

Wedding Planning Guidelines

Suggested Order of Service – A Christian Wedding

- Ushers seat the guests (Prelude music playing)
- Special music begins *
- Special family members/VIPs enter
- Parents of the Bride and Groom are seated
- The Minister and Groom enter and proceed to the front
- The Bridal party enters and proceeds to the front
- Music concludes for the bridal party *
- Music begins for the Bride's entrance (Processional music) *
- Opening words/welcome
- Bride and Groom present flowers to parents and/or VIPs
- "Declarations Of Intent" by the Bride and Groom
- First reading *
- Special music (congregational hymn, musical interlude, or musical and vocal offering) *
- Exchange of wedding vows
- Blessing of the rings
- Exchange of wedding rings
- Minister's prayer of blessing for the Bride and Groom (Lord's Prayer)
- Bride and Groom kiss
- Introduction of the new couple by the Minister
- Recessional music begins *
- Bride and Groom exit
- Minister's instruction to the congregation

* Selections for these elements of the wedding should be decided two months before to the wedding date.

Rehearsal

Wedding rehearsals are normally scheduled on the Friday evening before the wedding day between 3:00 to 5:00 pm. All members of the wedding party and participants in the ceremony are expected to attend to ensure a smooth ceremony. The rehearsal does not include music.

Decorations

Decorations, including floral installations, can be beautiful, but keep in mind that you wish to preserve a worshipful atmosphere. Please refrain from overly elaborate decorations. A standard of elegant simplicity is encouraged and appreciated. Decorations are limited as follows:

- Second Presbyterian Church has a seven branch, brass standing candelabra. No other lighted candles may be used in the Sanctuary or Chapel, with the exception of

a unity candle. The Church's candles must be used, and are included in the candelabra fee. Because of the fire hazard and potential damage to the candelabra, no decorations of any kind are allowed.

- Aisle candles are prohibited because the narrow aisles prevent safe passage of the wedding procession and guests. Also, no one may hold or carry candles in the sanctuary, except for lighting a unity candle by the bride and groom as coordinated with the minister.
- Your florist may provide a unity candle and holder, if you wish to include lighting of one in your ceremony.
- Flowers
 - Floral arrangements may be placed on the windowsills of the Sanctuary and Chapel.
 - One low (not to exceed 12 inches in height) flower arrangement may be placed on the communion table. It must not obscure the cross. The candlesticks may not be moved from the Communion Table. The Communion Table is 7'6" long and 32" deep.
 - Floral arrangements may also be arranged in containers and placed on the shelf above the choir seating area or on pedestals on either side of the communion table.
 - Floral arrangements in moderately-sized containers may be used in the Narthex or hallway outside the Chapel. No other decorations may be used in these areas. Arrangements may be placed on the tables in the Narthex, but the tables may not be moved or replaced with temporary structures.
 - The florist must leave the Sanctuary, Chapel, and the rest of the facility and grounds he or she uses, "broom clean." The sexton on duty is there to open and secure the building, to attend to the lighting, to adjust the heating or air conditioning, and to set up the candelabra if they are to be used. The charge for the sexton's time does not include clean-up for the florist.
 - Please let your wedding coordinator know if you will be leaving the floral arrangements for the following day's regular church service at least four weeks before the date of the wedding. If you will be taking arrangements with you, chancel and all other decorations must be removed from the sanctuary following the ceremony.
 - Floral arrangements and/or bows may be used on the pews, but, to prevent damage, the bows must be attached with plastic clips. There are 25 rows of pews divided by a center aisle. Pew doors are 2 ¼" wide.
- Under no circumstances may tacks or nails be used to fasten any decorations in place.
- Aisle runners pose a safety hazard and may not be used.

- Petals, rice, birdseed and confetti are not permitted to be thrown in the building or on the church steps because they pose potential safety hazards and are difficult to clean up. Live animal such as birds or dogs are also not permitted either inside or outside the sanctuary.

Dressing Rooms

The Westcott Room, an elegant reception room, is typically used as a bride's room for the bridal party. A ladies room with a mirrored vanity area and love seat is across the hall. The library in the former manse is available for the groom. Both can easily accommodate most wedding parties. You may arrange for refreshments to be available in each room.

Programs

Our communications coordinator can put together a wedding program for your ceremony using a classically elegant format. (Special paper requests may require an additional charge). If you wish to have a different style program, we recommend that you hire a professional. We suggest you include wording to remind your guests to turn off their cell phones and not to take flash photos.

Photography and Videography

Documenting the marriage celebration is important, but the sight, sound, and movement of documenting it should not disturb the ceremony itself. The photography and videography policy applies to all in attendance, professionals and guests alike. It is the bridal couple's responsibility to make this policy known to their friends and the photographer.

Professional photography during the marriage service is discouraged. However, by prior arrangement and with the permission of the pastor limited photographs and/or video done in an unobtrusive manner may be permitted. The use and placement of this equipment must not distract from the service of worship. Photographers and videographers are not permitted to come down the aisle during the processional or during the ceremony. Flash photography is not permitted during the ceremony under any circumstances.

Catering

If you wish to provide catered refreshments, please work out the details with your wedding coordinator before signing the catering contract.

Second Presbyterian Church permits serving champagne and/or wine in the Westcott Room or Smith Hall, but not in the Sanctuary or chapel. These beverages should never be served before the wedding service.

Parking

Second Presbyterian does not have a parking lot, but street parking around the church and in the neighborhood is readily available. The one block of Stratford Road by the church does have limited 2-hour parking, but the other streets only have commute-time parking limits on week days.

Marriage License

Bring your marriage license to the church office one week before the wedding date. To be married at Second Presbyterian Church, your license must be obtained from Baltimore City:

Circuit Court of Baltimore City Room 628
Clarence M. Mitchell, Jr. Courthouse
100 North Calvert St.
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Phone: 410-333-3780

The office is open from 8:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. At least one of the individuals seeking the marriage license must appear in person. The fee is currently \$85 in cash.

Expected Conduct

Out of respect for this place of worship, Second Presbyterian requires that members of the wedding party, florists, photographers, videographers, their employees and all guests avoid using obscene language, acting in a discourteous manner, or smoking in any part of the church buildings. Offenders will be asked to leave the church grounds immediately.