

Wedding Guidelines for Knox Presbyterian Church

3400 Michigan Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio 45208

WEDDING GUIDELINES

Knox Presbyterian Church is delighted to share with you in the joy of Christian marriage. We will attempt to make the planning and celebration of your wedding meaningful and memorable, as fitting for such a sacred occasion. These guidelines reflect our accumulated experience over many years of conducting wedding services as well as the directives of our denomination. May you find them helpful in the many preparations before you as you plan this joyous event. All weddings at Knox Church are conducted in accordance with these guidelines.

THE CHRISTIAN NATURE OF MARRIAGE

As Jesus Christ has blessed this relationship, and it has been declared holy throughout the life of the Church, those who pledged themselves each to the other in the sight of God are promised God's help as they enter in joys and duties of life together.

When marriage is performed in the context of Christian worship, the proclamation of the gospel of reconciliation in Jesus Christ is a promise of blessing to the marriage.

The Christian marriage is a service of worship before God, normally conducted in the house of God. Reverence shall be expected on the part of all present, and the service shall be under the sole discretion of the minister. - from the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church USA

In our society marriage is a legal contract authorized by the State. Because marriage has had religious significance for many people, the Church has been granted the authority to preside over the ceremony which affirms the legal covenant.

The purpose of Christian marriage is to acknowledge marriage and family as gracious gifts from God and to celebrate with joy and gratitude your acceptance of these gifts. Christian marriage also affirms your life together as a couple as well as your responsible participation in the wider structures of family and human society. Thus, it is appropriate that family and friends be invited to share in your celebration and happiness.

We consider it a sacred obligation to provide you with the means and setting for your marriage. We will try to serve you with the highest standards of spiritual and professional integrity.

SETTING THE DATE

Because of the number of weddings and other events scheduled at Knox Church, we advise you to consult with a Knox pastor at least six months in advance of your intended wedding date. For non-members, we are unable to schedule weddings sooner than one year before the proposed wedding date.

In the process of securing a date and time for your wedding, after reading these Wedding Guidelines, your next step is to consult with one of the pastors. After receiving a pastor's initial consent to officiate your wedding and if both pastor and church are available on your proposed wedding date, the next step in confirming your wedding is to submit a completed, signed Wedding Application along with a non-refundable deposit of \$200 to the church office. By signing the application, you confirm that you have read and agree to abide by the Knox Church Wedding Guidelines. A wedding date is not confirmed or held until the deposit and signed application have been received and accepted. The pastor will be in touch with you as soon as possible upon receiving these items to confirm your wedding date.

No weddings are scheduled on Sundays or legal holidays. Weddings are not performed in the building during Holy Week. No wedding will be scheduled to begin before 10:30 AM or after 7:00 PM. Two and

a half hours will be allowed for your wedding (1 hour prior, ½ hour for the ceremony and 1 hour after) which is to include the use of the dressing rooms, photography session, receiving line, etc. If you arrange for a reception at the church, more time will be allowed.

SANCTUARY SEATING CAPACITY

The Sanctuary will comfortably seat 328 guests. An additional 54 guests can be seated in the transepts, for a grand total of 382 guests.

MARRIAGE CONFERENCE

Once the wedding date and time have been confirmed by the officiating pastor, it will be your responsibility to make an appointment with the pastor to begin pre-marital conference sessions. The pastor who will officiate your wedding is required by Presbyterian law to meet with both of you prior to the wedding.

Together you will discuss the nature of and the privileges and obligations you will assume in Christian marriage, as well as the details of the rehearsal and ceremony. The pastor may require one or several consultations. These sessions provide an informal atmosphere in which to plan your wedding and support you in this important time in your lives. Anything shared with the pastor in these consultations will be held in the strictest confidence. Our pastors also stand ready to assist you after your wedding in any way possible.

WEDDING CEREMONY PARTICIPANTS

The wedding ceremony and rehearsal are under the direction of the officiating pastor and a wedding coordinator who will be assigned by the church. Our wedding coordinators are trained to assist the pastor with the rehearsal, to instruct the attendants and ushers, and to facilitate the actual wedding ceremony. Should you retain a wedding consultant, his or her services at the church are to be limited solely to arrangements of gown and apparel.

A Knox Church pastor will participate in all weddings held at Knox. However, if you desire the participation of an additional clergyperson or other individual at your wedding, such can be arranged. An individual assisting in the ceremony must be invited to participate by a Knox pastor. Therefore, no person should be invited to participate until you have discussed this matter with the officiating pastor.

Children are welcome to participate in the ceremony but experience leads us to discourage the participation of children under four years of age.

WEDDING MUSIC

The marriage service is a joyful and reverent worship celebration. Music used for the ceremony should be meaningful to the couple, but care should be taken that it also reflects an appropriate sentiment.

