



Weddings
at First Presbyterian Church
A Complete Guide

Living to make Jesus visible
 Prayer for Christian Marriage

Almighty and Gracious God,

In the beginning you made man and woman to be helpers for one another. You provided that a man would leave his father and mother, cleave to his wife to become one. The marriage relationship has been blessed by you and in it a man and a woman willingly share mutual love, affection and joy. In addition, they make a decision to love one another in all kinds of situations – “for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and health, until death do they part”. May those who make sacred vows to one another neither fear, nor take lightly their commitment to one another. May they be supported and encouraged by their families and friends.

As Jesus Christ came to serve us, may married couples serve one another, putting aside selfishness. May their home be built on the solid rock foundation of faith in Jesus Christ. May they live in both faithfulness and fidelity to one another and to the Lord Jesus Christ. In all things, may they enjoy each other, forgive each other, embrace each other and serve the Lord of all.

In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

Bride.....
 Groom.....
 Wedding Date.....
 Time.....
 Rehearsal Date.....
 Time.....
 Your Wedding Coordinator is:.....
 Phone Number.....

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Marriage Policy

WHEREAS, First Presbyterian Church of San Antonio (the “Church”) was formed in 1846 and has, throughout its history, administered the rite of marriage in accordance with the teaching of Scripture; and

WHEREAS, when God created Adam and Eve, He ordained marriage as the fundamental institution of society and a relationship between a man and a woman:

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them, and God said to them ‘Be fruitful and multiply...’ (Genesis 1:27-28) Therefore, a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh (Genesis 2:24); and

WHEREAS, Jesus said:

For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one. So they are no longer two but one. What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder (Matthew 19:4-6); and

WHEREAS, we understand marriage to be a covenant between one man and one woman in submission to God (Malachi 2:14-16) and as a lifelong covenant (Matthew 22:23-30; Mark 10:9); and

WHEREAS, we believe God has ordained marriage for the following ends:

- a. To glorify God (Genesis 1:26-28);
- b. As the consummation of the redeeming grace of God in Christ (Ephesians 5:22-33);
- c. To provide for the nurturing and training of children (Genesis 1:28; Ephesians 6:4);
- d. To affirm the proper context of human sexuality (Hebrews 13:4); and

WHEREAS, the Apostle Paul analogizes marriage between a man and a woman to the relationship between Christ and His church (Ephesians 5:25-27), and affirms the teachings of the Old Testament

and the words of Jesus Christ when he states:

For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one. This is a great mystery, and I take it to mean Christ and the church; however, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband. (Ephesians 5:31-33); and

WHEREAS, this Church has historically administered the rite of marriage as the union of one man and one woman, in accordance with the historical teachings of Holy Scripture;

WHEREAS, the familiar text of the wedding liturgy states, “Dearly beloved, we are assembled here in the presence of God to join this man and this woman in Holy marriage, which is instituted by God, regulated by his commandments and to be held in honor among all;”

NOW, THEREFORE, WE, the SESSION of FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SAN ANTONIO,

restate, reaffirm and adopt as the official policy of this Church the following:

1. Marriage is ordained by God and defined by Scripture;
2. Marriage is a rite of the Church to be administered in accordance with the historical and traditional teachings of Scripture and the historical practices of this Church;
3. A marriage ceremony in the Church is religious matter and is separate and distinct from marriage as defined by civil law, and is to be administered in accordance with the traditional and historical religious beliefs and teachings as expressed in Holy Scripture;
4. Marriage is the joining of one man and one woman to become one and is a union before God;
5. All marriages or weddings performed at this Church by any pastor shall be between one man and one woman in accordance with teachings of Scripture, the historic Confessions of the Presbyterian Church, and as set forth in this policy; and
6. This policy shall be included in the minutes of the Session and published as an official policy of this Church.

Adopted and approved by the Session of First Presbyterian Church of San Antonio on this 9th day of February, 2015.

Rev. John Seiders, Moderator

Norton A. Stuart, III, Clerk

Scheduling a Wedding

First Things First

You may either contact First Presbyterian Church's Wedding Coordinator, Leah Butler, for information regarding scheduling your ceremony or you may submit a Wedding Inquiry Form, available at www.fpcsanantonio.org. Within one week of submission of the form, First Presbyterian Church's (FPC) Wedding Coordinator will contact you.

