



WINDERMERE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
104 Windemere Road
Wilmington, North Carolina 28405

WEDDING PREPARATIONS: GUIDELINES, POLICIES, ARRANGEMENTS

OPENING STATEMENT

“Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family.” (*Book of Order, w-4.9001*); and “Christian marriage should be celebrated in the place where the community gathers to worship.” (*Book of Order, w-4.9003*).

The sanctuary of Windermere Presbyterian Church is available for wedding ceremonies to members and friends of the church. All such ceremonies are upon the approval of the church session.

The following is offered for the guidance of those contemplating marriage in this sanctuary and should be shared with any florist, caterer, photographer, and other participants.

Copies of these guidelines are available in the church office.

DATE AND TIME

Before announcing your wedding date, please contact the church office (910-791-5966) to make sure that the sanctuary, minister, church organist, church coordinator and fellowship hall, etc. are available on the dates you wish.

Rehearsal should be limited to one hour, so those involved should be encouraged to be on time to begin.

Members of the wedding party are welcome to dress at the church, but prior arrangement should be made with the minister and/or church coordinator. Windermere Presbyterian Church cannot be responsible for any articles left in the dressing area.

MINISTER

The minister of Windermere Presbyterian Church will ordinarily be the officiating minister at all weddings in the church. If you desire to have the minister of another church officiate in the ceremony, please discuss this with the minister of Windermere Presbyterian Church who then will issue an invitation with Session’s approval.

You should make an appointment with the minister for pre-marital conferences. Details of the wedding ceremonies will be included in these conferences. Since the wedding is a worship service, the officiating minister, under the guidance of the Session, will be responsible for the order, content, and direction of the wedding ceremony. Any wedding director which you might engage should receive a copy of these guidelines and function under the direction of the officiating minister.

MUSIC

“Music suitable for the marriage service directs attention to God and expresses the faith of the church.” (*Book of Order w-4.9005*). The major role of music in the wedding service is to emphasize the dignity of God and to glorify His name. All music should be planned with the minister and/or director of music/organist at least six weeks prior to wedding date. The minister and/or director of music/organist will assist in selecting music of an appropriate nature which focuses on God and emphasizes the faith of the Christian community rather than romantic love or sentimentality. The organist at Windermere Presbyterian Church will ordinarily play for all weddings in our sanctuary. Should you desire another organist/pianist to play, arrangements must be made through the minister and/or director of music/organist and with the permission of the session. This requirement is due to the fact that the church organ and piano are expensive instruments that only those who are trained can play properly and safely.

CHURCH WEDDING COORDINATOR – The wedding couple should contact the coordinator as early as possible and set the dates and times for rehearsal, wedding, and any deliveries such as flowers, caterers, etc. The coordinator will be present at all of these times and will be the final word regarding the security deposit. The coordinator can advise what, if any, of the sanctuary furnishings may be moved for the ceremony. If the couple does not have their own wedding director, the coordinator may act as a director if needed.

DECORATIONS – The Book of Order (w-49005) states that “flowers, decorations, and 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.” Our sanctuary is a special setting filled not only with special symbols of our faith but is also a place which has been furnished and set apart for the worship of God. Please check with the minister of the church or the church coordinator before making any plans to move or use any of the furnishings or symbols in the sanctuary. Simplicity of decorations is suggested. There should be an understanding with the florist as to the delivery and removal of all decorations. If families wish to leave any wedding flowers for use in the worship service on the Sunday following the wedding, arrangements should be made through the church office no later than two weeks prior to the wedding. An acknowledgment may be placed in the Sunday bulletin. Your florist is responsible for the removal of all decorations and debris immediately after the service. The sanctuary must be left in proper order for our regular worship services.

Only dripless candles may be used in the sanctuary. Those responsible for placement of candles must provide suitable protective covering for the floors, carpet and furnishings. Because of fire hazard, uncovered lighted candles may not be used in the aisles, windows or any other area through which the public is to pass.

No wires, tacks, nails, staples, Scotch or masking tape or other fasteners may be used to attach decorations to sanctuary walls, woodwork, furniture or floors.

It is required that all potted plants, fern, palms, etc. have protective containers under them to prevent water stains.

An aisle cloth (runner) must be used to protect flooring and carpet from stains if real flower petals are strewn. If you plan to use silk petals or flowers the aisle cloth is not required.

No rice may be thrown on the church premises. It is extremely hazardous to those walking on it and harmful to birds. Bird seed and “bubbles” may be used outside the church building.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Flash photography may not be made during the processional, the service, or recessional. Just as it would seem irreverent for a Sunday worship service to be interrupted by a photographer snapping and flashing pictures, so it is also true with the Christian Wedding. This would be distracting for you, the wedding party and the congregation. It is the responsibility of the ushers to see that no flash photos are made by wedding guests during this time. However, time exposures or non-flash photos by the professional photographer are permitted during the ceremony in an unobtrusive manner from a stationary position.

The wedding may be videotaped following these guidelines: Only qualified persons requested by the family and approved by the minister and worship committee may operate video equipment in the sanctuary. Only two video cameras may be set up in the sanctuary for the service. They must be stationary and must not distract from the wedding service. The operators should be dressed appropriately for a wedding and should not make gestures or audible noises during the service. All equipment should be in place and all testing completed at least one hour before the ceremony.

MISCELLANEOUS

- Smoking is not permitted in the church building, courtyard because of potential damage to the building and furnishings and in consideration of those who are allergic to smoking.
- Alcoholic beverages or other substances may not be used on the church property.
- Make sure your caterer, photographer, and florist know the location of the church and are in agreement on the time they will be there.
- Make sure all members of the wedding party attend the rehearsal, know the location of the church, and arrive on time.
- The groom and the ushers should be at the church one hour before the ceremony.
- Parents and grandparents should arrive at least thirty minutes before the time of the wedding.
- Designate someone to be responsible for removing all items left in the dressing rooms, since the church cannot accept any liability.
- Appoint groomsmen to light candles twenty minutes before the ceremony, and extinguish them following the ceremony.
- If the couple want a bulletin or program for the wedding, they are responsible for providing it.
- Make sure arrangements are made to remove all decorations, debris, etc. from the building.