

PARK RIDGE COMMUNITY CHURCH
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A WEDDING MANUAL

Congratulation! Since you are reading these pages you are obviously preparing to celebrate a very important moment in your life, the beginning of your marriage.

We, the members and staff of Park Ridge Community Church, are ready and willing to arrange for weddings in our church whenever possible. Indeed, we have had over the past decade, a significant ministry to couples who wish to celebrate their marriage covenant in a Christian church. We are honored to serve the community in this way. However, please note that we only perform weddings for members or friends of members of Park Ridge Community Church.

We do hope that you will understand that one does not simply “rent” a church and staff as one might a reception hall and catering staff. Though we are more than willing to help you design a wedding ceremony that is sensitive to your religious background and personal beliefs, weddings celebrated at Park Ridge Community Church must reflect our own deep understanding of marriage as a sacred covenant between two persons who choose to share their journey together and with God. Because of the many services and activities of our church and its professional staff, we ask you to understand and abide by certain requirements. Please read the following pages carefully so as to avoid possible misunderstandings.

It is our hope that your wedding will be a profoundly religious experience, and a memorable event in the lives of all who share the occasion.

Scheduling a Wedding at Park Ridge Community Church (hereafter referred to as PRCC)

We do not schedule weddings more than six months in advance. We cannot be sure of our own church programs further than that, nor of the personal schedules of our professional staff.

After reading this manual, if you are willing to agree to fulfill the requirements, there is a Wedding Reservation Form to be filled out and returned to the church office either by mail, email, or fax. This can be done up to six months prior to your preferred wedding date. This does not mean your wedding is scheduled, only that you are communicating to us that you would like to have your wedding at our church on the specified date.

When the office receives your Wedding Reservation Form, it will be given to one of our pastors, who will then call you to confirm whether or not your date is available and to arrange a meeting with you.

The minister will expect to meet with both the bride and groom at least twice prior to the rehearsal. The first meeting should take place six months prior to your wedding. Until this meeting has been concluded, you may not assume your wedding has been scheduled. Our pastors reserve the right to choose not to perform a wedding ceremony.

A second meeting will be scheduled one month prior to your wedding. If this is not done at the first meeting, it will be your responsibility to call the pastor to schedule this appointment.

We require that these appointments take place during regular office hours, Monday – Friday, 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM from September through May and 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM from May through September.

General Information

Seating Capacity – The main sanctuary of our church can seat 500 for a wedding. The chapel will seat 50. If the wedding party consists of more than a single attendant each for the bride and groom, the sanctuary must be used.

Rehearsals – These are necessary for all sanctuary weddings. These normally require the presence of the wedding party, the parents if they are to be ushered in, ushers, readers, and all other parties involved in the actual service. Rehearsals are usually held the night before the wedding. Exceptions are during the summer months, when the city of Park Ridge holds weekly evening concerts on Fridays. During the summer months we will not schedule any weddings on Fridays and will generally schedule rehearsals for Saturday weddings on the preceding Thursday.

The order of the service – The pastor, in conjunction with the couple, and our Minister of Music, will determine the order of the service. A minister from our staff must officiate at all wedding services and rehearsals. Any special requests about guest pastors or changes in the service must be discussed with the officiating pastor during your scheduled meetings prior to the rehearsal.

Dressing – The bridal party may dress at the church. The Parlor or Library may be used for this purpose. The church will be available one hour prior to the ceremony.

Parking – Parking is adequate. There is a 48 car parking lot available for your use behind the church (south) and spaces along Courtland and Prospect Avenues provide another 30-40 parking spaces.

Wedding License

The law requires that if your marriage is to take place in Cook County, you must have a wedding license issued from the Cook County Court Building. These are located at 118 N. Clark Street in Chicago, with branches in Maywood, Skokie, and Rolling Meadows. This license may not be dated more than 60 days prior to your wedding date. If possible, you should plan to give your marriage license to the officiating minister at the rehearsal.