Reserve the Date. Once the Wedding Coordinator contacts you, you will be given one or more registration forms and required to pay a \$75 reservation fee. Upon receipt of form(s) and payment, your wedding and rehearsal will be scheduled on the church calendar, based on availability. Checks should be made payable to First Presbyterian Church, and please indicate the bride and groom's names in the memo section of the check. Please note, the reservation fee is a separate fee and is not treated as a deposit. This fee does not get applied to your final balance; however, it is normally refundable in the event of cancellation. The balance of all fees is due one month prior to the wedding date.

If you would like to change the wedding or rehearsal date and/or time, contact the FPC Wedding Coordinator in writing for options. Changes are subject to availability of space.

Schedule Musicians. Please contact our Organist, Dr. Jae Ha, several months before your wedding to schedule a consultation regarding your ceremony music. If outside musicians or vocalists will be involved, be sure to make arrangements with him at this time. All music related inquiries should be directed to Dr. Ha. (See page 17 for contact information)

Scheduling a Wedding

Standard Fees

Reservation Fee.....	\$75
Sanctuary (seats 625) (members – no fee).....	\$500
Guthrie-Bryant Chapel (seats 75) (members – no fee).....	\$150
Griffith Chapel (seats 15).....	\$0
Clergy.....	\$200
Organist.....	\$300
• Additional Fee for Accompanying soloist or instrumentalist.....	\$50
• Bench fee for guest organist.....	\$200
Wedding Coordinator (up to 8 attendants).....	\$200
• Second Wedding Coordinator (9 or more attendants).....	\$100
Sound Technician & CD Recording.....	\$150
• Sound technician required for ceremonies performed in main Sanctuary	

Optional Services (based on availability):

Vocal Soloist provided by FPC.....	\$150
Trumpet Soloist.....	\$200
Chimes.....	\$75
Chamber Choir.....	\$400
(4 professional singers)	
Chamber Choir.....	\$800
(8 professional singers)	
Sanctuary Choir.....	\$1500
(8 professional singers plus volunteers and conductor)	

Payment Schedule

Reservation Fee.....	Due at time of reservation
Balance of Wedding Fees.....	Due one month prior to ceremony

Scheduling a Wedding

Cancellation Policy

FPC normally refunds all fees paid in the event your wedding is canceled.

Choosing a Date

Due to the observance of holidays and special events, and the availability of FPC staff, we regret that weddings cannot be conducted on the following days:

- Sundays
- Holy Week/Easter weekend
- Thanksgiving weekend (Thanksgiving Day through Monday)
- Christmas Eve or Christmas Day
- New Year's Eve or New Year's Day
- National holidays that occur on a Friday or Saturday
- Fiesta - Battle of Flowers Parade
- Additional dates not listed above may be unavailable due to church events and/or other scheduling conflicts.
- NOTE: FPC enhances the facility with seasonal decorations. These seasonal decorations will not be removed for a wedding.

Choosing a Time

Weddings are typically scheduled on Saturdays between 10:00 AM and 7:00 PM. Please contact FPC's Wedding Coordinator to request a ceremony outside of these times. Please note, FPC will not conduct weddings on Sundays.

Rehearsal Scheduling

The rehearsal is scheduled for 4:00, 5:00, or 6:00 PM on the evening before the wedding. It will consist of practicing the processional and recessional, reviewing the wedding ceremony, usher training, and an orientation of FPC facilities and procedures. One hour is allocated for the rehearsal. Please be sure your wedding party is present and ready to begin at the appointed time.

Preparing for Your Wedding

Premarital Counseling Requirement

First Presbyterian Church strongly believes healthy marriages start with a good foundation and understanding of the issues married couples face. We consider premarital counseling to be an essential part of achieving a healthy and happy marriage. Therefore, couples are required to complete counseling with the presiding pastor or a pre-approved program by the pastor performing the ceremony. Premarital counseling at FPC is based on the Prepare and Enrich inventory and consists of four to six sessions lasting approximately 60–90 minutes each.

