 United Presbyterian Church

Wedding Policy and Forms

2400 W Northmoor Road

Peoria, IL 61614

309-693-2002 www.unitedpc.org

**Introduction**

Congratulations! Your wedding is a happy and sacred occasion and we rejoice with you as you plan for your day of faithful promises. Christian marriage is a wonderful expression of grace and hope between two people. In the Presbyterian tradition, we believe it is a covenant blessed by God through which two people are called to live out lives together in witness to the love that God bears for the world. Marrying in a Christian setting, you make your vows to one another before God in the atmosphere of worship and you begin your marriage by making a conscious statement of your faith in the great goodness of God in Jesus Christ together and individually.

We are excited that you are considering using United Presbyterian Church (UPC) to help you celebrate this important day. It is not necessary to be a member of this congregation in order to be married at United Presbyterian Church; however we ask that you respect that this is not a Hall being rented, but a House of God entered for your celebration. The use of the facilities of United Presbyterian Church is not intended merely to be a place to be married, but rather, a setting for sacred worship that results from serious thought, planning, and preparation by the participants.

The following guidelines governing Christian weddings at United Presbyterian Church are intended to assist you in your planning and to ensure that the ceremony celebrates the gift of marriage by glorifying God. It is possible conditions will arise that call for special attention. These can be discussed and resolved by meeting with the pastor. We want your wedding to be a joyous celebration and will do our part to make that a reality. Thank you for considering United Presbyterian Church as a location for your wedding.

**Reserving A Wedding Date**

Inquiries about having your wedding at United Presbyterian Church should be directed to the Church Administrative Assistant, who can be reached at 309-693-2002 or upc@unitedpc.org. She will check date availability and connect you with the pastor.

The bride and groom must personally confer with the pastor before the date can be confirmed and announced and the church reserved. The consultation will allow both you and the pastor to assess whether having the wedding at UPC is a good fit based on your beliefs, wishes, and needs.

We will do our best to accommodate your scheduling desires, but church related activities and meetings take precedence over other activities. Weddings may not be scheduled when in conflict with the use of any of the Church’s facilities by other groups within the church. We try to schedule weddings so your wedding is the only event happening at the church at that time. Furthermore, weddings, wedding rehearsals and wedding receptions shall generally not be scheduled on Sundays, New Year’s Eve, New Year’s Day, Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday (or during the days of Holy Week), Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. In addition, seasonal decorations related to the worship life of the church are not changed for weddings.

**Fees And Deposits**

We desire to set neither prohibitive charges nor restrictions for the use of our Church facilities. However, there are certain expenses, which may be incurred and are to be assumed by those requesting the facilities for weddings. Our Schedule of Wedding Fees is currently being revised; this can be discussed with the pastor at the beginning of the process.

A deposit of $150 for non-church members is due within one week of notification of approval of your request for use of the Church for your wedding, rehearsal dinner and/or reception in order to reserve your date.

A list of all incurred fees, including optional fees, will be included on an invoice and mailed approximately one month before the wedding with payment instructions. Payment is due no later than one week before the wedding date. Failure to pay in a timely manner may result in a reduction of services provided or in extreme cases, the cancellation of the wedding. Billing questions should be directed to the Church Financial Secretary.

**Officiant/Pastor**

The officiating pastor of all wedding at United Presbyterian Church will be one of the pastors of UPC. A pastor of United Presbyterian Church may agree to perform a wedding only after a conference with the bride and groom. Outside clergy may be allowed to conduct the ceremony at UPC in special cases when no UPC pastors are available, pending the Head of Staff Pastor’s and Session’s approval. Outside clergy may be invited to assist in the ceremony at the invitation of the pastor. The officiating pastor will also require that the couple complete “Pre-Marital Conversations” (see Pre-Marital Conversations below) prior to the ceremony. Fees associated with a UPC pastor officiating are listed in the Fee Schedule at the end of this document.

