

# **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**

Members should contact the church office well in advance of their 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:** Lorraine Burns, Ellyn Cauble, Donna Crisp, and Cammy Glover all serve as wedding coordinators at SHPC. Determining who will direct a wedding will be based upon the coordinator's availability and the couples' preference.

## 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).

Sexton Fee (service in <b>Sanctuary</b> )	\$150.00
Sexton Fee (service in <b>Chapel</b> )	\$100.00
-If using Flower Box, add to Sexton Fee	\$ 50.00
-If having reception here, add to Sexton Fee	\$ 50.00
Use of church candles in Sanctuary	\$ 60.00

### NON-MEMBERS

<b>Sanctuary</b>	\$400.00
Use of church candles	\$ 60.00
Sexton Fee (No Reception)	\$150.00
Sexton Fee with Reception	\$200.00
*If using Flower Box, add to Sexton Fee	\$ 50.00
<b>Chapel</b>	\$300.00
Sexton Fee (No Reception)	\$100.00
Sexton Fee with Reception	\$150.00
<b>Barron Hall</b>	\$250.00
<b>Reception Room</b>	\$150.00

### ORGANIST FEES

Small wedding, no rehearsal:	\$175.00
Wedding and rehearsal (no singers or instrumentalists)	\$300.00
Wedding and rehearsal (with singer(s) and/or instrumentalist(s))	\$330.00

### VIDEOGRAPHER FEE

\$150.00

**Honorariums for the pastors are customary. An honorarium for the church wedding coordinator is appropriate for non-members. It is also helpful for the pastor and the wedding coordinator to be invited to the rehearsal dinner.**

All fees should be paid to the church prior to the rehearsal, except the sexton fee, which should be paid directly to Tony McBath. The sexton fee may be higher, depending on the number of people and how long the church is scheduled for use. *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.

## **ORGANIST**

All fees (see page 3) include a consultation with the bride and groom for the selection of the wedding music. The organist's fee is paid by the bridal couple directly to the organist; this payment is due at the rehearsal (or prior to the wedding if there is no rehearsal).

## **SHPC VIDEOGRAPHER**

SHPC's audio/visual techs will be on site to run the sound and to record the wedding based on their availability (see page 3 for fees). The videographer's fee is paid by the bridal couple directly to SHPC; this non-refundable payment is due no later than 24 hours prior to the event.

## **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 7. This form must be signed and returned to the church two weeks prior to the wedding. Forms may be emailed to [rguyton@sequoyahchurch.org](mailto: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 and/or receptions 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 or reception 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.

## **BARRON HALL**

Barron Hall is usually available for a reception following the marriage service. Arrangements to use the Hall should be cleared with the Business Manager as well as the church office staff. There are often basketball practices and parties scheduled on weekends, so consideration should be given to allowing enough time for setting up, decorating, and cleaning up. Again, since the church office is open 9 to 5, Monday through Friday, arrangements should be made with the church office to give access to the caterer and florist. Please note that the church does not provide catering services.

## **RECEPTION ROOM**

The Reception Room is a small, parlor-like room down the hallway from the chapel and may be used for small receptions, including up to fifty (50) guests. A small kitchen adjoins the Reception Room. All dishes, cups, glasses, flatware and paper products should be provided by the caterer. The rooms are to be left clean and orderly.



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