



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR WEDDINGS AT PPC

Congratulations! As your pastors we want to thank you for considering Patterson Park Church as the location for your wedding ceremony. We look forward to shepherding you both as you prepare to be united in marriage.

This packet of information includes: PPC's marriage convictions, wedding-day guidelines and fees, and an application.

Please feel free to call the church office and ask to speak with a pastor if you have any questions in regard to our biblical convictions on marriage or premarital counseling. All other questions should be directed to our wedding coordinator, Christi Snauffer, at christisnauffer@yahoo.com who will assist you with all church-related preparations, resources, fees and guidelines pertaining to your wedding rehearsal, ceremony and reception.

Your servant brothers,
The Pastors & Elders of Patterson Park Church

FIRST STEP CHECK LIST

(Steps to be completed in sequence)

- Complete the Wedding Application, located at pattersonpark.org/wedding-application.
- Read over the PPC Wedding Policy.
- Schedule an appointment with a PPC Pastor to go over the application.
- The pastor will have the PPC Wedding Coordinator reach out to schedule a time to meet with you. She will schedule the date of wedding, as well as explain the list of responsibilities, resources available to you, and answer any questions.

PPC'S MARRIAGE CONVICTIONS

WHAT IS MARRIAGE?

A marriage is the one flesh union of one man and one woman in a lifelong covenant before God and their church. A wedding is a ceremony that signifies the moment in time when God unites this couple. God defines and creates a marriage. God conditions marriage as being between one man and one woman for life. Only God can bring two people together in marriage and thus only God can separate them at death.

God designed the unity of a one flesh union in marriage to provide for human flourishing and to speak about the greater reality of the unity of Christ and His bride, the church.

WHY HAVE A WEDDING?

If marriage is primarily something that God does in joining two people together, then why do we make a public covenant before the church? Because the church is tasked with declaring to the world what God is doing in the world. Two of the church's primary responsibilities are to preach the gospel and to disciple Christ's sheep, and a wedding is an opportunity to do both.

1. Churches use weddings as an opportunity to preach the gospel because marriage is not an ultimate end in life. The unifying of a man and a woman in a one flesh relationship at a wedding is not as important as what it pictures: the unity of Jesus with the church.
2. A wedding is also an opportunity for discipleship because the church family witnesses the wedding and holds the couple accountable to their vows. So, a wedding is not simply something that a church does, it is also for the edification of the church too. Weddings are not only by the church, but they are also for the church.

WHO CAN BE MARRIED?

Patterson Park Church and its pastors will only officiate, and permit facility use for the weddings of couples who agree with the church's stated purposes for a wedding: a wedding is a function of the church designed to preach the gospel and disciple believers. Since wedding ceremonies are so closely tied to the function of discipleship within the church, two groups of people are distinguished in relationship to church membership: couples where one or both are members of the church; couples where one or both are in the immediate family of a member of the church.

MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH

If only one person in the couple is a member of the church, part of the pre-marital counseling will focus on which church the couple will ultimately join. That choice will not affect whether the wedding will be performed.

WHO CAN OFFICIATE A WEDDING?

Patterson Park Church retains the right to oversee every element of the wedding ceremony including the assigning of a designated wedding coordinator. A PPC staff pastor shall act as the "church host" for the wedding. His duties will include welcoming the wedding party at the rehearsal and being involved in some way in the ceremony. He must agree to the details of the wedding provided by the couple and the wedding coordinator. The following criteria must be met for the elders at Patterson Park to approve of anyone who is not already a pastor of this church to officiate at a wedding held here:

1. A Patterson Park Church staff pastor must meet with the officiating pastor to coordinate the content and focus of the wedding.
2. Officiating pastors must agree with Patterson Park's stated definition of marriage and purpose for a wedding.



3. Officiating pastors must be in good standing with a church that is of similar doctrinal convictions to Patterson Park and is also approved by that church to officiate weddings.

PRE-MARITAL COUNSELING

The couple must attend multiple sessions of pre-marital counseling as a prerequisite to the wedding and as a final determiner of whether Patterson Park will allow the wedding to be held here. Please contact the pastor who is performing your ceremony to schedule your counseling sessions. Requests to meet this requirement with counseling outside the church pastoral staff must be approved by the officiating or coordinating pastor.