**Pre-Marital Conversations**

Couples will participate with the officiating pastor in a series of conversations about marriage prior to the wedding service. These conversations are a chance to talk about issues around marriage in a safe space. These conversations are not a time when the pastor dispenses advice and counsel, but conversations meant to deepen and strengthen your commitment to each other and have a united vision for your future together. Topics that are covered are: ideas about marriage, family history, future goals, finances, division of household responsibilities, in-laws, and communication. These conversations can be both fun and rewarding.

It is the responsibility of the couple to initiate contact with the pastor to set up these meetings. If these conversations do not take place, the pastor has the right to withdraw from participating in your wedding, and to remove the wedding date from United Presbyterian Church’s master calendar.

The pastor also has the right to withdraw from participating in the wedding and/or remove the wedding from UPC if s/he, in her/his sole discretion, determines that the couple should not be married based on the pre-marital conversations and/or any other information that becomes known to her/him. In the event of such an occurrence, the deposit paid to hold the wedding date on the church calendar shall be refunded.

**Marriage License**

The State of Illinois requires that all couples married in the state have a valid marriage license. The couple is responsible for obtaining the license prior to the wedding date, and shall bring it to the pastor no later than the time of the wedding rehearsal. The pastor will not perform the wedding ceremony without a valid marriage license.

**Rehearsal**

A rehearsal is usually held the afternoon or evening proceeding the wedding day. The rehearsal is a chance for everyone to practice how they will enter the church, where to stand, cues, etc. A good rehearsal is the key to a smooth wedding. Be sure to include the date and time of the wedding rehearsal on the Wedding Information Worksheet. Once times for the rehearsal are set, UPC will insist on prompt adherence to the announced schedule because we will reserve the sanctuary for you at that time and everyone who will participating in the service will make arrangements to be there at that time. The Pastor, or other officiant, shall direct the rehearsal.

**The Service**

A wedding service at United Presbyterian Church is an act of worship. Thus, the wedding service will be conducted according to the guidelines and theology of marriage found in the PCUSA Directory of Worship. There is not, however, one set liturgy that must be followed. We want your wedding to be an expression of who you are, so the pastor will work with you to create an order of service that glorifies God and celebrates your unique identity as individuals and as a couple. Typically, the pastor will work with you during one of the pre-marital conversations to create the order of service. It is appropriate, but not required, for the service to include special music and/or hymns. The pastor will work with you in conjunction with the Director of Worship and the Arts and the Church Accompanist to help you select appropriate music. UPC musicians have the first right of refusal for all weddings. All music has to be approved by the pastor.

If you desire communion to be served as part of your ceremony, it must be approved by the church Session and be offered to everyone in attendance. It is required that at least one scripture is read and that there be a brief homily by the pastor.

**Wedding Assistants**

A Wedding Assistant, or two, will be assigned to assist the pastor at your ceremony. They will act in a coordinating role to ensure that assigned responsibilities are carried out and that the worship ceremony goes as planned. These persons will attend both the rehearsal and ceremony. They are not wedding planners, but serve so the wedding runs smoothly and the personal details for your service are attended to. A Wedding Assistant will contact you soon after you book your wedding at UPC.

**Reception At Church**

Members of United Presbyterian Church can request a post-wedding reception at the church. The ability to have the church clean and set up for worship and other activities on Sunday morning is the primary factor in determining whether a reception can be held. If you would like use of the kitchen it is a state law that a certified kitchen worker be present. A fee schedule covering room usage, support staff such as kitchen workers and sound technician, and custodial fees can be obtained through the presiding pastor. This service is currently not available to non-members. UPC is a smoke, drug and alcohol free campus.

**Couple’s Responsibility**

It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to read this wedding policy carefully and to see that its provisions are kept by all members of the wedding party. The couple will also need to sign and return the statement page at the back of the policy confirming that it has been read and understood. This is to ensure that there will be no misunderstanding or deviation from the established guidelines and policies.

