

HAZELWOOD CHRISTIAN CHURCH WEDDING POLICY

-revised April 2008

I. LOOKING FORWARD TO YOUR CHURCH WEDDING

It is a joy to be united in marriage through the sacrament of Holy Matrimony at Hazelwood. We believe this is an experience of the greatest importance between you, your heart's desire and your loving God. Marriage witnessed before God and in the company of God's people is an authentic act of Christian worship. Weddings are a celebration of God's gracious gift of life, and the special gift of life together as two commit themselves to each other in the presence of God and the company of their family and friends.

To a Christian, marriage is more than a legally binding contract. It is a covenant between two individuals, founded upon vows made before God. Thus understood, marriage becomes a lifelong union.

- In body: Physical and organic.
- In mind: Sharing ideals, purposes, aims.
- In spirit: The recognition of God's presence in our lives.

Marriage is one of the major experiences of life involving a deliberate and faithful decision--the decision to be a partner in establishing a Christian home.

A church wedding is more than a social event. If the church wedding is to have integrity, those who participate in it need to have a sincere desire to maintain their marriage on the firm foundation of faith in God. Just as God's blessing is invoked upon the new relationship, so should divine guidance continue to be sought in private and corporate worship. A marriage that begins in the church should continue in the church.

II. YOUR WEDDING - SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

There will be many things to consider in planning your wedding. At times, some of the details may seem to take over and cause you to lose sight of the meanings behind your plans.

We suggest that you make every effort to come to the day of your wedding physically rested, spiritually aware, and genuinely concerned that the event be a beautiful and meaningful occasion--one you will truly wish to remember.

Your wedding day is the creation of a memory. A helpful guideline is this -- what is it that you wish to remember about your wedding? Insofar as possible and appropriate, you should plan accordingly.

The Hazelwood Christian Church staff pledges to do its part in assisting you in making your wedding something to remember.

III. CONTACTING APPROPRIATE STAFF

The following staff members may be reached during the day, Monday through Friday, in their by calling (765) 282-5969.

Rev. Colby Smith
Senior Minister

Linette Cook
Administrative Assistant

James Petty
Hazelwood Staff Organist

John Burke
Property Manager

IV. WHERE TO BEGIN - SCHEDULING YOUR WEDDING

When you have decided to be married, you should do the following as soon as possible:

- A. Call the church office at 765- 282-5969. As the church calendar is often quite busy, the sooner you call with your dates the better the probability of insuring the time you desire.
- B. Inform the receptionist that you are interested in being married. You will be connected to the Administrative Assistant who handles all wedding arrangements. The Administrative Assistant will need to know this information:
 1. Desired date, time, and place of your rehearsal and wedding. Note: weddings on Sundays, holidays, and on days preceding holidays are at the minister's discretion. Weddings at Hazelwood need to be arranged no later than four months prior to the wedding date. All weddings must first go through a 4 – 6 session of religious instruction. This is a Muncie community church covenant.
 2. A minister from our congregation will officiate. The minister must be consulted when arrangements with other ministers are desired.
 3. Under ordinary circumstances, receptions are not held at Hazelwood.
 4. The Administrative Assistant will make arrangements with the minister conducting the service for a mutually agreeable time for a conference with the couple.
 5. After the meeting with the minister, schedule a meeting with our staff organist to discuss the music to be played. (At least two months prior to wedding.)

V. GUEST MINISTER(S)

It is Hazelwood's policy for a minister of this church to preside at all marriage services. If there is a desire to have guest clergy assist in the service, work with the minister, so that an appropriate invitation may be issued. Church policy states a minister from Hazelwood Christian Church always participants in the service, and always conducts the rehearsal.

VI. DRESSING FACILITIES

Sanctuary wedding

Dressing facilities for the bride and her attendants are located in the lower level of the sanctuary. Adequate space, full length mirrors, dress racks and rest-room facilities are included.

The Chapel, at the front left of the Sanctuary is available for the groom and his attendants. Two restrooms are at the front right of the sanctuary, and both are available to the groom and his attendants. The Sacristy is reserved for the minister.

VII. MARRIAGE CONFERENCES

Arrangements are to be made for personal conferences with the minister, with both the bride and groom present. These should normally begin at least 4 months in advance of the wedding date.

The number of sessions vary according to each set of circumstances. As our congregation is a participant in the Muncie Community Marriage Covenant, the couple should be prepared for a total of 4 to 6 premarital sessions, at which both bride and groom are present.

The couple can plan on approximately one hour for each conference. Time will be set aside to discuss:

- The meaning of Christian marriage.
- The meaning of the various parts of the marriage service.

Particular attention will be given to the needs of the couple being counseled.

The couple is reminded of the need for a marriage license in Indiana. Application for a license is made at the County Clerk's office, 100 West Main Street (747-7726). Indiana residents must apply in the county they live in. Out-of-state residents must apply in the county they want to be married in. Payment to the Clerk's Office may be either cash or money order.