Music for the service

The Process – After your first meeting with the officiating minister, he/she will contact the Minister of Music of your wedding date. The Minister of Music will then contact you to set up a time to discuss the music needs of our wedding ceremony. After talking with you, the Minister of Music will arrange to have our organist/pianist available for your wedding and communicate with him/her about your music selections, for a fee. Our organist or one of his assistants will play for all weddings. We ask your understanding of this necessity. It greatly facilitates the wedding service to have an organist familiar with our order of worship as well as with our instrument.

A Word About Suitability – Sometimes couples desire a ‘church wedding’ simply because the church is seen as being a ‘nice place’ for the event, a place where flowers, candles, and music will enhance the beauty of the occasion. We need to be reminded, however, that the true reason for a church wedding is that marriage is an ordinance of God, and its solemnization before the altar is a placing of the marriage relationship under the blessing and commandment of God. Wedding music, therefore, is not simply any music that happens to be about love or romance, nor even any music one happens to like. Wedding music must be an integral part of the praise and prayer of the service, a part, really, of Christian worship. Certain songs that may be appropriate for your reception, or in some other setting, may be altogether unsuitable for your wedding. For this reason, you must clear all music that you wish to be played or sung at your wedding with the officiating minister. Our Minister of Music will consult with you about your music selections on a variety of pieces in a variety of styles that would be appropriate.

Some General Information About Service Music – Normally, the organist plays prelude music for 10-15 minutes before the service, any additional service music (processional, recessional, solo), and 10-15 minutes of music following the service while your guests exit the sanctuary.

Soloists/Instrumentalists are not necessary for the wedding service; however, they can certainly enhance your ceremony. Our church has available professional vocalists and instrumentalists should you wish to include such things in your service. Our Minister of Music can assist you in securing a suitable vocalist/instrumentalist should that be your desire.

Photography and Videography

Because a wedding is a service of worship, in which all guests participate to some extent, picture taking is discouraged. It is distracting for the wedding party, the minister, and guests alike. You must therefore, be willing to abide by the following rules concerning picture-taking at PRCC weddings:

1. Photographs may be taken anywhere in the church or on the church grounds beginning one hour prior to the service.

2. Your professional photographer (or friend serving in this capacity) may take flash photos of the wedding party entering the sanctuary during the processional music only.

3. Once the service begins (i.e., when the minister begins to talk) your photographer may only take time-exposure shots from the rear of the sanctuary or chapel, or from the balcony of the sanctuary. There is no flash photography allowed during the ceremony, either by your professional photographer or by guests attending the wedding. In the event that this happens, the minister will stop the ceremony and ask that those taking the pictures stop immediately.

4. Photographs may be taken in the chancel area after the service, and the minister will be happy to “re-enact” the service for the benefit of the photographer. At that time, the photographer may go anywhere he/she likes to get a better camera angle, for close-ups, etc. You will be given approximately 20 minutes for these pictures.

5. Your photographer must speak with the minister in his/her office at least 20 minutes before the service to be sure there are no misunderstandings.

6. Special note on videotaping: The service may be videotaped, but the rules governing still photography apply here as well. The videographer may not set up any additional lighting in the chapel or sanctuary, and may shoot the wedding only from the last pew of the chapel, the balcony of the sanctuary, or the doorway of the choir loft. If the videographer chooses to be in the choir loft, the camera must be mounted on a tripod and may not be moved during the service. Again, he/she must speak with the minister at least 20 minutes before the service begins.

Altar Flowers

The church does not purchase or arrange altar flowers for weddings. This is a normal part of planning with a florist. A single arrangement at the center of the chapel works best; the sanctuary altar is large enough for either a single center arrangement or two smaller side arrangements.

You may not use a trellis or other flowered archway in the church. Also, we do not recommend floor stands, especially with larger wedding parties, as your flowers will not be seen.

You may have flower arrangements or ribbons that attach to the pews, and if you have a flower girl, she may drop rose petals as she walks up the aisle.

Flowers may be delivered to the church one hour before the wedding. Please be sure you communicate this time frame with your florist when you place your order. Flowers left on the porch or outside the church prior to that may be ruined by rain or hot sun.

