Wedding Service Manual

Central Presbyterian Church

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Wedding Service Manual

Central Presbyterian Church

(as of 2026)

Christian Marriage

Marriage is established by God. We are delighted you wish to celebrate this time of immense joy in your lives through your wedding ceremony at Central Presbyterian Church. Couples are welcome to experience Christian marriage as a service of worship at Central Presbyterian Church.

Marriage Preparation Process

All weddings are subject to approval by the pastor and the Session. Weddings may be held in the sanctuary, the Cownie Chapel or the east courtyard. In consultation with the pastor, the wedding and rehearsal date should be established as early as possible. After the deposit has been paid, the wedding will be entered on the calendar.

Planning Timeline

- Deposit of $500 is due at signing to reserve your wedding date at Central, along with your signed Wedding Application. This is a non-refundable deposit.
- 5 months before the wedding, meet with the pastor and wedding coordinator. The coordinator will provide you with a checklist of details. She will be present at both the rehearsal and the wedding.
- 4 months before the wedding, meet with organist/soloist to plan music
- 3 months before the wedding, work with pastor to finalize the service
- 1 month before wedding – you will be invoiced for the balance due

The Marriage License

You will need to plan to secure a marriage license from the Clerk of the District Court in any county in Iowa. The license should be given to the pastor at the rehearsal with the appropriate information provided at that time. The wedding coordinator or the pastor will see that the marriage license is properly signed, entered into the church records, and returned to the court.

3829 Grand Avenue | Des Moines, IA 50312
PHONE 515-279-3658 | FAX 515-279-3651
www.centralpresdsm.org | office@centralpresdsm.org | Facebook centralresdm

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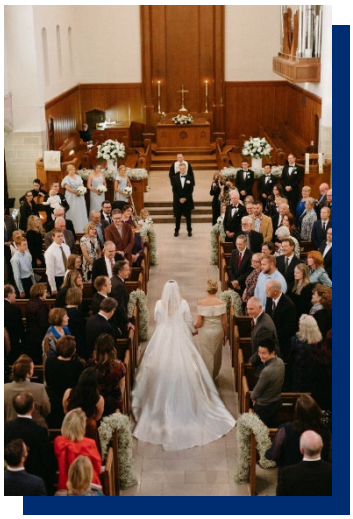
The Wedding Ceremony

Officiating Clergy

The pastor of Central Presbyterian Church will perform the wedding ceremony. However, other pastors may perform weddings at Central or assist in the ceremony with the approval of Central's pastor and Session. Only pastors who are ordained by a denomination (not licensed pastors) may conduct weddings at Central.

Music for the Marriage Service



Music for the wedding service should contribute to Christian worship, however exceptions can be made for other selections.

The staff organist or pianist will usually play for the service. Another musician may play for the service if approved by the pastor and music director. Appointments to discuss music selections will need to be made with our Music Director, or whomever we have designed to play for your wedding.

Hymn singing in the ceremony is both desirable and appropriate. Because of copyright laws, photocopying music is unacceptable and illegal, unless you are planning to have us live stream the service for you. If the live stream option is requested, you will need to provide us with the selection(s) titles, composer, and copyright information. Recorded music is permitted.

Photographs

Only non-flash pictures and videotapes with existing light may be taken during the service, only from the balcony and only if no disturbance is caused. This is to preserve the dignity, beauty, and worship atmosphere of the wedding service. Flash pictures may be taken during the processional and the recessional, but not during the ceremony itself. Please inform your photographer of this policy and ask the ushers to inform guests with cameras.

Posed pictures may be taken either before or after the ceremony at your discretion. If photographs are taken prior to the wedding, they should be completed at least 45 minutes prior to the start of the ceremony as guests will be arriving.

A drone may be permitted in the sanctuary, if the person operating the drone is an experienced photographer who offers this kind of service. You will need to make the pastor aware of your plans.

Rehearsal

The purpose of a rehearsal is to practice entrances, exits and other elements of the wedding so that on the day of the wedding everyone's mind will be free from worry and people will be able to focus upon the beauty and sacred meaning of the ceremony.

The rehearsal is customarily the evening before the day of the wedding. Once everyone is present, an hour is usually more than sufficient to accomplish what needs to be done. All the details of the rehearsal and service are at the discretion of the pastor of Central Presbyterian Church.

If you have hired an outside wedding planner or coordinator, someone from that company must be on hand for the rehearsal. Central's wedding coordinator is there to assist you and/or your hired vendor with building requirements, event space, and optional items available for your wedding.

Building Use Guidelines and Information

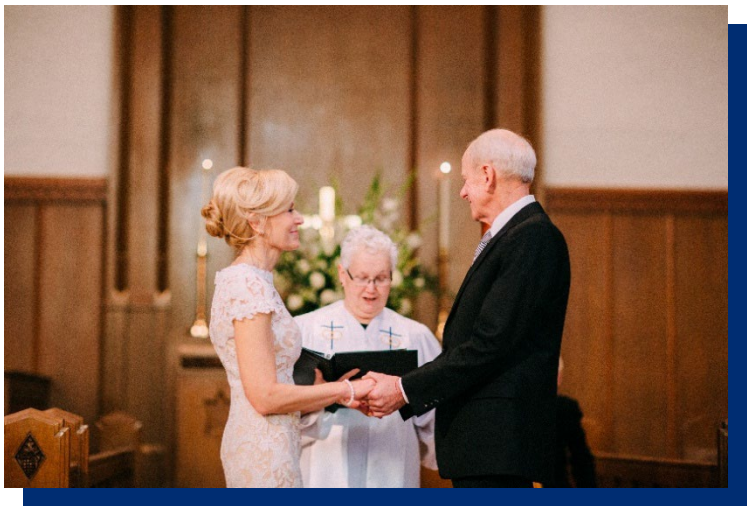
For a full explanation of Central's building use policies, please see the Building Use Guidelines, available on Central's website or by request. The following policies are specific to weddings held at Central Presbyterian Church.

