

WEDDING HANDBOOK

OLIVET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

2575 Garth Road
Charlottesville, VA 22901



Congratulations on your engagement! And best wishes on your upcoming wedding and marriage! This is one of the most exciting times in your lives. We look forward to sharing with you throughout the preparations leading up to the day of the blessed event.

This Wedding Handbook has been prepared by Olivet's Worship Committee to help answer some of your questions, guide you in your wedding planning, and enable your wedding ceremony to be a meaningful, rich, and blessed occasion of Christian worship.

Please feel free to ask questions, express concerns, and stay in touch with our church wedding liaison, administrative assistant or pastor as you prepare for your wedding and marriage.

Olivet is honored to be a part of your wedding. May God bless you as you prepare for a wonderful wedding day and shared life together!

The Meaning of Christian Marriage

“God created us male and female, and gave us marriage so that husband and wife could help and comfort each other, live faithfully together in plenty and in want, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, throughout all their days.

God gave us marriage for the full expression of the love between a man and a woman. In marriage, a man and a woman belong to each other, and with affection and tenderness, freely give themselves to each other.

God gave us marriage for the well-being of human society, for the ordering of family life, and for the birth and nurture of children.

God gave us marriage as a holy mystery in which a man and a woman are joined together, and become one, just as Christ is one with the church.

In marriage, husband and wife are called to a new way of life, created, ordered, and blessed by God. This way of life must not be entered into carelessly, or from selfish motives, but responsibly, and prayerfully.”

From the Book of Common Worship of the Presbyterian Church (USA)

The Purpose of a Christian Wedding

In a service of Christian marriage, a lifelong commitment is made by a man and a woman to each other in the presence of God, publicly witnessed, and acknowledged by the community of faith. The service begins with scriptural sentences and a brief statement of purpose. The man and woman shall declare their intention to enter into Christian marriage, and shall exchange vows of love and faithfulness. The service includes appropriate passages of Scripture. Prayers shall be offered for the couple, and in the name of the Triune God, the minister shall declare that the man and the woman are then joined in marriage.

From The Directory for Worship of the Presbyterian Church (USA)

Wedding Services at Olivet

Members, as well as non-members, are welcome to hold their wedding service at Olivet, as long as it will be a service of Christian worship, officiated by a Christian minister registered to perform marriages in the Commonwealth of Virginia, accompanied by pre-marital counseling and conforming to the guidelines provided in this Wedding Handbook.

Scheduling a Wedding at Olivet

To schedule your wedding in the Olivet church Sanctuary, you will need to complete and return a reservation form that is available through the church office (434.295.1367). Weddings may not be scheduled during Holy Week, on Christmas Eve, or before 2:00 p.m. on Sundays.

Officiating Minister and Pre-marital Counseling

Customarily, the minister of Olivet will officiate at wedding services held at Olivet. However, special permission may be given, and an invitation extended to a minister of your choosing.

Pre-marital counseling is required of all couples desiring to be married at Olivet. In this way, the church can help you prepare not only for your wedding day, but for your life together in marriage, and the fulfillment of your marriage commitments to one another.

Olivet's pastor typically meets three times with couples preparing for marriage. It is your responsibility to schedule these meetings in a timely manner so that the last meeting takes place a month or more before the date of your wedding.

Church Liaison

Olivet will provide a liaison to assist you in planning for your wedding with regard to using the Olivet sanctuary and facilities. The Church Liaison will:

- Answer questions about our wedding guidelines
- Share customary practices at Olivet
- Provide information on placement of flowers and decorations
- Introduce you to the facilities
- Open and close up the building for your rehearsal and wedding
- Assist with lights, sound equipment, and small furnishings

Every couple must arrange to meet with the Church Liaison prior to the wedding rehearsal. If you have a wedding director, he/she would need to meet with the liaison from Olivet as early in the planning process as possible.

The Church Liaison must be present at all rehearsals and weddings that Olivet's pastor is not officiating.

Dressing

The bride and groom and attendants may dress at the church, if desired. Two rooms are available for this purpose.

Music

After the date of your wedding has been placed on the church calendar, please contact the Director of Music concerning music for your wedding. The organist at Olivet will ordinarily play for weddings at Olivet. If you desire to have another organist or pianist accompany your service, please consult with the Director of Music as soon as possible.

All music should contribute to the worship of God, the proclamation of God's Word, or the dedication of our lives in response to God's love. The Director of Music will assist you with advice and recommendations for music that is appropriate for a Service of Christian Marriage. The use of congregational hymns is both appropriate and encouraged. A list of titles, names, and phone numbers may be obtained from the church administrative assistant (434.295.1367) during office hours.