Marriage License

It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to secure a marriage license. The marriage license must be given to FPC's Wedding Coordinator on or before the wedding rehearsal. The marriage license can be obtained from the County Courthouse/County Clerk's office in any Texas county. In compliance with the laws of the State of Texas, a wedding may not be performed without a license.

First Presbyterian Church is proud to be a Twogether in Texas approved provider. As such, couples who complete FPC's approved pre-marital course will receive a certificate making them eligible to receive a discount off their marriage license fee and also be eligible to have the 72-hour waiting period waived. While the \$60 state portion of the fee will be waived, up to \$12 in local fees may still apply. Marriage licenses are only valid for 90 days. Please be alert to this.

Preparing for Your Wedding

Role of the Wedding Coordinator

- Schedules the wedding, rehearsal, and related appointments.
- Schedules an initial 1–2 hour consult with the couple once ceremony has been booked.
- Ensures FPC wedding policies are understood and followed by the couple, wedding party, family members, and vendors. Involved parties and vendors must agree at the outset of planning to adhere to all FPC policies.
- Assumes responsibility for and authority over rehearsal and wedding day schedule in place of off-site coordinators or family members.
- Trains and coordinates ushers.
- Coordinates details with photographers, florists, musicians, FPC staff, and additional consultants.
- Obtains a copy of the wedding program prior to the wedding in order to verify details.

Role of the Officiating Pastor

- Maintains clear communication with the couple and FPC Wedding Coordinator.
- Conducts premarital counseling.
- Develops and conducts the wedding ceremony.
- Has final authority over all aspects of the ceremony (including music, etc.).

Preparing for Your Wedding

Ceremony Guidelines

A Christ-centered marriage ceremony is a service of worship. All elements, including music selection, should be appropriate to that occasion. Music for your wedding must be selected in consultation with FPC's Associate Minister of Music and Organist, Dr. Jae Ha, at least two months prior to the date of the wedding.

Likewise, your pastor will work with you to create a meaningful service which appropriately honors God and celebrates the covenant and union of marriage. FPC normally allocates one hour for wedding ceremonies, with the total scheduled facility time not exceeding four hours. This includes dressing, photography, ceremony, and clean-up.

Music and Musician Options

FPC proudly offers the services of our Associate Minister of Music and Organist, Dr. Jae Ha, to play the organ for your wedding. Dr. Ha will help you select the most appropriate and meaningful music for your special day, as well as select additional musicians and soloists if desired. Guest organists, pianists, and musicians are welcome to participate, with Dr. Ha's prior approval. All music must be approved by Dr. Ha. Honorariums for these guest soloists and extra musicians are included in the FPC wedding fee schedule. Due to logistics, all music in the ceremony, including preludes and postludes, must be performed live. No recorded music is allowed.

Outside Vendors

Deliveries

Due to the active scheduling of our facilities, please check with the Wedding Coordinator to confirm the date and time the florist or bridal shop may decorate and/or make deliveries. Dresses, flowers, and decorations may be delivered to the church on the day of the wedding; however, they are considered to be the responsibility of the wedding couple/party.

Audio Recording

First Presbyterian Church will provide one audio compact disc recording of your wedding ceremony (Sanctuary ceremonies only). A Sound Technician will be present for two hours on the day of your wedding—one hour of preparation/testing, and one hour for the ceremony. A technician may be requested to be present at the wedding rehearsal for an additional fee. A sound technician is required for all wedding ceremonies held in the main Sanctuary.

Photography and Videography Guidelines

Video and/or still photography is encouraged to capture your wedding. Sensitivity to the occasion is essential, so we ask that all flash photography be limited to before and after the ceremony. In addition, the placement of cameras should be limited to designated and unobtrusive locations. Formal wedding photographs may be taken before or after the ceremony. Professional videography is permitted, with the camera placed in the balcony of the Sanctuary or the rear of the Chapel. You will receive a copy of our guidelines when you meet with our wedding coordinator.

Florists

Please reference the Flower and Decoration Guidelines on page 14.

Day of the Wedding

Dressing Rooms

First Presbyterian Church offers facilities for the wedding party to dress and prepare for the ceremony. The bride's room is available, complete with restroom, mirrors, tables and chairs, in a fitting environment to the occasion. A large room is available for the groom and his attendants. FPC is not responsible for any personal items left in the Bride's room and/or other dressing rooms.