Dressing Rooms for the Wedding Party

There are rooms in which the bride and her attendants, and the groom and his attendants, may dress. Restrooms are located nearby.

Sound

Audio and Video technicians will be available to assist with set-up and management of the microphones, sound, and video or live stream options for the officiate, vocalists, musicians and readers at the rehearsal and wedding.



Lost or Stolen Items

The church will not be responsible for lost or stolen items.

Floral Arrangements and Décor

- **Balloon releases**, rice, birdseed, and other thrown projectiles are dangerous to the environment and people and are therefore prohibited.
- **Candles** – The church can provide candles for a fee.
- **Church Decorations** – Visual arts display such as special chancel decorations, banners and hangings must be discussed with the church prior to installation.

Flower Donation

If you would like to donate the wedding flowers to be used in church on Sunday, arrangements may be made in advance with the church office. If memorial flowers have not been scheduled for that Sunday, the gift will be gratefully received.

Wedding Cancellation Clause

If the Couple chooses to cancel their wedding ceremony at Central Presbyterian Church of Des Moines, Iowa, written notice must be provided to the Church Office. The following terms will apply:

Notice Period & Refunds

- **More than 6 months before the scheduled date**: All payments made, minus a non-refundable administrative fee of $75 will be refunded.
- **Between 3–6 months before the scheduled date**: 50% of the total fees paid will be refunded.
- **Less than 3 months before the scheduled date**: No refund will be issued.

Church-Initiated Cancellation

The Church reserves the right to cancel the ceremony in cases of building damage, unsafe conditions, or events beyond its control (e.g., natural disasters). In such cases, all payments will be refunded in full.

Rescheduling

If the Couple wishes to reschedule instead of cancel, the Church will make reasonable efforts to accommodate the new date. Rescheduling within 12 months of the original date will not incur additional fees, subject to availability.

Special Circumstances

In cases of extreme hardship or unforeseen emergencies, the Church Board may, at its sole discretion, waive or adjust the cancellation terms.

Fee Schedule for Weddings

Service or Facility	Active Member	Inactive or Non-Member
DEPOSIT (Non-refundable)*	*$500	*$500
A $500 deposit is required at the time your wedding is approved and secured on the Church calendar. Please see the Wedding Cancellation Clause on page 6 for details.		
REQUIRED SERVICES		
Sanctuary and East Parlor rental	Included	$500
Clergy	$300	$500
Wedding Coordinator	$300	$500
Pianist (standard or optional)	$250	$300
Audio Technician	$150	$200
Building Support	$150	$300
Cleaning service	$350	$500
REQUIRED SERVICES TOTAL:	1,500	$2,800
Service or Facility	**Active Member**	**Inactive or Non-Member**
OPTIONAL SERVICES		
Fellowship Hall (reception)	$300	$500
Cownie Chapel (smaller service)	Included	$250
Roberts Library (dressing room)	$150	$150
Soloist	$150	$150
Organist	$150	$150
Soloist	$150	$150
Video Technician (live stream)	$150	$200
Candles for candelabra (optional)	$50	$50

Central reserves the right to charge for any additional services requested that are not listed in the Fee Schedule. Whatever your needs are, please discuss them with our Wedding Coordinator and a fee, if required, will be proposed.

As stated in the Fee Schedule, a deposit is required at the time of booking. Please see the Wedding Cancellation Clause on page 6 for details.

Checks will be made payable to individual staff members at Central for each of the services provided, including a check to Central Presbyterian for facility rental fees. At the time of invoicing, you will be provided with a list of names and amounts to assist you with preparing payment. Fees are required to be paid on or before the Rehearsal date.

Deposits can be paid online at https://engage.suran.com/centralpresdm/s/give/new-gift, by selecting the Wedding fund. In the comment section, please add the name of the Wedding Party when submitting your online payment. Otherwise, the deposit check can be mailed to the Church Office at 3829 Grand Ave, Des Moines, 50312, with the Wedding Party name in the memo line.

Wedding Application

Central Presbyterian Church

Wedding date: _____ Time: _____

Rehearsal date: _____ Time: _____

Party A

Name: _____

First Middle Last

Address: _____

Street City State Zip

Phone: _____

Home Cell

Email: _____

Church membership: _____

Name after marriage: _____

Party B

Name: _____

First Middle Last

Address: _____

Street City State Zip

Phone: _____

Home Cell

Email: _____

Church membership: _____

Name after marriage: _____

Address after wedding: _____

Will you be requesting a guest pastor?

Name: _____

Ordination date & denomination: _____

Contact information: _____

_____

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