Rehearsal

A rehearsal is usually held on the evening before the ceremony. Those present will include the pastor, organist/pianist, Church Liaison, sound technician, bridal party, ushers, other musicians, and parents of the bride and groom. It is also strongly suggested that the photographer be present.

With promptness of the wedding party, attention and cooperation of all involved, the rehearsal should not take more than one hour.

The pastor should be given the wedding license at the rehearsal.

Custodian

Members and non-members alike must pay a custodial fee to have the Sanctuary, changing rooms and restrooms cleaned after your wedding. Olivet's administrative assistant will make arrangements for this service. The custodian is not responsible for moving furnishings in the Sanctuary. The wedding party must return all furnishings to their location before leaving the church.

Church Facilities

- The seating capacity of the Sanctuary is approximately 175 people.
- Use of the Sanctuary includes two rooms for dressing.
- Reception space in the Fellowship Hall is available upon request (notify Olivet's administrative assistant and/or Church Liaison).
- For ethical and safety reasons, birdseed is the only permissible item to be thrown or used outside the front entrance to the church Sanctuary.
- Smoking of tobacco or drinking of alcoholic beverages is not permitted in the church building or on the church grounds. The pastor and/or Church Liaison reserve the right to exclude anyone from the wedding service, or cancel the wedding altogether, should they detect drug or alcohol use by a wedding participant.
- Firearms are not allowed on the church property.
- With the exception of guide and service dogs, animals are not allowed in the Olivet Sanctuary.
- The repair of any damage to the building, equipment, or furnishings by the wedding party or guests is the financial responsibility of the wedding couple.
- Olivet Church cannot be held liable for any personal property that is lost or damaged.
- Furnishings in the Sanctuary may not be moved without permission of the pastor or Church Liaison and the wedding party is responsible for returning all furnishings to their location before leaving the building.

Sound Technician

The Sanctuary is equipped with a sound system for amplifying the voices of the pastor, speakers, instrumentalists, and soloists. If you desire to utilize the sound system, you need to notify the Church Liaison. Arrangements may be made for a sound technician to be present at the rehearsal and wedding service to monitor and adjust volume levels, and to make an audio recording of your service.

Flowers and Decorations in the Sanctuary

As flowers are considered part of the offering to God, fresh flowers are preferred. Please use rubber bands or wreath hooks to attach decorations, as nails, tacks, wire, and adhesive tape may damage wood and paint surfaces. Nothing is to be placed on/or near the organ or piano that could result in candle wax or water damage. All church furnishings are to be adequately protected from any potential damage from candles or water. All flowers and decorations will need to be removed following the wedding service. If you would like to leave flowers for Sunday's worship services, please notify the church office so that arrangements can be made ahead of time. Please give your floral arranger a copy of these guidelines, and ask him/her to contact the Church Liaison with any questions.

Pictures at the Wedding

The wedding photographer may take flash pictures of the bride and her escort as they enter the Sanctuary, and again as the bride and groom leave the Sanctuary. Flash pictures may not be taken after the service begins with the Call to Worship until it concludes with the Benediction.

Non-flash photographs may be taken from the balcony during the ceremony. Movies, videotapes, or digital recordings not requiring additional lights may be taken from the balcony. Plans should be shared with the Church Liaison.

Photographers may not stand or move about in front of the Sanctuary and detract from the service and distract worshippers.

The photographer should be given a copy of this Wedding Handbook, and should contact the Church Liaison beforehand regarding questions concerning these policies before the rehearsal day.

We request that the following note be placed in the wedding program:

Please respect the sanctity of the service by refraining from taking flash photographs during the ceremony, and by silencing all cellular phones and pagers before entering the Sanctuary.

Fees and Honoraria

All weddings require the presence of the Olivet pastor and/or the Church Liaison, and the custodian.

Wedding services with music may require the services of the Director of Music, organist, pianist, soloist, instrumentalist, and/or sound technician.

Fees that are payable to the church must arrive in the office 30 days prior to your wedding, and those paid directly to individuals personally no later than the night of the rehearsal.

Direct any questions about fees or honorariums to the Church Liaison. In the event that fees may cause a hardship, the couple should discuss this with the pastor at the first counseling session.

	Members	Non-Members	Notes
Sanctuary Use	No charge	\$300.00	
Fellowship Hall Use	No charge	\$100.00 \$150.00	Minimal use (cake/punch) Heavy use (pots, pans, utensils, stove, dishwasher)
Pastor	Honorarium	Gift to Church	
Church Liaison	Honorarium	\$175.00	
Director of Music	Varies with responsibilities	Varies with responsibilities	
Organist/Pianist	Varies with responsibilities	Varies with responsibilities	
Sound Technician, (and audio recording if requested)	\$50.00	\$50.00	
Custodian	\$50.00	\$50.00	
Damage Deposit	\$100.00	\$100.00	Refundable upon satisfactory inspection of the facilities