conduct the ceremony.

As a service of Christian worship, the marriage service is under the direction of the Pastor and the supervision of the Session. The marriage ordinarily takes place in a special service which focuses upon marriage as a gift of God and as an expression of the Christian life. Celebration of the Lord's Supper at the marriage service requires the approval of the Session, and care shall be taken that the invitation to the Table is extended to all present.

An order of service that may be used is from the Presbyterian Book of Common Worship (1993). It begins with scriptural sentences and a brief statement of purpose. The couple shall declare their intention to enter into Christian marriage and shall exchange vows of love and faithfulness. The service includes appropriate passages of Scripture, which may be interpreted in various forms of proclamation. Prayers shall be offered for the couple, for the communities which support them in this new dimension of discipleship, and for all who seek to live in faithfulness. A charge may be given. Other actions common to the community and its cultures may appropriately be observed when these actions do not diminish the Christian understanding of marriage. The service concludes with a benediction.

Music suitable for the marriage service directs attention to God and expresses the faith of the church. Please refer to the list of suggested music that is attached to this policy. The congregation may join in hymns and other musical forms of praise and prayer.

Flowers, decorations, and other appointments should be appropriate to the place of worship, enhance the worshipers' consciousness of the reality of God, and reflect the integrity and simplicity of Christian life.

A service of worship recognizing a civil marriage and confirming it in the community of faith may be appropriate when requested by the couple. The service will be similar to the marriage service except that the opening statement, the declaration of intention, the exchange of the vows by the couple, and the public declaration by the minister reflect the fact that the couple are already married to one another according to the laws of the state.

## **INFORMATION FOR PLANNING YOUR WEDDING**

In planning for your wedding, it is advisable to have an initial conference with the Pastor as soon as possible. The date of the wedding should be cleared through the Pastor and church office. Dates and times are to be set according to the schedule of the officiating pastor and the availability of church facilities. Weddings will not be scheduled on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Palm Sunday weekend, Holy Week, Easter weekend, or any federal holiday.

The wedding shall be under the sole direction of the officiating pastor. All weddings are to be performed by Riverside Presbyterian Church clergy. If you desire to ask other clergy to assist in the service, you should make your desire known to the officiating pastor so that an invitation may be extended to the guest clergy.

At least one counseling session before the wedding must be scheduled with the officiating pastor. Please feel free to call upon that pastor for advice and counsel at any time.

If the church is already decorated for a scheduled season or event, the decorations will ordinarily remain in place, the hanging on the pulpit may be white, if requested.

As an important liturgical symbol of the presence of Christ in our midst, the Communion table may not be moved from its central position in the sanctuary. If the couple wishes, the unity candle may be placed on it. Except for flower arrangements surrounding the unity candle, flowers may not be placed on the Communion table for weddings. Normally for a wedding the table will be moved to a position between the wedding party and the rest of the congregation, so that the entire congregation can be gathered around Christ's table.

The sanctuary comfortably seats 250 persons.

Riverside Presbyterian Church does not provide aisle runners. When the wedding couple wish to have an aisle runner or runners, they should arrange for a florist to provide and install such. The florist may make an appointment with the Wedding Coordinator to do this.

From a desire to be good stewards of the environment, we ask that only birdseed or rose petals be thrown as the bride and groom are leaving the church. Specifically, neither rice, confetti, nor balloons may be used for this purpose.

The use of any alcoholic beverage is prohibited in the church building and in all adjacent parking areas and outside grounds.

We appreciate your cooperation in maintaining the church building as a smoke-free environment.

## **MUSIC**

The couple should make an appointment to consult with the Minister of Music well in advance of the wedding date to decide upon the music for the ceremony and the use of musicians. Because a church wedding is a service of worship before God, requiring reverence on the part of all present, the music used in the ceremony should direct attention to God. Your choice of music must be approved by the officiating pastor and the Minister of Music. Secular or non-religious music is acceptable during the prelude, but not during the marriage service itself.

The Minister of Music of Riverside Presbyterian Church will play the organ for all weddings in the church, or secure a substitute, except when couples desire a service without music or with RPC instrumentalists only, such as a string quartet or handbell ensemble. RPC also has access to several professional musicians such as vocal soloists, string, woodwind, brass, and bagpipe soloists. For soloists, the organ will usually be needed to accompany them. These musicians' services and fees may also be enlisted through the Minister of Music. When couples decide to include a guest musician the fee for the Minister of Music will be an additional \$50, due to extra consultation and rehearsal time.