Please designate someone to remove all articles from both the bride's dressing room and the groom's dressing room immediately following the ceremony. FPC is not responsible for items left at the church.

Gifts

The wedding couple should appoint someone to be responsible for any wedding gifts brought to the church. Please arrange for gifts to be delivered to the family after the ceremony or reception. FPC is not responsible for gifts left at the church.

Ushers

Ushers will graciously welcome and seat your wedding guests. In addition, they will work closely with the Wedding Coordinator on ushering responsibilities. A general rule is one usher per every 50 guests.

Flower Girl/Ring Bearer

While children are a gift from God, they can also be unpredictable. Therefore, it is recommended any children in your wedding party be at least 4–5 years of age. Depending on the child, children are welcome to stand with the bridal attendants upfront for the ceremony or be seated in the pews with parents or guardians.

Communion Policy

The policies of both ECO and FPC state that if communion is included in a wedding ceremony, the elements must be served to the entire assembly of guests. If communion service is desired, it must be requested in writing by the bride and the groom and approved by the FPC Session (Board of Elders), at least two months prior to the wedding ceremony. For more information, contact the Wedding Coordinator.

Flower and Decoration Guidelines

- You are welcome to decorate the facilities for your wedding. However, we ask that flowers and decorations be appropriate to the occasion and tastefully appointed.
- Floral arrangements should not be overly ornate or ostentatious, thus distracting attention from the worship of God and sacredness of the couple's vows.
- Flowers must be placed on the flower stands provided. The communion table is to be left free of any decorations or floral arrangements.
- Florists must not use thumbtacks, pins, nails, tape, or glue on any of the furniture, walls, or appointments. Only ribbon, brackets, or wrapped wire that will not mar the wood may be used to fasten decorations to the pews.
- In an effort to protect the carpets, fresh white flower petals may be strewn in the aisle of the Sanctuary or Chapel.
- FPC can also supply candelabras at no cost with drip-less candles, should the couple so choose. Your florist is permitted to bring candelabras, but all candelabras are restricted to the Chancel. Aisle candelabras are not permitted.
- Chancel furniture is considered to be a part of the setting and may not be moved for weddings.
- Because another wedding may be scheduled in the same facility after yours, all flowers and decorations must be removed immediately following the departure of guests, unless other arrangements have been made.

- Please do not throw rice or flower petals in hallways or entryways to the church. Birdseed or bubbles may be used, if desired, outside only. Wedding bubble containers must be distributed outdoors.
- Bubbles may not be blown in the building.
- An aisle runner is not permitted.

Alcohol & Smoking Policies

Alcoholic beverages are not to be served and/or consumed on FPC property, including the parking lots. While we want your wedding to be a joyous celebration, we also want your wedding party and guests to remain focused on the sanctity of the occasion. Smoking is only permitted in the parking lots.

Receptions and Catering

We welcome receptions at First Presbyterian Church, San Antonio. We will work with you to determine if our facilities and policies are a good fit. Please contact the Wedding Coordinator for additional information.

Reception Fees

Please contact the Wedding Coordinator for fees and additional information (Fees include use of the facility for two hours.)

Photos



Want to learn more about us?

Contacts

Leah Butler, Wedding Coordinator

- leahb@fpcsat.org • 210-271-2725
- Office Hours: Tuesdays 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Susan Dullnig, Director of Facility Operations

- susand@fpcsat.org • 210-271-2757

Pastors

If you are looking for a church home or are interested in learning more about First Presbyterian Church and its ministries, please contact one of our pastors.

Ronald W. Scates, Interim Senior Pastor

- rons@fpcsat.org • 210-271-2711

Scott Simpson, Associate Pastor of Congregational Care

- scotts@fpcsat.org • 210-271-2712

Music

Dr. Jae Ha, Associate Minister of Music/Organist

- jaeh@fpcsat.org • 210-271-2729

Tom Dooling, Minister of Music

- tom@dooling.org • 210-271-2717

Office Hours

Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM-5:00 PM



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SAN ANTONIO

LIVING TO MAKE JESUS VISIBLE

404 N ALAMO STREET, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78205-1918