**General Information for Brides and Grooms**

Like you, the members and staff of United Presbyterian Church want to ensure that your wedding day is as memorable as possible. The promises you will be making to each other and the environment of the service of worship that surrounds them should be the focus of the wedding. This is best accomplished through good planning. For that reason, we want to be sure you have necessary information about church policies and practices so that you can incorporate this information into your planning well in advance.

**Use of the Church Facilities**

When you schedule a wedding at UPC, you will be the only event here during the time of your ceremony. You will have use of the church facilities for up to six hours on the day of your ceremony. Any extra time requested will be billed at an hourly rate, provided the expanded time frame can be accommodated. Such changes will be scheduled at least one week before the wedding, in consultation with the pastor. A custodian, Wedding Hostess, or Pastor will unlock the church and be with you the entire time.

**Alcohol and Tobacco Products**

United Presbyterian Church is a smoke-free facility. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on church grounds. In addition, no alcohol is allowed on church grounds. All members of your wedding party are expected to comply with this policy. Please ask them to do so.

**Candles - Dripless**

During the ceremony, special candles, Unity Candles, may be used to signify the joining of families into a new one. These family candles are yours to provide, and yours to keep after the ceremony. If you plan to use family and unity candles, please bring them with you to the rehearsal. We will provide votive candles and tapers for you to light your unity candle with. We will have a plain white table cover to protect the table from wax available for use. If you would like something different, it is your responsibility to provide it.

UPC also has two large candelabra available for use for an additional fee (see fee schedule). Besides the Unity Candle, no other wax candles are permitted in the service.

**Dressing at the Church**

There are areas available for the bridal party to dress at the church. The women’s dressing area, which is on the first floor of the church, off the Fellowship Hall, includes a restroom, hanging clothes rack, dressing screen, and full- length mirrors. There is also a sink and counter top that you can put snacks on. This room locks so brides can leave their dresses the night of the rehearsal in the church. The men’s dressing area is also on the first floor and is also able to be locked.

**Guest Books**

Outside the main double doors of the sanctuary is the best location for your guest book. A guest book podium is available for use.

Guest book attendants should plan to be in place 45 minutes prior to the time of the ceremony, and should close their books when notified by a Wedding Hostess, since this main entrance will be used by the wedding party at the beginning of the ceremony. Please provide your guest book attendants with this information.

**Photography**

The wedding ceremony is a worship service and, as with other worship, there are some restrictions on photography. They will not prevent your photographer from obtaining excellent pictures of your wedding, but these restrictions will ensure that the mood of the worship ceremony, and your own pleasure and concentration on each other is not compromised.

Please inform your photographer of these restrictions in advance. If your photographer has not worked at UPC in the past, please ask that they call the Church office for information, and talk to the pastor prior to the service. The restrictions:

1) Flash may not be used at any time during the ceremony.

2) All filming and photographs during the ceremony must be done from the balcony, the back of the church, or from set locations behind the chancel area, using available light. We do not want photographers running up and down the aisles or in front of the chancel during the ceremony. Please be assured this will not detract from the quality of photos your photographer will be able to take.

Please discourage guests from bringing cameras to the ceremony. It is advised that a note be included in the ceremony bulletin advising guests that flash photography during the ceremony is prohibited.

**Rice, Birdseed, Flower Petals, Confetti, Runners, etc.**

We ask your courtesy in helping to keep the church buildings and grounds clean and litter-free. No rice, birdseed, flower petals or confetti may be thrown in or around church premises – including the covered portico exit at the south of the church – as these items are difficult for us to clean off carpets and sidewalks (and they will likely be trapped in your dresses, veils, cummerbunds, only to appear for the rest of the day or evening!). The release of balloons is prohibited. No glitter is allowed on anything, including flowers. No runners are allowed in the church aisle.

Bubbles make for a lovely send-off at the church, or you may contact the location of your reception for their policies, and have the “throwing” done as you leave the reception for your honeymoon.