Following is a list of organ music frequently played for weddings:

- Trumpet Voluntary - Jeremiah Clarke
- Trumpet Tune - Jeremiah Clarke
- Selections from Water Music - G. F. Handel
- Rondeau - Jean Joseph Mouret
- Air - Purcell
- Voluntary - Purcell
- Martial Air - Purcell

## **AVAILABLE SANCTUARY ACCESSORIES**

Riverside Presbyterian Church makes available to couples a number of sanctuary accessories for weddings. The Wedding Coordinator is available by appointment with couples regarding decisions about accessories. Available accessories include the following items:

- Seven Branch Altar Candelabra (pair)
- Single Head Aisle Candelabra Triple Head Aisle Candelabra
- Unity Candle (after the wedding the unity candle belongs to the couple)

There is no charge for the above accessories.

Couples may wish to arrange the printing of the wedding bulletins. In such a case the program copy should be approved by the officiating pastor before taking it to the printer.

## REHEARSALS, RECEPTIONS, PHOTOGRAPHS & VIDEOTAPING

The wedding rehearsal is usually held on the day preceding the wedding and is conducted by the officiating pastor, unless the Pastor delegates the conducting of the rehearsal to the Wedding Coordinator. The Organist and any additional musicians will not be present for the rehearsal. One hour should be reserved for rehearsal time, and promptness at rehearsals is expected.

The couple should bring the marriage license to the rehearsal to be signed by the officiating pastor.

The wedding party may expect to have access to the church building 15 minutes prior to the wedding rehearsal, and an hour and a half prior to the time of the wedding.

Wedding receptions in the Riverside Presbyterian Church Social Hall can be scheduled with the Wedding Coordinator and Church Office, using a caterer. Arrangements for use of church equipment (linens, serving pieces, etc.) should be made through the Wedding Coordinator. The consuming or serving of alcoholic beverages is not permitted in the church building or on church property.

The upstairs Parlor is reserved for the wedding party. Members of the wedding party who prepare themselves for the wedding in the church building are asked to pick up their trash and leave church rooms in a tidy and orderly condition.

On any given day, weddings must be scheduled at least three hours apart.

Arrival time for all ushers should be no later than a half hour before the wedding. They shall be responsible for seating guests, lighting candles, and ushering out parents and guests after the recessional.

Photographs are permitted before the ceremony and afterwards; but during the ceremony itself photographs may only be taken by a designated photographer from a single stationary position in the back of the sanctuary and with available light only. Flash exposures are not permitted until after the benediction. Photographers taking photos during the processional are asked to do their work as unobtrusively as possible. The church makes this request because the marriage ceremony is a service of worship and any outside intrusion disturbs the reverence that should be a part of the service. **A sheet of guidelines for commercial photographers is attached and must be signed by the photographer and returned to the wedding coordinator prior to the wedding** in order for the photographer to be permitted to take photographs at Riverside Presbyterian Church weddings.

Video photographing of the ceremony is permitted, providing that the equipment and the photographer are located in one of three locations: at the back of the sanctuary, one of the far sides of the sanctuary, or in the choir loft with the equipment on a fixed tripod. Mobile video photography is not permitted.

## FEES

Riverside Presbyterian Church makes every effort to assist in limiting the cost of your wedding. Weddings, however, involve some extra services which the church is unable to underwrite. If, in the opinion of the officiating pastor, circumstances warrant it, the pastor may on rare occasions authorize the waiver of some of the following fees.

	Non-Members	Members
Security Deposit	\$300	\$300
*Clergy	\$350	\$125
Minister of Music	\$200	\$150
Minister of Music with guest musicians	\$250	\$200
Soloist from RPC List	\$75-\$150	\$75-150
Wedding Coordinator	\$200	\$200
Custodial Services	\$75	\$75
Use of Sanctuary	\$350	\$100
Use of Social Hall for Reception with kitchen	\$80/hr.	\$40/hr.
Use of Social Hall for Reception without kitchen	\$50/hr.	\$25/hr.

\*If the wedding is held off-site, there is an additional \$50 charge.

A deposit of \$300 is required for the scheduling of weddings. This amount will be used for the security deposit referenced above and will be refunded after the wedding provided no harm has been done to church facilities. **Weddings are not on the church calendar until this deposit has been received by the Wedding Coordinator.** Checks should be made out to Riverside Presbyterian Church.

The remaining balance of all fees should be paid by a check made out to Riverside Presbyterian Church **four weeks prior to the date of the wedding.**

**If, the wedding is canceled by the wedding party less than four weeks from the scheduled date, the deposit is non-refundable.**

## **VOWS — please chose one**

#1

In the name of God.

I, *Name*, take you, *Name*, to be my wife/husband,  
to have and to hold from this day forward,  
for better, for worse,  
for richer, for poorer,  
in sickness and in health,  
to love and to cherish,  
until we are parted by death.  
This is my solemn vow.

