

COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
550 Madison Ave
SCRANTON, PA 18510

THE CURCH'S WEDDING POLICY

Covenant Church wants to offer the best possible service to its members/ friends/neighbors and welcomes you to the use of our facilities. The Wedding Ceremony is a sacred rite and we desire that every ceremony be a beautiful and worshipful experience. We want to extend to each wedding party every possible courtesy and assistance.

To make available our services, the following procedures have been adopted:

RESERVATION FORM:

In order to secure the date of a wedding at our facility one must fill-out and turn in a reservation form to our Wedding Coordinator. This form will be submitted to our church governing board, the Session, for approval. The Session meets the second Tuesday of each month (though irregularly in summer months). A wedding date is only finalized once the Session has signed off on the reservation form. (Non-members must make a \$100.00 deposit).

MINISTER: Covenant pastors shall officiate at all marriages in the church except in unusual situations where other arrangements are made with the pastor and approved by the Session (as indicated in the reservation form).

The bride and groom shall arrange a premarital conference with a pastor as far in advance of this ceremony as possible--before the announcements are made or invitations are printed. Presbyterians are required by our Form of Government to meet with the officiating pastor for counsel prior to marriage (at least two sessions, about an hour). No specific charge is made for the pastor's services unless the couple is not related to the church. Any honorariums are private and not the church's responsibility and are optional for members of the congregation. For non-members, there is an honorarium for the pastor.

*Ministers of other denominations shall be allowed to use the facilities and perform the ceremony according to the rites of their respective church, subject to the approval of the pastor and Session.

MUSIC: We ask that our organist be offered the right of first refusal for weddings held in our facility. The couple will meet with the church organist to select appropriate music, soloist and/or instrumentalist. The wedding ceremony is a service of worship of God, and the music used should be in keeping with the sacredness and dignity of the occasion.

PHOTOGRAPHS: It is requested that flash photography not be used during the ceremony. The wedding party can be regrouped in the sanctuary following the service for re-enactment pictures. We ask that you provide the photographer with the enclosed “INSTRUCTIONS FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS AT CHURCH WEDDINGS.”

VIDEOS: A video taping of the ceremony must follow these guidelines. Stationary camera may be used with existing light only in any of the following places – in either of the balconies or under either of the balconies, in the rear of the sanctuary. A camera may be placed in the Chancel and left to tape on its own. The person taking the videos is not permitted to walk around the sanctuary with the video camera during the wedding service. Entrances and exits are NOT to be blocked, for safety reasons.

A reminder of the church’s photography/video policy is to be included in the Wedding Service Bulletin.

DECORATIONS: Flowers used must be in clean, rust free, leak-proof containers. The church will provide candles for the candelabras. The Unity Candles are the responsibility of the bridal party. Care must be taken to ensure wax does not damage furniture and cloths (*\$50.00 cleaning fee may be billed if such damage occurs*). Bubbles only are allowed and recommended as an alternative to any other tradition (rice, confetti or bird seed).

BUILDING ACCESS - The Church is open one hour before the scheduled Wedding time. The building will be closed one hour following the conclusion of the Wedding service. Please consult with the wedding coordinator regarding these time frames, as adjustments are possible, and then make arrangements with your Florist, Photographer and/or Videographer to arrive accordingly.

THE REHEARSAL: The time for the rehearsal is to be agreed upon with the pastor during the interview. Please make every effort to have the entire party at the church at the agreed upon time. The rehearsal usually takes about one hour. Rehearsal times for weddings with pastors from other churches should be scheduled with our Wedding Coordinator.

THE MARRIAGE LICENSE: The license must be in the hands of the pastor before the service can be held. It is preferable that you bring it to the rehearsal.

DRESSING AT THE CHURCH: The Covenant Room is available for dressing for the bride and her attendants. A large mirror is provided. (This is simply a multi-purpose room.)

RECEPTION: The Sawtelle Auditorium and/or the Covenant Room may be used for wedding receptions on the same basis as other groups. Reservations must be made with the church office. A separate sheet details use and charges. **NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ARE TO BE SERVED.**

USE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES: It is expected that members of the wedding party will refrain from alcoholic beverage immediately preceding both the rehearsal and the wedding. No alcoholic beverages are to be used on the church grounds. The bride and groom shall make these rules known to all members of the wedding party.

BULLETINS: A bulletin will be printed for the use of the congregation **if requested** by the bride and groom. Samples can be obtained from the pastor. There is a small fee for this service. (A reminder of our photography/video policy will be included in the wedding service bulletin.)

FEES AND HONORARIUMS FOR NON-MEMBERS: It is not the policy of the Covenant Presbyterian Church to look upon weddings as a source of revenue. There is, however, a minimum charge for the use of the sanctuary by non-members of the congregation. A \$100.00 deposit is required to reserve the space. The remaining building fees (if applicable) shall be paid **AT THE REHEARSAL**.

The honorariums shall be given to the individuals at the rehearsal. Please make the checks payable to individuals involved. Church members are not charged for the use of the sanctuary or space for a reception.

FEES:

Sanctuary for non-members	\$300.00 (includes \$100.00 non-refundable deposit)
Chapel for non-members	\$100.00
Covenant Room (for reception)	\$100.00 for first four hours, \$50.00 for each additional hour.
Sawtelle Auditorium (for reception)	\$250.00 for first four hours, \$50.00 for each additional hour.

Kitchen: Fee ranges between \$25.00- \$50.00 per hour, depending on use, in addition to above fees for room rentals.

*Cleanup is the responsibility of the renters. (Removal of decorations, flowers, etc.)

HONORARIUMS (Members and non-members):

Pastor	\$300.00
Organist	\$250.00
(The organist can assist in acquiring soloist/instrumentalist at additional cost)	
Wedding Coordinator	\$125.00
Door Security	\$ 16.50 per hour

APPROVED BY COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH SESSION ON

May 15, 2003

Fees updated November 2014

Policy Updates May 2018