VIII. MUSIC

The Hazelwood organist is to play for all weddings unless other arrangements are made with the minister and the organist.

In the event a guest organist is desired and a consultation with the church organist is necessary, there will be a fee for the church organist.

The organist of the church oversees wedding music. The couple is asked not to make any arrangements for music until they have had a conference with the organist. It is recommended to contact the church organist at least eight weeks prior to the wedding.

Often, the bride and groom find they were fairly unaware of much of the music. It is suggested that songs which have a special significance be utilized at the reception. Also, the reception is a more suitable place for popular music. Sanctuary weddings at Hazelwood will have the music selections drawn from either sacred or classical.

The prelude music is selected by the organist from the classical literature for the organ. There is a listing of suggested selections. A recorded number of appropriate selections is available for your review.

If you desire a soloist, please discuss this with the organist before making final plans. It is suggested that the vocal solo(s) be a part of the prelude music and/or at designated places determined by the minister and the organist.

The organist and the couple together plan the music for the processional and recessional. The organist will be pleased to help you select music which is festive, stately, and appropriate to the joyous occasion.

The purpose of the music is for a joyous service of praise and thanksgiving. Its purpose is to inspire and uplift the sacrament of Christian Marriage.

IX. REHEARSAL

The wedding rehearsal is directed by the Hazelwood minister in consultation with the bride and groom. All members of the wedding party: bride, groom, attendants, parents, ushers, acolytes, ring bearers, flower girls, etc., are requested to be available promptly at the appointed time, ready for the rehearsal. Rehearsals usually require an hour.

The rehearsal is usually scheduled for the evening preceding the day of the wedding. Its purpose is to compile all the details in your awareness before the wedding, so that you and the wedding party may conduct yourselves in the church with a minimum of confusion at the wedding itself.

Please remember to bring your marriage license to the rehearsal. If you desire the minister, the organist, wedding coordinator or others to attend the rehearsal dinner or reception, it is appropriate to send them an invitation.

X. GROUNDS - USE OF FACILITIES

The church sanctuary seats 300, and the chapel seats 25. Both the sanctuary and chapel are available, without charge, to members of the church for wedding ceremonies. The Fellowship House, 1401 West Beechwood, and grounds are also available, for very small weddings - likewise without charge to members.

There is a charge for use of various church facilities, grounds, and personnel for non-members. This will be discussed with you at the time of booking your wedding.

XI. FEES

- \$100 REFUNDABLE deposit.
- Hazelwood members please contact the church office for taking care of the organist, wedding coordinator, sound technician and resulting housekeeping services.
- For wedding couples who have not been participating members within the past twelve months, the amount for all services and buildings/grounds is \$1,500. This is payable to Hazelwood Christian Church and is due one week prior to wedding. Your package is all inclusive and includes:
 1. Minister – counseling, rehearsal, wedding
 2. Organist – consultation, rehearsal, wedding
 3. Coordinator – present for rehearsal and wedding and manages: ushers; lining up/escorting of family; placement bridal party; communication with organist; placement of bride and her escort.
 4. Sound Engineer – room sound volumes, manages all microphones, records the service and participates in both rehearsal and wedding
 5. Housekeeping – unlock; places wedding set-up including kneeling bench, candelabras; paramount change over; turn back over for Sunday worship; clean all restrooms; vacuum all carpets; adjust thermostats; lockup
 6. Building use for rehearsal and wedding. Candles with their liquid fuel. Two candelabras if desired. Kneeling bench if desired.

XII. LAWN WEDDINGS

It is understandable why there are requests for weddings on the grounds of Hazelwood. The beauty makes for a memorable setting.

However, over the years many churches have had unfortunate experiences with lawn weddings. For one, Indiana weather is unpredictable much of the year, making for last-minute change of plans. This usually calls for the need of two rehearsals--one inside and the other outside.

A musical instrument is not readily available for a lawn wedding. Strings or a harp could be used.

A larger deposit for outdoor weddings is required.

The wedding party assumes responsibility for renting, setting up, and dismantling all chairs, etc., used in an outdoor wedding. This involves work beyond that usually required of the Caretaker for inside weddings, and is thus not included in the normal fee.

No receptions are to be held on the grounds.

XIII. RECEIVING LINE

Receiving lines may be organized in several ways. The following allows for the warm greeting of guests and convenience of introduction.

Mother of Bride
Father of Groom
Mother of Groom
Father of Bride
Bride
Bridegroom

Suggested areas:

Sanctuary:

XNarthex or rotunda

XNorth outside landing beyond the steps, beginning the sidewalk to the Fellowship House.

Fellowship House:

XThe east side of the front steps to the Fellowship House. The porch, or in entry hall, or in front of the fireplace in the dining room.

Couples may, instead, choose to dismiss their guests, and greet them, by pews.

XIV. DECORATIONS

Simplicity is always in good taste, and especially in keeping with the architecture of the church building. Extravagant and wasteful arrangements of flowers are discouraged.

