

**Sterry Memorial Presbyterian Church
Policy Statement**

Wedding Policy

Reviewed & Approved by Session

November 19, 2019

STERRY MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (EVANGELICAL)

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Marriage in a church expresses a man and woman's desire to make Jesus Christ preeminent in their marriage ceremony, relationship and home. For those who accept (or who want to seriously consider) this understanding of a church wedding, the Sterry Memorial Presbyterian Church of Parma/Roswell is pleased to be available for your wedding and we will work with you to make your wedding a beautiful and memorable one. To help you with this we have established the following guidelines which adhere to the Tenets, Essentials and Position Papers of the EPC Denomination.

AN ACT OF WORSHIP: All weddings in the church are acts of worship before God and therefore should be approached with the same degree of reverence that one would give to any service of worship.

REQUEST:

Wedding requests start with the pastor (*not the church office*). *Nothing is placed on church calendar schedule until the Pastor has met with the man and woman and has given his/her permission to proceed.*

LEADERSHIP: The wedding is under the sole direction of the pastor of the church, and the pastor must approve all matters pertaining to the wedding. The ceremony must be performed by one of the SMPC pastors unless exception is made by the called pastor of SMPC and then only by agreement of the Session. (*The church leadership board*)

COUNSELING: In most situations a minimum of four hours of pre-marriage counseling is required. In these sessions, the pastor will help the man and woman explore the meaning of Christian marriage and the difficulties that commonly arise in the marriage relationship. The man and woman will do some reading and writing as part of the learning process. Preferably, the counseling sessions will be spread out over approximately a 10-week period.

SCHEDULING: A wedding should be scheduled well in advance of the desired date to allow time for the counseling and to secure the date on the church calendar, with final approval granted by Session (*The church leadership board*).

WEDDING COORDINATOR: The church has a **Wedding Coordinator* to help with all the arrangements for the wedding in the church. The Coordinator will further explain the church policies, acquaint the man and woman with the church facility, and assist the pastor in giving leadership during the rehearsal.

**Coordinator must be familiar with all rules and regulations of the EPC and is appointed/approved by the church pastor. (But is without authority to wave or change directions as set forth in this policy)*

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MUSIC: Since a wedding in the church is an act of worship before God, all music in the ceremony should direct attention to God and the purposes of Christian marriage. Secular music may hold special meaning for the couple; however, it might not be appropriate for a church ceremony. All music must be approved

in consultation with the pastor. Arrangements for soloists are made by the family; consulting with the organist/pianist is necessary.

FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS: The bride's family is responsible for the flowers and decorations for the wedding. The placement of flowers, candles and other decorations must be made in consultation with the Coordinator. Candelabras are available. Any furniture or other use of church property amenities may only be used by the discretion of the Coordinator.

REHEARSAL: All persons taking part in the ceremony should be present for the rehearsal. The rehearsal will take approximately one hour. The Bride (woman) and Groom (man) should urge the wedding party to be present and on time.

USHERS: The ushers should be on duty 45 minutes prior to the hour set for the ceremony.

RULES OF CONDUCT: No smoking is permitted anywhere in the buildings or on any of the church properties. No alcoholic beverages may be served on the church premises at any time. No one under the influence of alcohol may be present at the rehearsal, wedding, or reception. No confetti may be thrown. Birdseed may be thrown outside the building.

RECEPTIONS: In most situations, receptions at the church are by the oversight of the Wedding Coordinator. Music and dancing at the reception needs to be reviewed and approved by the Pastor. The Family/Bride and Groom are responsible to have adequate "staff" to serve at the reception as well as present in the kitchen. With the exception of ceremonial task such as serving at the cake table, this should not be close family members who should be honored guests. No alcoholic beverages may be served on the church premises except formal toasts at the reception.

Note: The NON Member section below refers only to specific persons who may be extended this privilege by being a child or grandchild of an active SMPC member, they must adhere to the Tenets, Policies and Essentials of the EPC Denomination and then only by permission of the Pastor and Session.

+Fees listed below required a specially trained person and will not be waved.

	SMPC Member*	Cancellation	NON Member	Cancellation
Wedding Coordinator+	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
Organist/Pianist	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
Sound System Operator+	\$75.00	\$75.00	\$75.00	\$75.00
Custodial Services+	\$100.00	\$00.00	\$100.00	NC
Building & Utilities+ <i>(Donation)</i>	NC	NC	\$400.00	NC
Pastoral Services	NC	\$00.00	\$300.00	\$300.00

Checks are written to **Sterry Memorial Presbyterian Church** and submitted to the Wedding Coordinator

*members and regular church participants

+must use these services

Wedding Coordinator services requires 10-20 hours

Pastoral services requires 20 or more hours

Payment of all fees must be made within three months prior to wedding, or at time of reservation.

- Fees will be reimbursed (minus cancellation fees) if the wedding is cancelled at least 1 week prior to services rendered.
- Fees may be adjusted in some circumstances but only with permission of Pastor and/or Session
- If marriage ceremony is off church premises then fees may be adjusted accordingly

We have read and understand the Wedding Policy of the Sterry Memorial Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Parma/Roswell. We are in agreement with the provisions of this policy and will follow its direction as we plan, prepare, and execute our wedding.

Signed:

Woman: _____ member since _____ phone _____
Full name

Man: _____ member since _____ phone _____
Full Name

If neither of above are members – list relationship to SMPC member below:

_____ member since _____ phone _____

Parent of Bride: _____ phone _____
(if involvement will be significant)

Pastor: _____

Date: _____

Office Use

Session approval form:

The above Wedding policy has been reviewed with man (groom) _____ and woman (bride) _____ and they are in agreement as signified by their signatures above.

Fee has been paid in full for services for the following: Wedding Coordinator, Organist/Pianist, Sound System Operator, Custodial Services, Pastoral Service and donation made to cover building and utilities

\$ _____

Approved by Session as signified by Clerk of Session

Signature _____ Date approved _____
Clerk of Session

This signed form must be kept in permanent church file by the Clerk for future reference

DIRECTIONS TO THE CHURCH OFFICE AND SESSION

ALL wedding couples – must complete and sign this form

Signed form is given to the Clerk of Session for signature

SMPC must retain this form in the permanent locked file for future reference.

(Note: Bottom line on this policy is that unless fees are paid ahead the reservation isn't held for them)