#2

*Name*, in the name of God,  
I take you to be my wife/husband from this time onward,  
to join with you and to share all that is to come,  
to give and to receive,  
to speak and to listen,  
to inspire and to respond,  
and in all our life together  
to be loyal to you with my whole being,  
as long as we both shall live.

#3

I take you, as a gift from God,  
to be my lifelong companion  
through tears and laughter,  
sickness and health,  
work and play.  
I will love you faithfully,  
constantly and prayerfully,  
now and forever. Amen.

#4

*Name*, I commit myself to be with you  
in joy and adversity,  
in wholeness and brokenness,  
in peace and trouble,  
living with you in fidelity and love all our days.

#5

I promise to be faithful to you,  
open and honest with you.  
I will respect, trust, help and care for you.  
I will share my life with you.  
I will forgive you as we have been forgiven.  
I will lead with you a simple, just and peaceful life  
as Christ has called us to live.  
And with you I will work to further simplicity, justice,

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and peace in our world.  
I will love you  
and be thankful for the blessing of your love  
until death parts us.

### **EXCHANGING RINGS – please chose one**

#1

*Name*, I give you this ring  
as a sign of my vow,  
and with all that I am,  
and all that I have, I honor you;  
in the name of the Father,  
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit  
(or in the Name of God).

#2

In token and pledge  
of our constant faith and abiding love,  
with this ring I thee wed,  
in the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

#3

*Name*, I give you this symbol  
as a sign of my love and faithfulness.

*Response:*

*Name*, I receive this symbol  
as a sign of our love and faithfulness.

### **DECLARATIONS OF INTENTION – please chose one**

#1

*Name*, will you have *Name* to be your wife/husband,  
to live together in holy marriage?  
Will you love him/her, comfort him/her, honor and keep him/her,  
in sickness and in health,  
and forsaking all others, be faithful to him/her  
as long as you both shall live?

**I will.**

#2

*Name*, will you have this man/woman  
to be your wife/husband?



**I will.**

#3

*Name*, will you have *Name* to be your wife/husband,  
and will you love her/him faithfully  
as long as you both shall live?

**I will.**

## **APPROPRIATE WEDDING SCRIPTURES**

Song of Solomon 8:6-7

Proverbs 3:3-6

Psalms 67

Psalms 100

Psalms 136:1-9, 26

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

Matthew 5:1-10

Matthew 22:35-40

John 15:1-17

## WEDDING CEREMONY INFORMATION FORM

Date of Ceremony \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(First) (Middle) (Last)

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip Code)

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(First) (Middle) (Last)

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip Code)

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF ATTENDANTS \_\_\_\_\_

Flower Attendant (circle one) YES NO

Ring Attendant (circle one) YES NO

### REHEARSAL

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

# RIVERSIDE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

## Acknowledgement of Receipt of Wedding Rules

1. I/We hereby acknowledge that I have received and read all rules and regulations relative to holding my wedding ceremony at Riverside Presbyterian Church.
2. I/We further acknowledge that the violation of said rules may result in forfeiture of the security/damage deposit tendered in the amount of \$300.
3. If there are damages to church property involved totaling less than \$300 and there were no relative rule violations, the remaining portion of the deposit will be refunded.
4. In circumstances whereby damage to church property exceeds the \$300 deposit, I/we understand that the party renting the church is financially responsible for incurred expenses over and above the deposit amount.
5. If, the wedding is canceled by the wedding party less than four weeks from the scheduled date, the deposit is non-refundable.

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Date

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Signature

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Signature

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Church Representative

## Guidelines for Wedding Photographers and Videographers

Weddings at Riverside Presbyterian Church are services of worship under the sole direction of the officiating pastor. Accordingly, photographers and videographers for weddings are asked to observe the following simple guidelines.

1. Photographers may take flash exposures before and after the wedding service. This guideline permits flash exposures during the processional and recessional. When the clergy person starts to speak, the service has begun and flash exposures are not permitted until after the benediction. If the photographer wishes to take natural light exposures during the wedding service, these should be taken from a single stationary position the back of the sanctuary during the wedding service.
2. If photographers and/or couple wish to include the clergy in photographs taken after the wedding, the photographer is asked to notify the minister of this desire prior to the wedding and take photos with the minister within fifteen minutes after the wedding. When no notice is given prior to the wedding that the couple desire the minister to remain after the wedding for photos, the minister will assume that his or her presence for photos is not required.
3. Videographers should set up their camera in one of three permitted locations: the back of the sanctuary, one of the far sides of the sanctuary, or the choir space behind the pulpit. After the camera operator chooses a location, they must remain there for the duration of the ceremony and not move about the sanctuary. Mobile video photography is not permitted.

I have read the guidelines for wedding photographer and videographers at Riverside Presbyterian Church and agree to abide by all its provisions.

Photographers Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_