

## **WEDDING POLICY**

### **ST. PETER'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

Congratulations! We are thrilled to be a part of this joyous time. The wedding ceremony you are planning at St. Peter's is a Christian celebration of love, commitment and thanksgiving. This is a joyous occasion for the wedding party and it is also a sacred worship service of the Christian faith. We will work closely with you as you plan and prepare for your wedding day.

Our procedures are straightforward. As you work through this document, you will find answers to many of your questions. So let's get started.

#### **CRITICAL ACTIONS**

Meet with St. Peter's minister, Rev. Arlen Vernava 440.988.4965 or [pastor@StPetersAmherst.org](mailto:pastor@StPetersAmherst.org)

Establish a Timeframe (Wedding Date.)

Contact Church Secretary to reserve your rehearsal and wedding dates. 440.988.4965

Submit \$100.00 deposit that secures your event and allows date to be posted to church calendar.

Complete St. Peter's Wedding Information Sheet.

Attend Marriage Preparation Counseling with Pastor Arlen. Contact Pastor Arlen to set dates.

Execute your plan.

Enjoy a stress-free rehearsal and Wedding day!

#### **MEET WITH ST. PETER'S MINISTER**

St. Peter's minister is responsible for conducting worship services and shall customarily be the officiating minister at all weddings held in our church. Additional ministers, including family members, may play an assisting role in consultation with the officiating minister. No wedding will be officially scheduled until the minister has spoken with the couple, confirmed availability, and agreed to officiate at the service.

#### **SETTING THE DATE**

After meeting with St. Peter's minister, and before extensive plans have been made, contact the church secretary to reserve the rehearsal and wedding dates and, if desired, use of the church fellowship hall. Any wedding date is tentative until the pastor and wedding coordinator have confirmed their availability. Preferably, this should be done at least 4 months before the wedding.

It is wise to have an alternate date in mind in case the church is already booked or the minister and/or wedding coordinator are not available.

Someone representing the church must be present at all rehearsals and weddings.

#### **WEDDING COORDINATOR**

The wedding coordinator will help you plan your wedding and will be at the rehearsal and wedding. The wedding coordinator will contact the couple prior to the pastor in order to handle initial details, provide the couple with a wedding packet, and begin the information collection process. The coordinator opens the building based on agreed upon times, assists in making sure that the principles of the wedding party are in their proper places at the proper times, and helps with general advice and plans that are specific to St. Peter's.

#### **PREPARATION FOR MARRIAGE**

Preparation for marriage is absolutely essential. Time should be given to plan for and to discuss what is important to you in your marriage. The minister will require several sessions with you in premarital/post marital counseling. Several topics will be discussed: communication skills, relationship skills, affection and sex, financial goals, expectations of each other, family backgrounds, children and faith issues. The minister will also discuss with you the Christian marriage service and its meaning. He will assist you in selecting some options to use in that service. It is recommended that pre-marital counseling begin at least three months before your wedding day.

### **WEDDING REHEARSAL**

Typically the rehearsal is held the evening before the wedding date. Promptness is important. All members of the wedding party should be present at the times agreed upon. Depending on the size of the wedding party and the complexity of the service, anticipate a rehearsal time of sixty to ninety minutes.

### **MUSIC**

The wedding service is a worship service. The music chosen, therefore, must be appropriate for a worship setting. The music will be evaluated by the minister and musician(s) on this basis; and their decision on its appropriateness will be final. The primary accompanist of the church is the staff organist/pianist. Once a date has been finalized the couple can meet with the staff-organist to determine music. The church does have the capability of using digital music. You will need to provide a person to operate the system.

### **WEDDING BULLETIN**

St. Peter's does not provide wedding bulletins. In the packet is a sample order of service that a couple may use as a template for a bulletin. But the design and copying of the bulletin is the responsibility of the couple. Please check the order of the service with the minister before printing a bulletin.

### **FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS**

Decorations are the responsibility of the florist and/or wedding party. While the sanctuary may be set up before the wedding rehearsal, they are not ordinarily put into place until the day of the wedding unless they are artificial in nature. It is important for the couple to arrange all set up with the wedding coordinator.

The sacred articles on the altar and elsewhere in the sanctuary are not to be moved without the permission of the wedding coordinator who will often check first with the pastor or altar guild. Decorations may not be secured with tape, staples, tacks or nails. Floral hangers and floral tape are acceptable. Decorations should be removed as soon as possible after the wedding service so the custodian will have the opportunity to restore the sanctuary for the next worship service.

The church has a kneeling bench and candelabras available for use in weddings. There must be no items of any kind thrown inside the church, nor any items (ex. helium balloons, doves) released inside of the sanctuary or used as decorations. Please refrain from using glitter in any format on decorations or as make up. Artificial "rose petals" only may be used as part of the processional. All decorations must be approved by the wedding coordinator.

### **PHOTOGRAPHY**

In order to avoid distractions, flash photography is prohibited during the wedding service. Pictures of the bridesmaids and bride may be taken during the processional prior to the invocation as long as the pictures do not interfere with the processional's timing. Pictures of the bridal couple and wedding party may be taken during the recessional after the service has been completed. Videotaping from a fixed position may be done during the service. Please check the appropriateness of the location of photographic equipment with the wedding coordinator. The photographer should check with the wedding coordinator before the wedding service to make sure he/she understands these guidelines. Pastor Bev requests one picture with the bride and groom.

### **SOUND EQUIPMENT**

The sound system may only be operated by a person who is approved by the wedding coordinator.

### **UNITY CANDLES OR SAND TERRARIUMS**

Unity candles or sand terrariums are the responsibility of the wedding couple. They should be brought to the church in time for the rehearsal.

