
**MCILWAIN MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL**

**MCILWAIN MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
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**REFERENCE: 2.51
COMMITTEE:
APP DATE: 03/06/2000
REV DATE: 02/15/2000**

SUBJECT: Weddings

SECTION I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Weddings are an important, exciting time! People instinctively turn to the church when they get married because they are already convinced that marriage was God's idea from the very beginning (Genesis 2:22-24). Having a wedding in a church building will not make a couple any more married in God's eyes. But it is fitting for believers to marry in a building designed for worship because they recognize the need for God's blessing and help. A marriage ceremony is not just two people giving their lives to each other, but is a service in which both the bride and groom come before God as worshipers.

The fact that you are interested in being married at McIlwain indicates that you want God's blessing on your marriage. Wonderful! We want to help you in that important commitment so that you establish a Christian home. Marriage is serious business. God intends that it be for life. That is why the Bible says that believers must only marry "in the Lord." This is expressed in 2 Corinthians 6:14, "Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?"

If your wedding is at McIlwain, we want it to be a service of worship and celebration. We want to join with you in seeking God's blessing on your lives. You are encouraged to discuss your plans with one of the pastors early in the process so that they can guide you. Please understand that church membership does not guarantee the right to be married in the church building, or that one of the pastors can perform your wedding on a specific date. Plan ahead so that you won't be disappointed.

SECTION II. PRELIMINARY ARRANGEMENTS

1. Those desiring to be married should inform their parents of their intent to marry and seek their blessings before contacting the minister. Parents should be kept informed of plans and parent approval sought at each stage of planning.
2. Those seeking marriage should inform the minister at the earliest opportunity of a desire to wed. He will provide counsel, especially about the spiritual significance of marriage. Arrangements should be made and counseling begun, preferably several months in advance of the wedding date.
3. It is also recommended that those seeking marriage have a physical examination and a conference with their family physician.
4. In the absence of a minister, the Clerk of Session should be contacted about who may be approved to conduct your wedding.

5. If either party has married previously the circumstances of their divorce should be discussed fully with the minister and also receive approval of the Session.
6. Prior to the rehearsal those desiring to be married should have discussed with the minister all plans for the wedding and rehearsal and filled out the Wedding Information Form.
7. The marriage license should be secured and given to the minister at the rehearsal (or at least one day before the wedding).

SECTION III. THE REHEARSAL

1. It is necessary to hold a rehearsal a day or two before a sanctuary wedding. The minister, as the one who will conduct the wedding, also conducts the rehearsal. Every effort will be made to prepare a service, which will be meaningful and significant for the bride and groom as well as appropriate for worship.
2. All members of the wedding party should be present and on time. Every step of the ceremony should be followed so that all will be familiar with the service and be able to participate without needless anxiety.
3. Those who will be in the receiving line at the reception should have received their instructions before the rehearsal or at the end.

SECTION IV. THE WEDDING AND RECEPTION

1. If members of the wedding party plan to use alcoholic beverages before or during the wedding, it is suggested that the marriage be planned elsewhere, because no alcoholic beverages may be used on the church property. The minister will not allow persons to participate who have been drinking or appear to be under the influence of alcohol. The same rules apply to the misuse of drugs.
2. Smoking is not permitted in any of the buildings and it is requested that members of the wedding party be informed of this policy.
3. Flash photography is inappropriate and distracting during the wedding ceremony, but posed photographs may be taken afterwards. Definite arrangements should be made with the photographer before rehearsal. Discreet videotaping is allowed and details may be discussed with the minister.
4. Decorations, including floral installations, should be appropriate for worship. Those desiring to be married are responsible for providing and arranging all flowers and decorations. There should be a clear understanding with the florist as to delivery and removal. **GIVE THIS INFORMATION TO THE BUILDING CUSTODIAN.**
5. The use of candles should be discussed with the minister and/or hostess.
6. You are responsible for obtaining the organist, soloist or other musicians planned to be used for the wedding. The minister should approve the musicians and music. He must have this information prior to the rehearsal, and it would be wise to confer with him much earlier before final plans are made.
7. Guests may not throw rice or birdseed inside the buildings or on the steps.

SECTION V. USE OF CHURCH FACILITIES

1. The bride and groom should contact the custodian at least seven days in advance of the wedding or rehearsal. Written instructions are a great help in avoiding misunderstandings and will relieve all of worries and assure the wedding party of his presence when needed. The custodian will need to know what articles of furniture will be needed and those to be removed; when to open and close the buildings; which sections to be closed and how many seats to reserve; the desired lighting arrangements; and, what is to be done with the flowers and decorations after the wedding.
2. No nails or tacks may be driven into woodwork or plaster.
3. The bride and groom shall be responsible for all equipment not belonging to the church used in the wedding or reception and shall pay for loss or damage due to the use or presence of such equipment before, during, or after the events. The bride and groom are also responsible for any damage to church facilities and equipment.
4. The bride and groom shall be responsible for the cleaning of any linens, punch bowl, cups, dishes, etc...used in the reception.

SECTION VI. FACILITY CHARGES

There will be no charge for the use of the physical facilities for the wedding of a member of McIlwain Memorial Presbyterian Church (including the wedding of an immediate family member of a church member). However the following costs will apply for the various personnel involved:

Wedding:

Hostess:	\$35.00
Custodian:	25.00
Sound Technician:	40.00

Reception:

Hostess:	\$35.00
Custodian:	25.00

Organist:

Rehearsal/Wedding	\$85.00*
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*(Flat fee – same cost even if there is no rehearsal)

The above fees should be paid to the church at least a week prior to the wedding. The church will pay the employees.

SECTION VII. WEDDING INFORMATION FORM

The **WEDDING INFORMATION FORM** will be completed and returned to the church office prior to the rehearsal to assist all involved parties in preparation for the wedding. See attached form.

**MCILWAIN MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
WEDDING INFORMATION FORM**

WEDDING DESIRED FOR:

DATE: _____ TIME: _____ PLACE: _____

PERSONAL INFORMATION:

GROOM: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

OCCUPATION: _____ CHURCH AFFILIATION: _____

BIRTH DATE: _____ IS THIS YOUR FIRST MARRIAGE? _____

BRIDE: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

OCCUPATION: _____ CHURCH AFFILIATION: _____

BIRTH DATE: _____ IS THIS YOUR FIRST MARRIAGE? _____

ADDRESS AFTER WEDDING: _____

WEDDING DETAILS:

NAME ANY OTHER MINISTER TO BE ASKED TO PARTICIPATE: _____

BRIDE'S ESCORT: _____ BEST MAN: _____

MAID/MATRON OF HONOR: _____

ORGANIST AND SINGER(S): _____

MUSICAL COMPOSITIONS TO BE PLAYED OR SUNG: _____

FLORIST: _____ PHOTOGRAPHER: _____

REHEARSAL: DATE: _____ TIME: _____

SITE OF RECEPTION: _____