

**ST. PETER'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**1933 Hanover Avenue, Allentown PA 18109**

**Pastor:**

**Church Office: 610-432-8762**

**Email: [office@stpetersallentown.com](mailto:office@stpetersallentown.com)**

**~ WEDDING GUIDELINES ~**

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## ... WEDDING GUIDELINES ...

### **INTRODUCTION:**

**Marriage** is not merely a legal contract, but a life-long union based on solemn vows made before God and in the presence of the officiant and witnesses.

**Marriage** is one of the four major experiences in life. The others being birth, confirmation, and death. Two of them involve decisions – the decision to affirm one's faith in Christ and the choice of a life partner in the establishment of a Christian home.

**A church wedding** is more than a social event. It is the recognition of the importance which spiritual values play in our individual lives. If the church wedding is to be particularly meaningful, those who participate in it ought to have a sincere desire to establish their marriage on the firm foundation of church life. As God's blessing is invoked upon the new relationship, so it should continue to be sought in private meditation and prayer.

### **SCHEDULE OF FEES AND EXPENSES:**

#### **Fee Structure:**

The fee structure for weddings for members and non-members is determined by church membership status at the **time inquiry is made** regarding the wedding date-reservation of the church.

#### **Pastor:**

**Members** – for members of the congregation, the Pastor shall be reimbursed **\$150.00** for her services.

**Non-members** – in the case of a wedding in which **neither the bride nor the groom is a member** of St. Peter's, the Pastor shall be reimbursed a minimum of **\$250.00** for her services.

In the event the church has no interim or called Pastor, the fee should be negotiated between the presiding Pastor and the Wedding Party directly.

St. Peter's reserves the right and option to approve or deny any proposed officiant for any religious or liturgical service or ceremony to be conducted on church premises.

#### **Assisting Pastor**

When another Pastor assists the Pastor of St. Peter's at a wedding, appropriate reimbursement should be made to the Assisting Pastor as well.



## **(Schedule of Fees/Expenses – Continued)**

### **Director of Music:**

The Director of Music shall be reimbursed for services rendered. A reasonable guide is **\$150.00** for the wedding service and an additional **\$20.00** if a soloist is used. A conference should be arranged with the Director of Music as soon as possible after the wedding date has been confirmed with the Pastor. In the event the Director of Music is not available, the Director of Music or Pastor may recommend a substitute. The couple may elect an alternate organist, subject to the approval of the Pastor and the Director

### **Soloists:**

Soloists may be used at the discretion of the couple and should be provided for financially. The fee should be determined by discussion with the soloist. A suggested amount is **\$75.00** for the ceremony.

### **Sexton Fees:**

Since the wedding in the church necessitates that the sexton cleans the church both before and after the ceremony, the couple should pay the sexton no less than **\$75.00** for these services. If candlelight is used during the ceremony, there is an additional **\$15.00** fee.

### **Bulletins:**

**Wedding Bulletins** will be prepared by the church office, **HOWEVER**, the bulletins are to be supplied by the couple. The Wedding Party bears the responsibility for supplying the bulletin covers. The bulletins are to be dropped off in the church office **two weeks prior** to the wedding. A final draft of the bulletin will be available if the couple wishes to look over it before it is printed. There will be a printing charge of **\$10 per 100 bulletins**.

### **Use of the Building:**

**St. Peter's nave** is made available free of charge to any **member** who has maintained active church membership status in accordance with the congregation Constitution by both communing and making a contribution of record during the year prior to the wedding date reservation inquiry.

### **Inactive Members:**

**Members of St. Peter's** who are on the membership rolls **but do not meet the criterion of membership in good standing** set forth in the paragraph above, shall pay **\$150.00** for the use of the church nave.

### **Non-Members:**

Couples seeking to be married at St. Peter's, **neither of who is a member of the congregation**, will be assessed a fee of **\$300.00** for the use of the nave. Non-members are not permitted to use the church facilities for a reception or rehearsal dinner.

### **Payment of Fees:**

**All fees** should be placed in separate marked envelopes and given to the Pastor at the rehearsal. Cash is preferred, but individual checks may be written to the Pastor, the organist, the sexton, and the soloist if one is utilized.

## **(Schedule of Fees/Expenses – Continued)**

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### **COUPLES RESPONSIBILITIES:**

**Couples are responsible** for all items, such as, altar flowers, liturgical candle set, a white runner for the center aisle and any other decorative items they may want.

**Candlelight Wedding** – the couple is responsible for purchase of pew candles [**37 pews candle holders**]. Candles can be purchased online (6” or 8”). **Bring the candles with you to rehearsal.**

### **ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

**Flower Girls and Ring Bearers** – the inclusion of extremely young flower girls and ring bearers in the wedding party is not encouraged. If flower girls/ring bearers are to be used, they should be no less than five years of age.

