



Wedding Policy

A. Introduction

A service of Christian marriage is more than a social convention. It is an ordinance of the Church and a witness to the world of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The session of Penfield Presbyterian Church has adopted this policy in order:

- ✦ to enable couples married at Penfield Presbyterian Church to understand the nature of their Christian commitment;
- ✦ to insure that the facilities of the church are used in keeping with the Directory for Worship of the Book of Order;
- ✦ to bear a faithful witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

B. Who may be considered for marriage at Penfield Presbyterian Church?

Because marriage is an act of Christian discipleship, both persons seeking marriage should be professing Christians. At a minimum, at least one of the participants must be a professing Christian. Because marriage takes place within the life and work of a Christian community, couples should ordinarily be active members of Penfield Presbyterian Church, Penfield, New York.

Exception: Non-members and former members of Penfield Presbyterian Church who wish to be married in the sanctuary must apply to the pastor, who may exercise discretion in deciding who may enter the discernment process.

C. Discernment Process

The discernment process may begin as early as one year, but no later than four months, prior to a proposed marriage date.

- ✦ Those wishing to begin the process of discernment must first complete an application. When the application papers are returned to the church office a *tentative* date for the wedding may be placed on the church calendar.
- ✦ The couple meets with the pastor of Penfield Presbyterian Church.
- ✦ The pastor may refer the couple to a counselor to help the couple prepare for marriage, or the pastor may conduct the counseling. If the pastor does not conduct the counseling, the couple must give permission for the counselor to provide a report to the pastor.
- ✦ The couple meets again with the pastor. If the pastor is convinced of the couple's commitment, responsibility, maturity, and Christian



understanding, she/he may approve the marriage. If the pastor deems the marriage unwise she/he shall assure the couple of the Church's continuing concern for them and not conduct the ceremony. (Book of Order W-4.9002b).

✦ If the pastor approves the marriage, the wedding date is confirmed on the church calendar.

D. The Marriage: A Service of Worship

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. With the approval of the session, the Lord's Supper may be celebrated during the marriage service, and the invitation to the Table will be given to all baptized Christians. With the approval of the session, the marriage service may also take place during the Service for the Lord's Day.

The service begins with scriptural sentences and a brief statement of purpose. The two persons 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 minister shall declare publicly that the couple 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. -- Book of Order W-4.9004

E. Ministerial Leadership

Ordinarily the pastor of Penfield Presbyterian Church will have the privilege of conducting weddings in its sanctuary. The invitation for another minister to take part in the service must come from the pastor of Penfield Presbyterian Church. Couples should not invite other clergy to take part in the service before consulting the pastor.

F. Order of Service

The pastor will work with the couple to determine the order of service. All parts of the ceremony should be appropriate to Christian worship and acceptable offerings to God.

G. Music

Any music that accompanies the service should direct attention to God, who sanctifies marriage, and special care should be taken to assure that it is suitable and reverent. The singing of hymns by the congregation is encouraged. Music appropriate for worship is required. The pastor, in consultation with the organist/church musician of Penfield Presbyterian Church must approve all music.

H. Musicians

Like the pastor, the organist of Penfield Presbyterian Church has the privilege and responsibility of leading worship at weddings, and shall ordinarily play for all weddings. Another organist or other



musicians may be invited to take part in weddings at the discretion of the organist of Penfield Presbyterian Church.

Instrumentalists and vocal soloists shall be under the direction of the organist of Penfield Presbyterian Church.

I. Symbols and Decorations

The baptismal font, Communion Table, Bible, and pulpit are symbols of the faith. They may not be moved from the plain view of the congregation or obscured by flowers, candles, or other decorations. The pastor must approve the placement of flowers, candles, or other decorations.

Decoration of the sanctuary will be at the expense of the wedding party. In keeping with the simplicity of this place of worship and to avoid conspicuous displays, decorations should not be elaborate. The following stipulations apply:

Tacks and nails may not be driven into church furnishings or property, and tape must be of the kind that will not leave a sticky residue.

Dripless candles must be used and care should be taken that candles not be allowed to drip on the furniture or carpet.

Flowers used for weddings must be removed immediately following the service. Couples who wish to provide flowers for Sunday worship should contact the Church Office Administrator.

Because of the serious safety hazard they pose, no rice or bird seed may be thrown in or around the buildings. Use of alternate symbolism must be checked out with the pastor.

Wedding parties will be responsible for the orderliness of the church property for the next service. This is especially important for weddings held on Saturdays. All properties of florists, caterers, or other persons employed to assist with the wedding must be removed immediately after the wedding.

J. Photographs and Video Recording

Flash photos may be taken in the sanctuary before or after the service by arrangement with the pastor. Photographs may be taken as members of the wedding party enter the sanctuary. **Photographers may only enter the main floor of the sanctuary during the service as specified by the pastor.** Permission from the pastor is required to use electronic equipment such as video or tape recorders. The use of this equipment must not distract from the service of worship. It is the couple's responsibility to make this policy known to their friends and the photographer.



K. Rehearsals

If a rehearsal is held, the pastor shall be the director. "Wedding consultants" or other persons playing a supportive role shall be under the direction of the pastor.

M. Intoxicants

No one, including the couple, under the influence of alcohol or any other intoxicant shall be allowed to take part in the rehearsal or the marriage service. The minister has the prerogative of canceling both rehearsal and wedding if this restriction is not observed.

N. Use of the Courtyard, Crossroads Lounge or Multi-purpose Rooms for a Reception

If available, one or more of these areas and the kitchen may be used for receptions. This includes the use of punch bowls, dishes, etc. It is recommended that a caterer be hired as the church is not able to provide these services.

With the exception of a champagne toast (*with prior approval of the Session*) no alcoholic beverages may be served on church property.

O. Dressing Rooms

Ordinarily, the wedding party uses the Music Room for dressing.

P. Scheduling

Weddings shall not be scheduled during Holy Week. All other dates need to harmonize with the Church's calendar.

Q. Security

Overnight storage on church premises of any property, including food and serving dishes, is discouraged. Penfield Presbyterian Church is not responsible for lost, damaged, or stolen property.

R. Fees and Honoraria

- ✦ The conducting of weddings for church members is an expression of the pastor's ministry to the congregation. A suggested honorarium from *non*-members is \$250.00. This is not a fee for services, and no couple shall be denied the services of the pastor because of inability to give an honorarium.
- ✦ The organist is a professional musician who shall participate in the wedding and rehearsal. He/she shall be paid a fee of \$225.
- ✦ The fee for the use of the sanctuary for non-members is \$250.00
- ✦ The fee for the use of the additional rooms (the Crossroads Lounge, Multi-purpose room, kitchen, or courtyard) for non-members is \$200.00. This is in addition to the custodian fee.



- + There is no fee to members for the use of the sanctuary or other church facilities.
- + The fee to members and non-members for custodial services is \$60.00.
- + The sanctuary, custodial, and facility use shall be paid to the church office *at least one week prior to the marriage service*.
- + Payment to the organist shall be made separately to the organist.
- + In some circumstances there will be a fee for the pre-marital counseling sessions required in the discernment process. Those fees shall be paid directly to the counselor.



SUMMARY OF FEES AND HONORARIA

SERVICE	MEMBERS	NON-MEMBERS
Pastor of Penfield Presbyterian	<i>at your discretion</i>	\$250.00
Organist	\$225	\$225
Custodian	\$60	\$60
 Sanctuary	 None	 \$250.00
Crossroads Lounge, Multi- purpose Room and/or Courtyard / Kitchen	None	200.00
Counseling Fees	arranged with counselor	arranged with counselor
Office Administration	None	\$60

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