DIVORCE

Divorce is a departure from the purposes of God. While in the Old Testament divorce was allowed and was apparently easily secured, this, like polygamy, was contrary to God's highest intentions. Jesus explained that provisions for divorce in the Old Testament were an accommodation to "the hardness" of people's hearts and a necessary evil (Matt. 19:8). The prophet Malachi declared, *For I hate divorce, says the LORD the God of Israel* (2:16, NASB). Jesus said, *What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.* (Matt. 19:6 (ESV); (see also Mark 10:6-9). The church, therefore, should seek always to discourage divorce as a solution to marital problems. The Bible teaches that even when a Christian is married to a nonbeliever, the Christian should continue in marriage with his or her unbelieving spouse if at all possible (1 Cor. 7:12-13).

While divorce is always contrary to God's intentions, there may be certain circumstances when it is permitted or happens regardless of efforts to prevent it. The pastors will counsel couples where these situations exist.

REMARRIAGE

Scripture permits the remarriage of people who have been divorced under certain circumstances. If, after being divorced, one of the original marriage partners dies, the remaining partner is free to remarry. Romans 7:2 and 1 Cor. 7:39 make clear that death dissolves the marriage relationship.

When an adulterous relationship has brought about a divorce, the party who is not guilty of adultery has a right to remarry. The words of Jesus ... *whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality ...* (Matt 19:9 ESV) imply the right of remarriage.

Remarriage is never commanded in Scripture; it is in some cases only permitted. Divorced people who have scriptural grounds for remarriage should enter such remarriage only with the greatest caution. Seldom is there a marriage failure for any cause in which one of the partners is "completely innocent." The applicant for remarriage should demonstrate an attitude of repentance for any part he or she may have had in the original failure.

PATTERSON PARK WEDDING GUIDELINES

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR FACILITY USE

- PPC does not schedule weddings on or around major holiday weekends.
- Pre-existing PPC ministries will take precedence.
- Use or consumption of illegal or controlled substances or alcoholic beverages is prohibited on church property.
- Use of tobacco products is not permitted inside the buildings or near the doors.
- No rice, candy rice, seeds, or fresh flower petals may be thrown inside the building – fresh or dried flower petals, sparklers and bubbles may be used outside only.
- See **Event Use Guidelines** for expanded list and receive more details from **PPC Wedding Coordinator** for guidelines pertaining specifically to Weddings/Receptions.

SUGGESTED DONATIONS

- Patterson Park Church believes that a wedding celebration is ultimately a celebration of what God has done and looks ahead to what He will do when Jesus returns. With this belief in mind, PPC does not charge members a facility fee to host their wedding celebrations at Patterson Park. If you would like to give a donation to help offset the cost of your wedding, PPC suggests a donation of \$250. To make your day run as smoothly as possible, in addition to the facility, Patterson Park provides the following support personnel and services:
 - o PPC Wedding Coordinator & Assistant, Facilities Support, Maintenance, and Reception & Kitchen Coordinator if applicable.

OUTDOOR WEDDINGS AND RECEPTIONS

- The Patterson Park Church lawn is available for outdoor ceremonies, but the couple is responsible for obtaining a tent, chairs, tables, dishes, cutlery, table linens, etc. The couple is also responsible for procuring all of their own technical equipment and support for outdoor events.
- An “inclement weather” plan must be in place and communicated with the PPC Event Coordinator and the couple must decide the **day before the wedding** whether to have an indoor or outdoor event. If planning a reception at PPC, a back-up reception set-up plan must be submitted and approved for use of the FLC.

PROPERTY OR EQUIPMENT DAMAGE

- The couple will be responsible for the replacement or repair of damage done to church property or equipment during the course of the rehearsal, wedding and/or reception.



IN SUMMARY

We thank you again for considering Patterson Park Church as the place to begin this exciting new phase of your life together. We pray that your marriage will bring glory to God and happiness and fulfillment to you. If God blesses you with the responsibility and joy of raising children, we pray that you will teach them God's Word and that they will grow up putting Him first in everything. We pray that your home will be a place of Christ-centered hospitality and service to those in your community.

Once again, we (your pastors) are available to answer any questions you might have in regard to our biblical convictions on marriage or premarital counseling. All other questions should be directed to our Wedding Coordinator, Christi Snauffer, christisnauffer@yahoo.com who will assist you with all church related preparations, resources, fees and guidelines pertaining to your wedding rehearsal, ceremony and reception.

Grace and Peace in the Name of Our Savior, Jesus Christ,

Your Pastors & Elders