**Flowers/Floral Decorations** – floral decorations may be placed in the church by the couple through any reputable florist. Delivery of the flowers for the ceremony can take place Saturday between the hours of 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.

**Holy Communion** is excellent with the understanding that all assembled shall be invited to participate. Holy Communion is a corporate act intended for all who believe. If Holy Communion is to be included, it may be preceded by an Act of Confession and Absolution at some point in the service.

**Aisle Runners** - the use of an aisle runner during the service is permitted but not encouraged. Aisle runners are merely an added expense to the couple which present a safety hazard to both the wedding party and to your guests since the heels of women’s shoes tend to get caught in the runner causing them to stumble and fall. In addition, aisle runners impact negatively on photographs of the bridal procession (i.e. white wedding gown against a white aisle runner does not allow for color contrast and thus obscures the beauty of the gown in photographs!) However, if you must have an aisle runner, please note that St. Peter’s does not have one available and you will, therefore, have to rent it from your florist. The center aisle of St. Peter’s Church nave is 60 feet in length.

**Pictures** – **NO Flash pictures** are to be taken during the Wedding Ceremony. Professional photographers may take time exposure and/or video tapes. **No church furniture is to be moved** for the picture taking. If the Pastor is to be photographed with the bride/groom, those pictures should be taken first.

**Rice/Birdseed** - in respect for the food needs of the world, it is requested that **NO RICE** be thrown at the bride/groom as they leave the church. **It is suggested that you have your guests throw ‘real’ rose petals, blow bubbles or ring hand-held bells.**

**Balloons** - Also, to avoid harming wildlife with helium balloons, it is strongly suggested that **NO BALLOONS** be released.

**Use of Alcohol or Drugs** – the use of alcohol or drugs of any kind by any member of the bridal party or the designated drivers prior to the wedding ceremony or on the church premises is strictly forbidden and cause for the cancellation of the ceremony.

## **PRE-MARITAL COUNSELING AND PLANNING:**

### **Counseling:**

All couples desiring to be married at St. Peter's are required to engage in pre-marital counseling. Couples can expect to meet with the Pastor for at least one or more sessions to discuss the wedding ceremony itself and an in-depth look at marriage.

It is assumed that the couples will utilize the marriage rite of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Any changes, additions, and/or substitutions to that rite are subject to the approval by the Pastor. The same is true for all aspects of the wedding ceremony.

### **Music:**

Normally, the selection of music for the wedding ceremony (including any selections to be sung by the soloist) will take place at an appointment between the couple to be married and the organist of the church (plus the soloist if one is to be utilized). In most instances, the organist will demonstrate a variety of appropriate musical selections. If the couple desires that other music be utilized, such selections should reflect high quality examples of the art of composition.

**Remember, the marriage service is a worship service, a sacred rite!** It is not necessary to have music at the church, but when it is used, it must be chosen with care and discrimination. It must be of the type to glorify God and accent the reverence of the service and be part of a religious experience, not merely entertainment. Thoughts expressed in a Christian marriage service include: God's love for the church through Christ forming the foundation of the love a man and woman share; asking God's blessing of the marriage; and the praise of God expressed when Christians rejoice.

For that reason, operatic selections and art songs should be examined to ascertain that both the background and musical context conform to the above statement. Many of these selections tend to extol romanticized or secular ideas of love and marriage and so detract from the worship and praise of God. Such songs would be suitable for use at the reception.

**Instruments** such as flute, trumpet, guitar – as well as voice – may be used to enhance the service. In choosing the music and musicians, the ability of the musician must correspond to the degree of difficulty of the music. Congregational participation can be encouraged by using hymns as part of the service.

Selections that are questionable regarding their appropriateness must be referred to the Pastor for final decision.

### **Scheduling your wedding date:**

Wedding services are discouraged during Holy Week and Sundays.

### **REHEARSALS:**

**Scheduling Rehearsal** - the Pastor and the couple may schedule a rehearsal. It is requested that the entire wedding party, including the parents/guardians of the couple attend the rehearsal. The Wedding Sub-Committee will assist the Pastor and the Wedding Party during the rehearsal and the day of the ceremony.

**Marriage License** – the Marriage License must be given to the Pastor no later than the rehearsal.



**Private Ceremony** – if the wedding is done in a private home/setting, respect for the marriage as a Christian service needs to be held up, particularly in the choice of music and special arrangements.

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<b><u>FEE SCHEDULE</u></b>	<b><u>MEMBER</u></b>	<b><u>NON-MEMBER</u></b>
Church Use	\$ - 0 -	\$ 300.00
'Inactive' Member Church Use	\$150.00	
Pastor's Service	\$150.00	\$250.00
Organist	\$150.00	\$150.00
(Rehearsal w/Soloist)	\$ 20.00	\$ 20.00
Sexton Fee	\$ 75.00	\$ 75.00
(Candlelight Service)	\$ 10.00	\$ 10.00
Soloist Fee	\$ 75.00	\$ 75.00