Please note: During the Christmas season the church's Altar Committee decorates the altar and chancel with flowers/greenery arrangements that cannot be moved. Persons choosing to schedule their wedding during the month of December shall accept the altar/chancel flower arrangements intact, making no addition or change whatsoever. There is no additional fee involved for these flowers.

Charges and Professional Fees

Building Rental Fee: \$300.00

This charge is a rental fee for the use of the sanctuary or chapel and includes the use of the Parlor and Library where the wedding party may choose to dress and wait for the ceremony to begin.

Aisle Runner Fee: \$100.00 (optional)

The church has available for your use a cloth aisle runner that reaches from the altar to the back of our sanctuary (65 feet). The fee involved covers our cost of having the runner dry-cleaned. Many florists have paper or plastic aisle runners available, which they include in your floral package. You have the option of using their disposable runner.

Bulletin: \$15.00 (optional)

If you would like to have a bulletin printed for your wedding, the church office will type and print this for you. You must provide to the parish coordinator any information needed to print this bulletin no less than two weeks prior to your wedding. If possible, you will be asked to proof a rough draft. The cost of this service includes the cost of the bulletins.

You may write a single check, made out to PRCC, for the combined costs of any of the above items. The total cost for church rental, runner, and bulletins is \$415.00.

Minister and Other Professional Fees:

Minister: \$400.00

The minister's fee for a sanctuary and chapel wedding includes two pre-marital conferences, service design, preparation, rehearsal, and the service itself.

Minister of Music: \$100.00

The Minister of Music fee includes one meeting with you in person or if you prefer, a phone consultation to assist you with your music selections, arrange for the organist and other musicians or soloists, and in general, help you plan the music for your wedding which will personalize the ceremony for you and your future spouse. If additional meetings are necessary, there may be an additional charge.

Organist: \$250.00

This fee includes an initial interview to select music, preparation (rehearsal time), and the service itself.

Soloist/Instrumentalist Fee: Varies

The fees for professional vocalists and instrumentalists hired by our own Minister of Music vary, but include preparation time and the service itself. If you choose to use your own soloist, an additional rehearsal fee may be charged. Please contact our Minister of Music as soon as possible if you choose to have additional music at your wedding.

Wedding Coordinator: \$ 225.00

Our wedding coordinator assists the bridal party at the rehearsal and on your wedding day. He/She opens the building one hour prior to the start of your ceremony, sets up the sanctuary or chapel, and cleans up the building after your wedding. He/She provides services including coordinating the arrival of the bridal party, florist, and photographer. The coordinator makes sure that all participants are at the proper spot for the wedding ceremony to begin and coordinates all aspects of your wedding day at the church.

THE THROWING OF BIRDSEED IS PROHIBITED – ONLY BUBBLES MAY BE USED

Payment of Wedding Fees – The payments must be in separate and clearly marked envelopes. Please do not bring one check for the whole amount. If you are paying by check, the checks will need to be received in our office no later than one month prior to your wedding. If you choose to pay in cash, the fees must be given to the minister no later than the day of your rehearsal. Please notify the pastor at the first meeting of your intended form of payment. Couples bringing checks to the rehearsal will be asked to exchange them for cash. Failure to pay the fees under the above stipulations will result in the cancellation of your wedding.

For your convenience, we have listed the names of our staff and a notation of the fees:

<u>Minister</u> Rev. Dr. Brett McCleneghan	\$400.00
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<u>Organist</u> Rick Hagedorn	\$250.00
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<u>Wedding Coordinator</u> Nicole Kremer	\$225.00
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<u>Minister of Music</u> Sasha Gerritson	\$100.00
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Vocalist/Instrumentalist
Fees vary depending on number and type of musicians required

Church
You may write one check for this entire amount made payable to Park Ridge Community Church.

Building Rental Fee	\$300.00
Aisle Runner Fee (optional)	\$100.00
Bulletin Fee (per 100, optional)	<u>\$15.00</u>

Total Church Fees	\$415.00
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