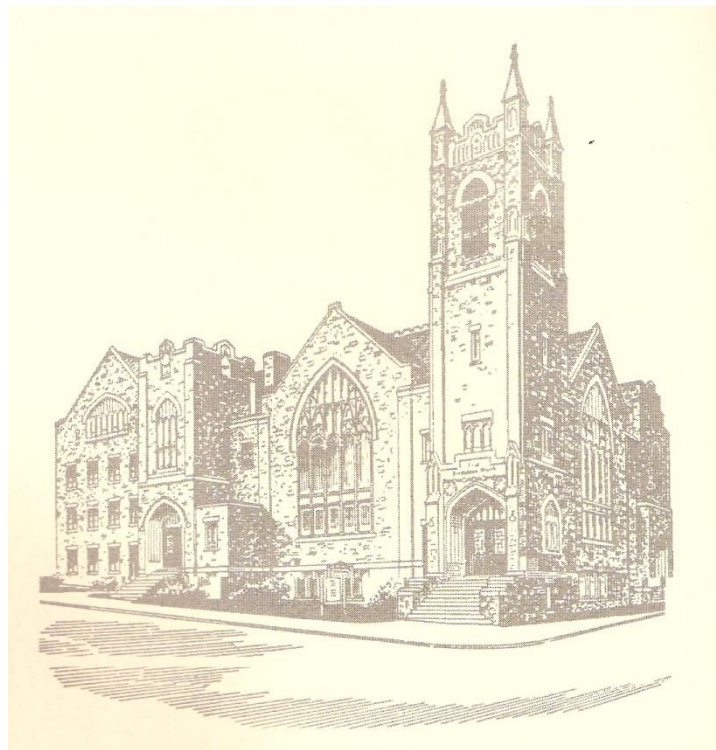


First Presbyterian Church Fairmont, West Virginia

Service of Worship

For
A Christian Marriage



This manual has been developed as a guide for couples and their families who are preparing for Christian marriage.

Marriage

~ stated directly from the Book of Order – The constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Christian Marriage

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage is a civil contract between a woman and a man. For Christians marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. In a service of Christian marriage a lifelong commitment is made by a woman and a man to each other, publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

Preparing for Marriage

In preparation for the marriage service, the Pastor shall provide for a discussion with the man and the woman concerning

- (1) the nature of their Christian commitment, assuring that at least one is a professing Christian,
- (2) the legal requirements of the state,
- (3) the privileges and responsibilities of Christian marriage,
- (4) the nature and form of the marriage service,
- (5) the vows and commitments they will be asked to make,
- (6) the relationship of these commitments to their lives of discipleship,
- (7) the resources of the faith and the Christian community to assist them in fulfilling their marriage commitments.

This discussion is equally important in the case of a first marriage, a marriage after the death of a spouse, and a marriage following divorce.

If the Marriage Is Unwise

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 Pastor shall assure the couple of the church's continuing concern for them and not conduct the service. In making this decision the Pastor may seek the counsel of the session.

Time and Place of the Service

Christian marriage should be celebrated in the place where the community gathers for worship. 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. Others may be invited to participate as leaders in the service at the discretion of the pastor. 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. The marriage service may take place during the Service for the Lord's Day upon authorization of the session. It should be placed in the order as a response to the proclamation of the Word. It may then be followed by the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Form and Order of Service

The service begins with scriptural sentences and a brief statement of purpose. The man and the woman 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. In the name of the triune God the Pastor shall declare publicly that the woman and the man are now joined in marriage. 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 and Appointments

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. 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.

Recognizing Civil Marriage

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 husband and wife, and the public declaration by the Pastor reflect the fact that the woman and man are already married to one another according to the laws of the state.

FROM FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FAIRMONT, WEST VIRGINIA

Wedding Service

A clergy person or other recognized representative of another faith may participate in the wedding collaboration with the pastor. Legal officiate shall be the Pastor of First Presbyterian Church.

Music for the wedding service

The couple is encouraged and advised to schedule an appointment with First Presbyterian Church's director of music to select music for the wedding worship service. The director of music is able to guide the couple and can provide a wide range of appropriate music selections.

Prior to its use in the wedding, music provided by soloists or groups shall be reviewed by the director of music. The final selection and approval of any music will be determined by the director of music in consultation with the pastor.

Flowers

Flowers are an appropriate addition to the sanctuary for the wedding. One or two arrangements on small tables or on the communion table are recommended. Flower petals are sometimes strewn in the aisle. It is recommended the petals be made of paper or dried petals. If carpet runners are used for the procession; fresh flower petals may be used.

Photographs

Photographs may be taken by guests from their respective pew seats during the *procession* and the *recession*. Cameras and cell phones must be turned off during the worship service. All photographers/videographers shall meet with the pastor prior to the wedding.

Wedding day

The wedding party and their families may enter the church one hour prior to the wedding, unless other arrangements are made. Rooms are available for the bride and bride's maids, and groom and groom's men to dress and prepare for the wedding.

Handicapped parking/& accessibility

Entrance is located directly from the church parking lot into the sanctuary via wheelchair accessible ramp. Please let us know if there are any other special needs.

Candles

Candles lit (for special illumination) must be drip-less. Drip-less candles may be purchased, at cost, from the church. Please mention the use of candles to the pastor during the first counseling session.

Rehearsal

The rehearsal for the wedding must be planned and scheduled in advance with the pastor. Scheduling is discussed during the first counseling session.

Scripture selections

If you have any Bible passages that are special to you; please bring them to the pastor's attention. These passages are helpful in planning your wedding and can be discussed further during a counseling session.

Wedding Service

A sample wedding worship service is available from the pastor and can be discussed during counseling sessions.

Social Room

The social room is available for the rehearsal dinner and the reception. No alcoholic beverages permitted.

Fees for the wedding

The church provides its facilities, staff, etc. to assist with preparing and conducting the worship service for a Christian Marriage.

A \$100.00 *non-refundable* deposit will be required to reserve the dates for the wedding and rehearsal. This \$100.00 deposit will be credited to the building use fee.

	Members	Non-Members
Building use	\$150.00	\$300.00
Pastor ¹	Honorarium (gift)	\$350.00
Director of Music ²	\$150.00	\$250.00
Sexton ³	\$200.00	\$200.00
Total	\$500.00	\$1,100.00
Use of Fellowship Hall		
For Rehearsal dinner	\$50.00	\$100.00
For Reception	\$100.00	\$200.00

All wedding fees must be paid in full one week prior to the wedding.

A check for the building use, fellowship hall and & sexton made to First Presbyterian Church (FPC)

A check for the pastor made to _____

A check for the director of music made to _____

¹ **Pastor:** Includes three pre-marriage counseling sessions, rehearsal, wedding service and worship service

² **Director of Music:** Includes meeting with the couple, attending the rehearsal and playing for the worship service. **If additional time is needed to rehearse with a soloist or other musician(s), additional fees may apply**

³ **Sexton:** Includes attending the rehearsal (clean up afterwards), opening the church for the bridal party, florist, photographer(s), etc. Preparing the sanctuary for the worship service, cleaning the church sanctuary and other spaces that are used in conjunction with the wedding service and worship service. Two hours for rehearsal, eight hours for wedding: ten hours total. **Each additional hour is \$20.00 per hour**

**We would like to invite you to join us on a Sunday morning to experience our
worship service.**

First Presbyterian Church
301 Jackson Street
Fairmont, West Virginia 26554

Telephone: 304.366.2628
Email: office@fairmontfirst.net

Appointments with the pastor may be arranged by phone or email.

This manual was adopted in August 2013