

WEDDINGS  
at  
CLAREMONT  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

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Thank you for your inquiry about a wedding at Claremont Presbyterian Church. Use of the church for weddings is governed by Session, which has adopted the policies outlined in this booklet. Compliance with the policies is required of all wedding participants and guests.

We are delighted that you are considering Claremont Presbyterian Church for your wedding. It is a joy to us to share our sanctuary, which is for us a sacred space where God's Holy Spirit is present.

Claremont Presbyterian Church is an inclusive community that recognizes that families come in many shapes and sizes. We believe that marriage is a gift of God for the well-being of families. As Christians, we see marriage as a means for God's grace to become present in the world in a special way as a couple commits to a life-long covenant blessed by God and witnessed by the community.

Marriage is also a civil contract for a couple. The presiding pastor's primary role is to act on behalf of the church to ask God's blessing for the covenant being made by the couple.

Weddings at Claremont Presbyterian Church are services of worship. Our sanctuary is intended for couples who wish to seek God's presence and blessing as they make holy promises to one another. Most services here are based on Christian liturgies. Our pastors will work with interfaith couples to shape weddings that appropriately honor both traditions.

We extend a warm invitation for those considering a wedding at Claremont Presbyterian Church to join us in worship.

We pray God's blessing will be with you as you continue to plan for this sacred occasion.

## INITIAL ARRANGEMENTS

The congregation and ministers of Claremont Presbyterian Church rejoice with you as you plan for the celebration of your marriage. It is hoped that this booklet, which outlines the wedding policies of our church and answers typical questions about weddings, will assist you in planning.

**Meeting the Pastor:** If the prospective bride and groom find these wedding policies acceptable they may begin arrangements for their wedding at Claremont Presbyterian Church by contacting the church office to schedule a preliminary interview with the pastor who must give approval for the wedding to take place in the church.

**Contacting the Wedding Consultant:** Upon receiving the pastor's approval, the wedding couple next gets in touch with the Wedding Consultant who, as an agent of the Session, is involved in all weddings performed in the Sanctuary of the Claremont Presbyterian Church. The Consultant will coordinate wedding and rehearsal dates and times with the church master calendar, assist with the completion of the Wedding Form and the Covenant of Cooperation, review the wedding policies with the prospective bride and groom, and insure that the deposit of wedding fees is received by the church. The church office will provide information about contacting the Consultant.

**Date Selection:** The church calendar will be consulted to reserve tentative dates and times for the wedding and rehearsal. However, these dates and times will not become official until the pastor has reviewed the Wedding Form and Covenant of Cooperation. Announcements should not be made nor printed materials ordered until written confirmation of dates and times is received from the church. Confirmation will be provided within two weeks of initial application.

**Scheduling Counseling Sessions:** At least two additional meetings must be scheduled between the pastor of the Claremont Presbyterian Church and the wedding couple. These are wedding counseling and they will occur during the six weeks preceding the wedding.

### **THE PASTOR**

Ordinarily a minister associated with Claremont Presbyterian Church must officiate at all weddings performed in the church. The church's officiating pastor is the final authority in all matters pertaining to the wedding service or to the use of the building. Guest ministers who agree to observe church policies may be invited by the church pastor to help with or to conduct a service alone. However, a guest minister officiating alone must defer to the church's Wedding Consultant when there is a question of policy interpretation.

A minister of the church will meet with the wedding couple on several occasions (See "Meeting the Pastor" and "Scheduling Counseling Sessions.") At the first counseling session discussion may concern events leading to the decision to marry and setting goals conducive to a successful marriage; the second meeting may focus on specific aspects of the wedding service.

If a couple wishes the pastor to attend a reception or rehearsal dinner, the invitation for pastor and spouse should be extended well in advance of the event.

Convention advises that the pastor's honorarium is offered by the groom prior to the rehearsal. The separate Wedding Fee Schedule included with this booklet details honorarium guidelines.

### **THE WEDDING CONSULTANT**

Our wedding Consultant has experience in creating beautiful, memorable weddings. She will gladly assist the bride and groom with their plans and will provide valuable information about the many details relating to the rehearsal and to the marriage service. She will be flexible and open to the reasonable preferences of the wedding party.

The wedding Consultant will be on duty at the rehearsal and during the wedding service. She will provide access to portions of the building and/or facilities where and when needed.

### **MUSIC**

Music selected for the wedding shall be appropriate for a service of worship and shall meet the approval of the officiating pastor. The congregation may join in singing hymns and other musical forms of praise and prayer.

Session has established that live music and accompaniment ordinarily will be used in worship. Customarily the organ will be played by the church organist who will also advise about music selections. The church will arrange for an alternate organist if the church organist is unavailable.

The organist must be informed of music selected at least four weeks before the wedding to allow adequate preparation time.

### **THE REHEARSAL**

A wedding taking place in the Sanctuary requires a rehearsal in the Sanctuary. About one hour is allotted to each wedding rehearsal. If possible, all members of the wedding party (the parents of the bride and groom, the attendants, the best man and ushers) should attend the rehearsal and, of course, they are expected to arrive promptly at the appointed hour.

### **RECEPTIONS**

The Fellowship Hall is available for receptions. Catered food may be served from the kitchen but use of kitchen equipment is not permitted. Access to the Fellowship Hall should be arranged through the church office during business hours.

### **PHOTOGRAPHS, VIDEO TAPING AND SOUND RECORDING**

Photographs, both still and videotaped, may be taken within the building and on the grounds before and after the wedding service. Flash photography is distracting and therefore is not permitted during the wedding service except that a photograph may be taken by the official wedding photographer of the bridal party as they enter for the ceremony.

### **DECORATING FOR THE WEDDING**

The Wedding Consultant gives florists access to decorate for the wedding. Flowers are displayed in standing baskets or on columns. They may not be placed on the communion table. Equipment and decorations must be removed from the church immediately following the wedding. Flowers may be donated for church use at worship if the Wedding Consultant is so informed.

Chancel furniture and church decorations for the Easter and Christmas seasons are not to be removed or rearranged for any reason. Nothing may be attached to the pews that will in any way mar the wood.

A trinity candelabra and a kneeling bench are available for use without extra charge. Free standing candelabra, decorative columns, and aisle runners can be obtained from the florist. Dripless candles are required. Plastic sheeting, which is provided, must be placed beneath all candelabra.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

- The Pastor and Wedding Consultant, as representatives of the Session of our church, are charged with the responsibility of overseeing the use of church property and facilities. They require that the Session's policies prohibiting smoking in church buildings and prohibiting the consumption of alcohol anywhere in the building or on the grounds be strictly observed by wedding participants and guests alike. Should the prohibitions be ignored, the wedding may be delayed or even cancelled.
- A bride's dressing room is provided for the convenience of the bride and her attendants.
- The sanctuary, including balcony, has seating for 500.
- The Lord's Supper may be celebrated at weddings with the approval of the Session. The invitation to the Table shall be extended to all baptized persons present and the elements must be served by elders or deacons of Claremont Presbyterian Church.
- A wedding license is valid for use if it was obtained through any county office within California. It is to be given to the officiating minister at the wedding rehearsal.
- The throwing of rice, birdseed, confetti, or similar material is not allowed.
- Limousines and/or wedding party vehicles may not drive or park on the plaza near the sanctuary entrance. The Wedding Consultant will suggest accessible parking areas.
- Fee information is detailed on the separate Wedding Fee Schedule.