Candles are symbolic of the light of the world, and enhance any worship setting. Due to the air currents in the sanctuary, we recommend utilizing the church's oil candles and candelabra. Regular candles, even dripless, often burn down too quickly and too unevenly. If candles are desired at the ends of the pews in the sanctuary, they can be secured from your florist.

The candles which are present on the Communion Table are sufficient for the wedding service. They and others may be lighted by the usher or acolyte with a taper provided by the church.

Unity candles are frequently part of the marriage ceremony. If such a candle is desired, it is to be provided by the couple. The communion candles may serve as heritage candles to be lighted by mothers or parents.

Decorating the pews is discouraged because care must be taken to avoid any damage to the furnishings by use of nails, tacks, and tape. Bows may be attached with appropriate cushioned fasteners from florists.

Arrangements should be made with the florist for the removal of the decorations immediately after the ceremony. Any candle wax on the carpet resulting from candles placed by the florist is to be removed by the florist.

An aisle runner can be secured from your florist, and one is required if fresh flower petals are used. From the chancel steps to the glass doors, it is 64 feet. The minister and organist should know you are using a runner, as it affects the music of the service. The church provides a kneeling bench for couples who wish to kneel for prayer during the ceremony.

XV. PHOTOGRAPHY, VIDEOS, AND SOUND SYSTEM

As many pictures that can be taken before the wedding is helpful to everyone involved, especially your wedding guests. They may also be taken after the guests have left the site of the wedding ceremony.

No photography may be taken during the service, with these exceptions: time exposures from the balcony of the sanctuary, and a flash picture prior to the processional and following the recessional.

All photographs should be taken by a designated photographer. Photographers other than the designated photographer may take pictures before or after the service, as previously agreed upon with the designated photographer.

Movie equipment may be used, if by an experienced operator. The camera should be stationed in the left chancel area of the sanctuary or in the balcony. Moving around the sanctuary during the wedding is discouraged and not in keeping with the atmosphere of worship.

A tape recording of your wedding service is provided from Hazelwood's sound engineer.

XVI. CONDUCT OF WEDDING GUESTS

For the benefit of all concerned, smoking and the use of alcoholic beverages are prohibited in all areas of the church buildings and grounds.

It is customary to use birdseed instead of rice. Please do not throw the seed inside the buildings. Also, wedding bubbles may be used instead. If helium balloons are desired, they must be biodegradable.

XVII. USHERING

All ushers would find it very helpful to acquaint themselves with the following instructions in order that the wedding service may proceed smoothly.

1. Arrive one hour before the wedding is to begin. More time may be needed if pictures are to be taken before the ceremony.
2. Ushers are responsible for lighting and extinguishing the candles used in the ceremony, unless an acolyte is used. These include candelabra, in addition to the two candles on the communion table. The two on the communion table may be used as heritage candles to be lighted by mothers or parents. If so, the ushers would not light these candles.
caution - if a unity candle is provided, do not light this candle, as the couple will light it during the service.
3. Tapers are available for your use. The wick may need to be exposed by pushing it up through the handle. Be careful not to expose too much, as the flame becomes larger.
4. Candles may be lighted approximately thirty minutes before the beginning of the wedding, and extinguished after the last guests have left. If pictures are to be made immediately following the service, the candles may be extinguished following the taking of the pictures.
USHERS ARE RESPONSIBLE TO SEE THAT THIS IS DONE.
5. The ushering, itself, may be directed as the couple and the minister see fit. It is customary to seat the bride's family on the left side, (facing the front), and the groom's family on the right. An usher needs to be designated for each side of the aisle.
6. The front rows on either side are left vacant unless they are expected to be needed.
7. The second row from the front, on the right, is reserved for the groom's parents--on the left, for the bride's mother.
8. The next remaining rows are reserved for grandparents and immediate family members.
9. Guests are ushered in this order: those arriving early, friends, immediate family, grandparents, groom's parents, mother of the bride.

(ushering continued)

10. The groom's parents should be escorted to their seats after all other guests are seated, except the bride's mother, who is escorted in just before the start of the processional, which is usually the hour of the wedding. *DO NOT SEAT MOTHER OF THE BRIDE if there is an emergency which justifies delay.*
11. Check with the minister and the organist at the rehearsal, for the exact time and coordination of seating and music.
12. Offer right arm to the lady, if ushering to the right side of the aisle; the left, if ushering to the left. The husband or escort walks behind you and your guest. Wait until both guests are seated before returning to the narthex to seat other guests. Male guests unaccompanied by a lady walk beside you.
13. No one should be ushered down the center aisle after the bride's mother is seated. Seat latecomers from the side, and toward the back, unless they are immediate family.
14. No one is to be seated during the processional.
15. Ushers who are also to serve as groomsmen should go to the groom's quarters immediately after ushering the mother of the bride, or after unrolling the aisle runner, if one is being used. In fact, it is better if there are separate ushers and groomsmen, to facilitate the processional.