

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR WEDDINGS

SEQUOYAH HILLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Session/Building & Grounds approved fee change October 2018 | Revised 2020

The Session of Sequoyah Hills Presbyterian Church is pleased that you have chosen our church as the setting for what is probably the most important event in your life. Marriage is ordained of God and only through His blessing and guidance can a home be under the Lordship of Christ. Seeing the wedding ceremony as an experience of Christian Worship can be an important step in shaping the course of a marriage.

These policies and procedures are offered as a guide in planning your wedding. Details of the service and use of our facilities are fully explained herein. We hope you will keep in mind that the most important presence at a wedding is God, and the entire service should be designed to praise and glorify Him. The policies and procedures described below are based on Sequoyah Hills Presbyterian Church's Statement of Faith, and on our reformed biblical and confessional heritage.

SETTING THE DATE

A Wedding Request Form should be submitted to the church office well in advance of your preferred wedding date to schedule the use of the church facilities. The office will coordinate with the pastor, church organist, SHPC wedding coordinator, and the sexton. **No weddings may be scheduled during Holy Week** and care should be taken in scheduling weddings around other special times in the liturgical year. If you are considering scheduling a wedding during the Advent/Christmas season please see the special note under the "Flowers" section.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

As in all services of Sequoyah Hills Presbyterian Church, a pastor of the church shall be responsible for the leading of the marriage service. The duties of the service may be shared with other pastors if the couple wishes; however, when a request is made for pastors outside our church to assist in the service, the invitation must be extended by a pastor of Sequoyah Hills Presbyterian Church.

The pastor will explain to the bride and groom details of the wedding, the significance of marriage, and the marriage service itself. All couples married at SHPC must receive a minimum of four one-hour pre-marital counseling sessions with a SHPC pastor or someone under the direction of a SHPC pastor. If the pastor is convinced after discussion with the couple that commitment, responsibility, maturity, or Christian understanding needs to be strengthened before considering the marriage wise, the pastor shall assure the couple of the church's continuing concern for them and not conduct the ceremony. In making this decision the pastor may seek the counsel of the session.

The order of worship used for the marriage service is directed by the Book of Common Worship of The Presbyterian Church (USA). The wedding will be under the ultimate direction of the pastor. Bridal consultants and florists may attend the rehearsal but will have no part in the guiding of the service, except at the pastor's discretion.

WEDDING COORDINATORS: Donna Crisp coordinates weddings at SHPC. Donna will coordinate or assign someone depending on availability. A coordinator is required and must be scheduled before the wedding can be approved.

FEES AND HONORARIUMS

MEMBERS*

The facilities of Sequoyah Hills Presbyterian Church are available without charge to all members' families (bride or groom or immediate family).

Wedding, Sanctuary or Chapel	\$ 700.00
Small Wedding in Chapel with no rehearsal	\$ 300.00

NON-MEMBERS*

Wedding, Sanctuary or Chapel	\$ 1200.00
Small Wedding in Chapel with no rehearsal	\$ 700.00

All fees should be paid to the church prior to the rehearsal. *Sequoyah Hills Presbyterian Church reserves the right to assess additional charges for extra cleaning, breakage, or pilferage. A refundable deposit of \$200 is due once the wedding is approved.*

MUSIC IN THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

Since marriage is an act of worship, the music used in the service should reflect our Christian faith and should be prayerfully and carefully chosen in keeping with the spirit of worship. *Music suitable for the marriage service directs attention to God and expresses the faith of the church. The congregation may join in hymns and other musical forms of praise and prayer (Book of Order, W-4.9005).*

The church organist must be consulted for assistance in planning the service as soon as the wedding is scheduled. The SHPC organist will play for the service, unless for some good reason the wedding party wishes to use someone else. Such arrangements must be cleared through the SHPC organist. It is the policy of SHPC not to use taped music.

SHPC VIDEOGRAPHER

SHPC's audio/visual techs need to be on site to run the sound and to record weddings in the Sanctuary.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

It is also appropriate to observe the Lord's Supper on other occasions of special significance in the life of the Christian community, as long as the celebration of the Sacrament is open to the whole believing community (Book of Order, W-2.4010).

Some couples choose to celebrate The Lord's Supper during their wedding service. The Book of Order states that when The Lord's Supper is served, it is open to all believers present and approved by the Session. Serving the whole congregation is one possibility. Another possibility is to serve the Sacrament immediately following the rehearsal to all believers present. Since this gathering usually includes the closest of family and friends, taking the Sacrament together in the sanctuary or chapel after the rehearsal is deeply personal and richly meaningful in preparation for the wedding service. In either case, the SHPC Pastor should be consulted.

WEDDING PICTURES

No pictures may be taken in the sanctuary during the marriage service, which begins with the Seating of the Mothers and ends with the Benediction. Pictures prior to the Seating of the Mothers and after the Benediction may be taken from the Narthex and/or the Balcony at the discretion of the SHPC wedding coordinator. A video camera may be used only if the camera is in an inconspicuous and stationary location as approved by the SHPC wedding coordinator. The videographer may not stand with or hold the camera in a pew, the aisles, or chancel area. **All photography equipment must be removed from the sanctuary one hour before the wedding ceremony is scheduled to begin.**

Please make sure the photographer knows these restrictions at the outset and that failure to follow these policies could result in being banned from taking pictures at SHPC in the future. A form indicating that the photographer and/or videographer have read, understand, and will follow this policy is on page 6. This form must be signed and returned to the church two weeks prior to the wedding. Forms may be emailed to rguyton@sequoyahchurch.org.