The Knox Church organist plays for all wedding ceremonies. (A decision by the couple to go against this policy will not reduce wedding fees.)

After the wedding is confirmed and wedding conferences with the pastor have begun, but before music plans are made, a planning/advising conference should be made with the organist. Until this conference is held, guest singers and instrumentalists should not be invited to participate. If desired, the Knox organist can suggest professional musicians for your wedding. Final approval of guest musicians rests with the Knox organist.

WEDDING REHEARSAL

Your wedding rehearsal will be directed by the officiating pastor, assisted by the Knox wedding coordinator. The purpose of a rehearsal is to prepare for the service of worship. All participants should

observe this in decorum. The rehearsal is normally 30-45 minutes in length on the day preceding your wedding day, and should not be scheduled to begin later than 6:30 PM. Because there may be other events scheduled in the church on the same evening, it is extremely important that all members of your party arrive on time.

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Your photographer must carefully observe the following guidelines:

- 1) Your photographer must remain quiet and inconspicuous during the ceremony: Flash photography is not permitted during the ceremony; non-flash (available light) may be taken only from the balcony, narthex, or transepts during the service.
- 2) One picture each may be taken of the bride and bridesmaids as they process down the aisle. The photographer may stand no more than 8 pews inside the sanctuary or in the transepts to do so.
- 3) The photographer should not move around during the service itself.
- 4) Photographs of the recessional may be taken, but the photographer must remain in the narthex while doing so.

Please convey these guidelines to the photographer at the time you are securing their services. Your photographer should be asked to report to the pastor and/or wedding coordinator upon arriving at the church for a review of these guidelines.

Picture-taking by guests during the ceremony is discouraged. Your wedding ceremony is a worship service and we ask that you and your families help see that these guidelines are observed by all.

VIDEOGRAPHERS

Wedding services may be videotaped only under the following conditions:

- 1) Video cameras will be permitted only in the balcony of the sanctuary or in the transepts; they may not be placed in the center aisle or in the chancel area.
- 2) Arrangements for wireless microphones must be made with the pastor before the wedding ceremony.
- 3) Video photography will be done with available light only — no additional lighting is permitted.
- 4) Permission to videotape the wedding must be arranged through the officiating pastor at least one week prior to the service.

WEDDING DECORATIONS AND EFFECTS

We encourage minimal decorations and they should be carefully planned. It is the responsibility of the florist to check with the Knox Church Office Manager regarding plans for the delivery of decorations. We recommend that flowers be placed only on the sanctuary reredos or the chancel floor. It is also possible to use ribbon or simple arrangements of flowers on the pews in the center aisle, however; please do not use tape, glue, tacks, staples, or nails to secure decorations to the pews. Should you desire to keep the floral decorations from your wedding, please make arrangements to have them removed immediately following the ceremony.

Available for your use are two free-standing candelabra for the chancel area. We plan to use those candles at all weddings which begin at 6:00 PM or later unless we are requested to do otherwise.

For aesthetic and safety reasons, we ask that no aisle runners be used. We also ask that nothing be thrown as the couple departs the church following the wedding, i.e. flower petals, rice, bird seed, etc. (Blowing soap bubbles is permissible outside the church.)

PARKING

Knox Church has two parking lots available for guests. You can find more information regarding parking in Hyde Park at Knox.org.

ALCOHOL USE AND SMOKING

Alcoholic beverages and smoking are not permitted on Knox Church property.

SUMMARY AND TIMELINE FOR SCHEDULING YOUR WEDDING AT KNOX CHURCH

- 1) Contact one of the Knox Church pastors for an initial consultation and to inquire about pastor and church availability.
- 2) Complete and sign the wedding application form and return it to the church office with the \$200 non-refundable deposit.
- 3) Once a pastor has confirmed your wedding, contact the pastor to make an appointment for a wedding conference.
- 3) After the initial wedding conference, arrange an appointment with the church organist.
- 4) Meet with your florist and photographer; advise them of the church's guidelines spelled out in this document.
- 5) Be certain that all church fees are paid in full at least one month week prior to the wedding. The check should be payable to Knox Presbyterian Church and should note the last names of the couple in the memo portion. For questions on balances due, please contact the Knox Church Office Manager.
- 6) Bring your marriage license to the church office within one week prior to your wedding, or to the rehearsal to give to the pastor.
- 7) Remind all members of your wedding party to be on time for the rehearsal.
- 8) If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact the officiating pastor. Our goal is to help make your wedding a wonderful and blessed beginning of a long and happy marriage.

Knox Presbyterian Church
3400 Michigan Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45208
513-321-2573
www.knox.org

Revised 09/18/15 ML