### **AISLE RUNNER**

The church central aisle is approximately 63 feet long. If an aisle runner is desired, the florist is responsible for acquiring and securing it to the carpeting. The aisle runner should end at the chancel area steps to avoid tripping when the wedding party moves into the chancel area. It is strongly encouraged that the bride tests any aisle runner fabric with her wedding shoes on to determine the durability of the runner.

### **SIZE OF CONGREGATION FOR SEATING**

The sanctuary main floor seats comfortably 230 people, with four handicap spots for those in wheelchairs and the balcony an additional 130. Be realistic in the number of people you invite, especially in the summer time, as we have no air conditioning.

### **RECEIVING LINE AND OUTDOOR CELEBRATION**

More and more couples are choosing to do a receiving line at the reception hall or to visit each table at the reception hall. There is room for the bride and the groom, and both sets of parents inside the narthex, with the rest of the wedding party located on the steps at the front of the church. No rice, birdseed, candy, confetti, or any other wedding favors can be released as the bride and groom exit. Balloons are not to be released. If desired, bubbles may be used with either individual portions or a bubble making machine.

### **CHANGING FACILITIES**

Traditionally, the Fireside Room is used by the groom and groomsmen and the Fellowship Hall/Choir Room is used by the bride and her honor court. The facilities are clean but very simple. We recommend the wedding party completes the bulk of their preparation before coming to the church. However, the wedding party may use our facilities for full preparation before their nuptials if desired.

### **CHURCH FACILITY HOURS**

The church facilities will be opened for the rehearsal 15 minutes before the scheduled time unless other arrangements have been made with the Wedding Coordinator. The church facilities will be opened for the wedding no more than 2 hours before the service, nor stay open more than 1 hour after the actual service unless otherwise planned for. Additional time may require an additional fee.

### **WEDDING LICENSE**

For the service to have legal standing a wedding license must be secured at the Lorain County Probate Court, no more than 60 days prior to the wedding. It is requested that the wedding license be at the church no later than 10 days before the wedding or given to the pastor at the last Premarital Counseling session.

### **FEES**

The following fees have been established by St. Peter's. Upon reservation of the church a \$100 deposit is required to hold the reservation. If the event is cancelled 90 days prior to the wedding, the deposit will be refunded. Otherwise the deposit will be applied to the balance due. The total balance is to be paid no later than 10 days prior to the event.

Sanctuary Weddings: \$575 (all-inclusive facility and staff fees)

Chapel Weddings: \$75 (facility only, staff fees dependent on size, scope of wedding)

Off Site Fees: Negotiated with Pastor

Please make check out as follows for church fees: *St. Peter's United Church of Christ*

Special Notes:

**ST. PETER'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
**582 Church Street Amherst, OH 44001 (440) 988-4965**

**WEDDING INFORMATION SHEET**

In order to prepare the church for the wedding, this contract **must** be completed.

Wedding Date \_\_\_\_\_ Wedding Time \_\_\_\_\_

Rehearsal Date \_\_\_\_\_ Rehearsal Time \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Wedding: Sanctuary \_\_\_\_\_ Chapel \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**Bride's Name** \_\_\_\_\_ Member \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

**Groom's Name** \_\_\_\_\_ Member \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Telephone Number of *local* contact (mother, person in bridal party)

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

New address after marriage, if known \_\_\_\_\_

**FEES**

**Sanctuary \$575 (includes building use and staff fees)**

**Chapel \$ 75 (Building use fee only. Additional fees will apply.)**

**A \$100 deposit is required to place your wedding on the church calendar. Mail or deliver the deposit to St. Peter's United Church of Christ, 582 Church Street, Amherst, OH 44001.**

Signed (Bride or Groom): \_\_\_\_\_ Form Received: \_\_\_\_\_

Deposit Received: Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Received by: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Payment(s): Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Received by: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Payment(s): Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Received by: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Payment(s): Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Received by: \_\_\_\_\_

## IMPORTANT DATES

Date	Action
_____	Establish a preferred and secondary wedding date
_____	Contact Pastor
_____	Complete and Submit Wedding Information Sheet
_____	Pay deposit Amount: _____ Received by: _____
_____	Schedule appointment with Wedding Coordinator
_____	Florist Contacts Wedding Coordinator
_____	Premarital Counseling Session One
_____	Premarital Counseling Session Two
_____	Premarital Counseling Session Three
_____	Meet with or call Wedding Coordinator to review progress (two-four weeks prior to wedding)
_____	Wedding License delivered to Pastor

### **ADDITIONAL WEDDING INFORMATION**

Marriage Service: Traditional \_\_\_\_\_ Custom Authored \_\_\_\_\_

Reception at \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Hall) (Address)

(Please notify the minister, wedding coordinator, and organist if you want to invite them to your reception.)

**General Questions** – Complete as many as possible before meeting with the wedding coordinator.

\_\_\_\_\_ Music selections. All music must be approved by Pastor.

\_\_\_\_\_ How many in the wedding party? \_\_\_\_\_ Groomsmen \_\_\_\_\_ Bridesmaids

\_\_\_\_\_ Name of Ring bearer?

\_\_\_\_\_ Name of Flower girl/boy.

\_\_\_\_\_ Who will light the candles?

\_\_\_\_\_ Who will be walking the bride down the aisle?

\_\_\_\_\_ Names of Soloists or Readers (of scripture).

\_\_\_\_\_ Will you have a double or single ring ceremony?

\_\_\_\_\_ Are you having a guestbook? Where will you put it?

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of guests expected to attend?

\_\_\_\_\_ What are the colors of your wedding?

\_\_\_\_\_ Would you like Communion at your wedding?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you want a Kneeler?

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you want candelabras?

\_\_\_\_\_ Are you providing a Wedding Program?

Names of Parents of Bride

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Names of Parents of Groom

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_