**Decorations**

You are welcome to add to the beauty of our sanctuary with flowers in the chancel and decorations on the end of the pews, but no nails, staples, thumbtacks, tape, or wire is to be used on any surface. If you would like to use church podiums or pillars to place flowers on please let the pastor know several weeks in advance. Please refrain from moving or rearranging furniture without approval from the pastor or Wedding Hostess.

**Ushering**

If you plan to have guests, parents, grandparents, etc. ushered to their seats, please instruct your ushers to be ready to begin ushering 45 minutes prior to the start of the ceremony. They will light the candles/candelabra (other than family/unity candles) prior to the start of guest seating, seat guests, and do any necessary ushering after the ceremony. The Wedding Hostesses assigned to your wedding will help the ushers learn their duties at the rehearsal.

**Questions?**

If you have questions not answered by this policy guide, please direct them to the pastor who will officiate at your wedding through the church office at 309-693-2002, or via email.

United Presbyterian Church of Peoria, Illinois

Fee Policy for Weddings

All fees must be paid not less than one week (7 days) prior to the date of the wedding. Checks should be made payable to: *United Presbyterian Church of Peoria.* Checks for individuals must be made payable to the specific individual who is providing services. All checks should be mailed or delivered in one envelope, making certain the names of the bride and groom and the wedding date are noted. These fees apply to weddings officially scheduled after July 1, 2018. Thank you .

Send/deliver payments to: Sabrina McGrath, Financial Secretary

2400 W. Northmoor Road; Peoria, Illinois 61614-3343

Phone: (309) 693-2002 E-mail: [finance@unitedpc.org](mailto:finance@unitedpc.org)

This page is currently undergoing revision. Fees include:

1. Use of Church and Grounds

This is for six hours the day of the wedding which includes deliveries, preparation such as dressing, ceremony, activities after the service, such as photos, clean up of rooms used by the wedding party, and clearing of the building by the wedding party.

2. Professional Fees

A. Officiant

B. Organist

3. Support Staff and Other Fees

Set up and clean up of Chancel and other areas of the building, including rooms for women and men, bathrooms, welcome center, opening doors and securing the building.

Sound Technician

Use of Church Candelabra

Wedding Bulletin (set-up, printing, folding, etc.)

**Wedding Policy**

**Declaration of Understanding**

The Undersigned hereby acknowledge that they have read and understood the terms of the foregoing wedding policy.

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Bride Date

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

Groom Date

Please return the signed declaration to the church with your deposit check securing your wedding date. Your request for a specific date is considered incomplete without this declaration.

**Wedding Information Worksheet**

United Presbyterian Church

2400 W Northmoor Dr

Peoria, IL 61614

(309) 693-2002 ~ Email: upc@unitedpc.org ~ www.unitedpc.org

Bride\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Email\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Baptized Y N Member Y N Church background\_\_­­­­­­­­­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Previous marriage Y N Yr. previous marriage ended \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Employed by\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parents' names/address\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Groom\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Email\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Baptized Y N Member Y N Church background\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Previous marriage Y N Yr. previous marriage ended \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Employed by\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parents' names/address\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Day/Date of wedding\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Time\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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

Minister \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Organist\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Special music requests\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Soloist\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Photographer\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Florist\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Church Wedding Assistant \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Number of guests at church\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Unity candle Y N

Church prints bulletins Y N Sound Tech \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Set Up & Clean Up \_\_\_\_\_\_

Room use: Sanctuary Y N Fellowship Hall Y N Dress here Y N

Honorariums: Pastor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Organist \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Assistant \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Support Staff and other fees\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Use of Building and Grounds for 6 hours \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Deposit of 150.00\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ paid \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Bride's attendants:

Maid of honor \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Bridesmaids \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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

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Flower girl \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Bride's escort down the aisle \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Groom's attendants:

Best Man \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Groomsmen \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Ushers \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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

Ring bearer \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Approved by Session \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ On Church calendar \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_