

ARDMORE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH WEDDING POLICIES

- I. As a congregation, we are delighted to share in the joy of this wonderful occasion. We know that wedding ceremonies can be held in any setting, but the choice to have yours in our Sanctuary or Chapel has some distinct implications. A wedding at Ardmore Presbyterian Church is a worship service. A bride and groom pledge themselves to one another in the presence of God. A wedding is the beginning of new life together. Our emphasis is not simply on the ceremony, but also on the life that follows for the husband and wife. Finally, a wedding is an act of community. Both clergy and laity at APC are involved in preparing the bride and groom for the lifetime commitment of marriage.

These wedding policies and procedures were developed with these ideas in mind. Please read all of them carefully. Your decision to schedule your wedding at APC implies that you understand them and will abide by them.

II. Wedding Policies

a. Scheduling Your Wedding

- i. Schedule your wedding as early as possible to secure your preferred date, and to allow yourselves sufficient time for planning and meeting with your minister to plan the ceremony. Some holiday weekends are not available (such as Easter, Thanksgiving, and the Christmas season). Our Sanctuary can hold over 400 guests, but its design works well for weddings of any size. The Memorial Chapel seats approximately 100 guests.
- ii. Church members may schedule a wedding at any time and non-members may schedule a wedding as far as 12 months in advance of your chosen date. On the wedding day, each wedding party has the use of the church wedding facilities for a total of three hours (one and a half hours prior to and one and half hours from the scheduled time of the ceremony). If additional time is necessary, additional charges will incur. The Church Administrator will notify you when your date has been confirmed. However, the officiating minister has the right to give final approval for your wedding.

b. Officiating Minister

- i. Beyond officiating at the wedding, clergy will primarily help the bride and groom understand the biblical and theological foundations for marriage, the wedding ceremony, and the marriage vows.
- ii. Ardmore Presbyterian Church believes that both men and women are called to serve as ordained ministers. Therefore, our clergy consists of both men and women. A minister from the church staff will officiate at all weddings. [The clergy officiate at non-member weddings on a rotating schedule and therefore requests for a specific minister are not possible.] If you are a member of Ardmore Presbyterian Church and wish to request a specific minister, please do so by contacting the Wedding Facilitator.

c. Pre-marital Counseling

- i. We believe it is important to plan as much for your marriage as you do for your wedding. To help you begin your new life together, you will meet with the Pastor at least three times for pre-marital counseling.

d. Wedding Facilitator

- i. On the wedding day, APC's Wedding Facilitator will direct the ushers; line up the wedding party; direct the seating of the parents and special guests; oversee photography, videography, and floral policies; and assist with the wedding party's departure. The Wedding Facilitator is knowledgeable in the wedding ceremony and procedures and will be in charge of all matters concerning the church and the wedding.

- ii. Ardmore Presbyterian Church welcomes the use of an outside wedding coordinator for your personal needs. However, to ensure that church policies and procedures are observed, outside wedding planners, coordinators, or consultants are not permitted to direct rehearsals and weddings.
- e. Music at Your Wedding
 - i. There are many possibilities for music at a wedding ceremony. Often the organist provides most of the music; sometimes a vocal soloist or instrumentalist (trumpeter, harpist, bagpiper) is added; occasionally small ensembles (string or brass quartet) are hired.
 - ii. Whatever you decide, please remember the wedding ceremony is a worship service, and this informs the selection of music and performing media. It is the policy of the Session of Ardmore Presbyterian Church that musical selections, particularly vocal, have a clear connection to worship (sacred texts rather than theater or popular culture songs) and are presented “live” by individuals (rather than via pre-recorded music).
- f. The Wedding Party
 - i. It is expected that the members of the wedding party will conduct themselves at all times in a manner acceptable to a place of worship. **No alcoholic beverages are allowed in the church or on the church grounds.** Members of the wedding party are also expected to refrain from using alcoholic beverages immediately prior to the rehearsal and wedding. The wedding rehearsal or wedding will not be performed if any member of the wedding party is under the influence of alcohol. Smoking is not permitted in the building. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to communicate these policies to the wedding party.
 - ii. You may want to provide your wedding party and family with an agenda and time schedule of your rehearsal and wedding day activities, so all involved will know what is expected of them. **It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to give this policy to the wedding party in advance of the wedding.**
- g. Rehearsals
 - i. Rehearsals are scheduled on Friday evenings and are limited to forty-five minutes; therefore, it is important to begin on time. Everyone involved in the wedding, including the bride and groom, attendants, ushers, candle lighters, scripture readers, parents and grandparents should be present. Only processional and recessional music will be played at the rehearsal. Vocalists and instrumentalists are welcome to attend to receive cues regarding timing of their music but need to schedule separate rehearsal times.
- h. Photographers and Videographers
 - i. Once you have picked a photographer who will capture your priceless memories, remember that it is important to stick to a schedule and follow a few rules. **It will be the responsibility of the couple to instruct the photographer that no flash photography is permissible in the Sanctuary or the Chapel after the processional and before the recessional.** Photographers are to remain as unobtrusive as possible by not positioning themselves between your guests and the chancel. They may not walk up and down any of the aisles during the processional, ceremony, or recessional. During the processional and recessional, photos may be taken three or four rows down the center aisle from the back. Other photographs may be taken before or following the ceremony either in the Sanctuary or Chapel, or on the outside grounds within your scheduled time.
 - ii. Your ceremony may be videotaped using available light only. When videotaping from the chancel, a tripod must be used, and the videographer may not be seen. Videographers must approve where they would like to set up with the Wedding Facilitator prior to setting up their equipment. Videographers will not be allowed to plug into the audio systems of the Sanctuary or Chapel. If sound is required, they must contact the Minister of Music prior to the wedding date to make arrangements. **It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to give this policy to the photographer and videographer in advance of the wedding.**

- i. Flowers, Decorations and Other Worship Aides
 - i. We recommend the use of a professional florist, rather than family and friends decorating the Sanctuary/Chapel. The amount of time involved and the amount of materials needed are often difficult for nonprofessionals to anticipate. As a result, important details may be overlooked, which can create undue stress on you, your family, and our staff during one of the most important days in your life.
 - ii. All floral or other decorative arrangements must be approved by the Wedding Facilitator. Decorations may not obscure the cross. Chancel furnishing may not be moved or rearranged without permission. Floral arrangements must have bases that will protect our carpeting and furnishings from moisture, dirt, or other damage. No tacks, nails, or tape may be used to attach decorative items. Ribbons, rubber bands and pipe cleaners may be used to attach arrangements to the pews and candelabra.
 - iii. The florist is responsible for cleaning up debris from floral or decorative arrangements. Any apparatus brought in by the florist must be removed immediately following the ceremony. Our staff will dispose of any items left after the wedding. **It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to give this policy to the florist in advance of the wedding.**
- j. The Marriage License
 - i. Ardmore Presbyterian Church is located in Ardmore, Pennsylvania and therefore a Pennsylvania Marriage License is required. The license can be secured from any county courthouse in Pennsylvania. Wedding licenses in Pennsylvania are valid for 60 days from their issuance. The wedding may not take place if more than 60 days have passed from the issuance date of the license. There is also a three-day waiting period from the date of application before it is issued. Please bring the license to the church on the evening of the wedding rehearsal. The minister cannot perform the wedding without the marriage license.
- k. Parking
 - i. Parking is available across the street next to Suburban Square.
- l. Fees
 - i. Please contact the church office for wedding fees.