

St. Luke's Presbyterian Church  
8915 Timberside Drive  
Houston, Texas 77025  
713-667-6531

## Wedding Policy

A Christian wedding is a service of worship in which a man and a woman are joined in holy marriage, which is instituted by God, regulated by God's Commandments, blessed by our Lord Jesus Christ, and to be held in honor among all people. It is the desire of the Pastor and Session of St. Luke's Presbyterian Church to assist you in making your wedding a worship experience that will be meaningful and will live always in your memory.

To this end, St. Luke's Presbyterian Church is happy to offer its services and facilities to members of St. Luke's and to non-members in accordance with this policy and subject to the approval of the Session and the Minister.

### **Arrangements**

As soon as your wedding plans begin to take shape, you should contact the Church Office and the Minister to set the date and time for your wedding. You will need to submit the reservation form to the Church Office to reserve the church facilities and prevent scheduling conflicts. You will also need to talk to the Minister about counseling appointments, the wedding rehearsal and the wedding service.

The Minister of St. Luke's Presbyterian Church will ordinarily officiate at all wedding ceremonies in the church. A couple may request another Presbyterian minister (or a minister of another denomination) to assist in their wedding. Participation of other ministers in weddings at St. Luke's must be at the invitation of the Minister with the concurrence of the Session. Plans for other ministers to assist in a wedding should be made well in advance in order for a proper invitation to be extended.

Before the Minister can perform a marriage service, premarital conferences with the couple are necessary. Should there be any question regarding the appropriateness of a marriage, the ministers bears the responsibility for a final decision. The minister may consult with the Session.

The couple must secure the marriage license not less than three (3) days but not more than thirty (30) days prior to the wedding. The license must be given to the Minister at the rehearsal. The Minister will sign and return the license to the court, and the court will record it and return it directly to the couple.

The wedding rehearsal takes place on the night before the wedding and takes about one hour. Please insist that all persons in your wedding party be on time. Since the Minister is responsible for the conduct of all worship in a Presbyterian Church, she or he shall be responsible for the direction of the wedding rehearsal. The organist does not attend the wedding rehearsal.

## **Music**

In accordance with the customs of this church, the organist shall play for all weddings in the church. Other organists may be used only by invitation of the church organist.

The music for the wedding should be appropriate for a service or worship of God. The themes of wedding music include praise of God, thanksgiving, rejoicing in God, and prayer for the continued blessing of God's presence and guidance.

When an opening hymn, anthem or solo is sung, the words should help place the wedding in the worship context. The soloist may be the personal choice of the couple. In the event a soloist is needed, the organist maintains a file of persons who are qualified. The soloist will need to arrange a time to meet with the organist to rehearse.

The organist has many selections from which to choose music for the wedding. An appointment with the organist in order to make selections should be arranged well ahead of the time set for the rehearsal and wedding. The Minister and Organist have final approval of which music is acceptable. Pre-recorded music is not permitted.

## **Wedding Coordinator**

The Church Wedding Coordinator(s) is the official representative of the church who assists the bride and groom in having a smooth and carefully planned wedding. It is necessary for the coordinator to meet with the bride and mother, or the persons responsible for the wedding, to discuss the policies outlined here. The Wedding Coordinator(s) should be contacted directly.

## **Rules and Regulations**

Floral decorations should be in good taste and should enhance the appearance of the church as a place of worship. No nails, screws, staples, thumbtacks, or tape may be used on any surface or furniture under any circumstances. Only dripless candles may be used. No pews or regular church furniture may be moved, with the exception of the communion table and baptismal font. These may be moved only by qualified personnel and only after discussion with the wedding coordinator and/or pastor. Furthermore, furniture is not to be used for standing upon by persons or equipment.

Nothing may be thrown, i.e. confetti, rice, bird seed, etc.

The Wedding Coordinator and/or Pastor will have final authority on all matters pertaining to the logistics of the actual Wedding Service.

## **Photography**

Photographs are an important aspect of preserving this momentous event in your life. However, since the wedding is a worship service, no flash pictures are permitted during the service. (The Photographer must meet with the Pastor prior to wedding rehearsal. Photos by others in attendance are not allowed.) A flash may be used at the back of the sanctuary as the bride enters and when the couple leaves. Non-flash pictures may be taken from the balcony during the service. Videotaping may be done from the balcony during the service if it is done without any special lighting. All videography/photography in the balcony must not interfere with the musical participants. Please discuss use of the balcony/loft with the director of music prior to the wedding. All flash pictures in the Sanctuary must be taken before or after the service.

## **Smoking**

No smoking is allowed in any area of the church.

## **Rooms for Dressing**

The bride and her attendants will use the Session Room and adjoining bathroom (immediately to the rear of the Sanctuary). The groom and his attendants may use space on the second floor along with the bathroom on that floor.

## **Expenses and Fees (Non-Members)**

The wedding fee covers staff and facilities charges. The facility is available for a total of four hours, including the wedding service itself. After four hours, an additional \$200 per hour is charged. A Minister, Organist, Wedding Coordinator, and Custodian are assigned to each wedding service. They are committed to assist in every way possible to make the wedding a worshipful and meaningful experience. The Wedding Coordinator will be at the church thirty minutes before the rehearsal and at least one hour before the wedding.

The wedding fee is \$1,300. The fees for the Wedding Coordinator and Custodian, for a total of \$400 payable to St. Luke's Presbyterian Church, is due at the time the reservation of the church is confirmed. The \$300 fee for the Minister and the \$200 fee for the Organist are due 30 days prior to the event and post dated for the day of the event. The checks should be made payable directly to Minister and Organist. Checks for both the Minister and Organist must be given to the Wedding Coordinator for holding 30 days prior to the wedding. Additional charges may be assessed to cover extraordinary expenses, including damage. The Wedding Coordinator will determine whether such charges are required after she has inspected the facilities for damage and has defined any extraordinary services performed by the church staff. A \$250 refundable deposit is required one week before the event and will be returned within seven days of the event, providing no damages occurred as determined by the Wedding Coordinator.

The above fees are based on the following:

Building	\$400
Wedding Coordinator	\$250
Custodian	\$150
Organist	\$200
Minister	\$300
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	\$1,300
Refundable Deposit	(\$250)

Below are names and telephone numbers, which may be helpful:

Reverend Scott Harbison, Pastor	713-667-6531
Marvin Gaspard, Organist	713-667.6531
Wedding Coordinator	
Jayne Manry	713-667.6531

The Session of St. Luke's desires to help make your wedding as beautiful and meaningful as possible, and one that will be cherished across the years. If there are questions or any other help we can offer, please let us know. The Session will consider hardship cost reductions on a case by case basis. Hardship cases must be brought to the Session for approval.

May God's richest blessings be with you and the Christian home you are establishing.