Please let guests know that no pictures should be taken during the service. It is helpful to print the following in the wedding program: “To honor the reverence and dignity of the service of worship, we ask that no photographs (camera or cell phone) be taken during the service.”

USE OF THE CHURCH FACILITIES

NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Possession and/or use of alcoholic beverages at weddings on church property is prohibited. Vehicles in the church parking lot are on church property!

SANCTUARY AND CHAPEL

The marriage service may be held in either the sanctuary or chapel. When more than one hundred (100) guests are expected, the sanctuary is more suitable.

Nothing (other than communion when applicable and approved) may be placed on the Communion table.

Flower placement and other decorations must be approved in advance. NO glitter, confetti, or rose petals may be used in the Sanctuary or Chapel.

FLOWERS

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 (Book of Order, W-4.9005).

Floral arrangements should be planned in keeping with the beauty and worshipfulness of the sanctuary and chapel and should not be excessive. Arrangements to deliver flowers in the evening or on a Saturday or Sunday must be made through the church office. Requests to adjust the heat and air conditioning to preserve flowers must also be made to the church office. The church has a pair of candelabra which are normally used for worship services. Three additional standing candelabra and a kneeling bench are also available to be used in the service.

White sanctuary banners are routinely used for weddings. If another liturgical color is preferred, the church office must be informed one week before the wedding. The church is open 9 to 5, Monday through Friday.

Kathryn Callaway is the liaison from the church flower committee, who must be consulted by the wedding florist and/or bride to determine what may be left in the sanctuary for Sunday worship services. Please contact Kathryn Callaway (865-776-4243), at least one month prior to the wedding date if flowers are to be donated or if you have any questions.

If you are considering scheduling a wedding during the Advent/Christmas (last weekend in November through first weekend in January), please remember that the Chrismon tree is in place in the Sanctuary entrance for the entire season and various Christmas decorations are in place throughout the church. In the Sanctuary, greenery only is used for the candelabra arrangements

for the first two weekends, then poinsettias are added for all future weekends. You would need to plan accordingly, keeping in mind that no outside flowers can be used during this season.

The use of rice, birdseed, confetti, glitter, and rose petals inside the church building or around any entrance following the wedding service is discouraged, because of the problem with cleaning up afterwards. Decisions to use aisle cloths should be made only in consultation with the pastor.

DRESSING FACILITIES

The Reception Room with a full-length mirror is provided as a dressing room for the bride and her attendants. The Fowler Conference Room is provided for the groom and his ushers to use prior to the wedding.

AMENDING THIS POLICY

This wedding policy may be amended by the Worship Committee, with appropriate advisement from SHPC Pastors, Staff, Session, and SHPC Wedding Coordinators. Any amendments will subsequently be reported to the Session, which may, at their discretion, amend the policy further or overrule any amendments made by the Worship Committee.



I, _____(photographer) of _____ (photography company) understand that pictures at the wedding of _____ may NOT be taken in the sanctuary during the marriage service, which begins with the Seating of the Mothers and ends with the Benediction. Pictures prior to the Seating of the Mothers and after the Benediction may be taken from the Narthex and/or the Balcony at the discretion of the SHPC wedding coordinator. All photography equipment must be removed from the sanctuary one hour before the wedding ceremony is scheduled to begin.

I, _____(videographer) of _____(videography company) understand that a video camera may be used only if the camera is in an inconspicuous and stationary location as approved by the SHPC wedding coordinator. The videographer may not stand with or hold the camera in a pew, the aisle, or the chancel area.

I have read, understand, and will follow this policy. I also understand that failure to follow these policies could result in being banned from taking pictures or video at SHPC in the future.

Signature of Photographer

Date

Signature of Videographer

Date

_____ & _____
Bride's Name Groom's Name

Bride's cell and email _____ Groom's cell and email _____

Rehearsal Date and Time _____ Communion Served? Y N

Wedding Date and Time: _____ Communion Served? Y N

SHPC Pastor _____ Guest Pastor _____
(if applicable and invited by SHPC Pastor)

Organist SHPC Other* Additional Musicians* _____

Location (circle one): Sanctuary Chapel | Approximate number attending service _____

Standing Candelabra? Y N Sanctuary Banner Color (circle one): White Green

No. of Bridesmaids _____ Maid/Matron of Honor _____

No. of Groomsmen _____ Best Man _____

Flower Girl/Ring Bearer (include ages) _____

Florist* _____ Would you like to donate flowers for Sunday services? Y N

Photographer* _____ Videographer* _____

**See pages 3 and 6 of Policies and Procedures for Weddings document*

Reception Location _____

Address after Marriage _____

*Please include contact information for non-SHPC vendors.

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE CHURCH OFFICE NO LATER THAN 30 DAYS PRIOR TO THE WEDDING DATE.