

# GROVE CITY ALLIANCE CHURCH



2009

*Wedding Policy Manual*

# A Church Wedding

Congratulations on your engagement and decision to get married. God blessed marriage by officiating the first marriage between Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Then Jesus honored marriage by performing His first miracle at a wedding in Cana of Galilee.

**You have asked for a church wedding.** You could have chosen to elope. You could have gone to a justice of the peace, or to a Las Vegas wedding chapel. You could have decided to live together without getting married. You have done the right thing. You are seeking to start your life together with God's blessing and continued help.

**You are asking for God's blessing and approval.** The Bible is God's Word. It is the owner's manual for life and marriage, as well as God's blueprint for eternal salvation. God has instituted marriage. He has set up certain rules, principles, and guidelines for building a successful marriage and home that will last a lifetime.

**You have asked your pastor to marry you.** A pastor serves as God's representative in your wedding. It is his solemn duty and privilege to counsel, warn, instruct, and encourage you through God's Word toward a wholesome God-honoring marriage.

**We are in a cultural crisis in marriage.** More than 50% of marriages today end in divorce, or separation. Many couples in love deny that marital problems can happen to them. They assume that any differences will fade with time, or will not be important in the long run, or that they will be able to change the other person after marriage. This is not true. The harsh reality is that 25% of all couples are separated or divorced within the first three years of marriage.

The truth is that many Americans spend more time on their hobbies than they do on their marital relationship. It is easier to get married than to get a driver's license. There is less scrutiny over a marriage than there is to buy a car or take out a mortgage on a house.

**We require premarital counseling** for all church weddings. It has been demonstrated that it is possible to measure the predictability of marital success. It is possible to prepare for a marriage that will last. Many premarital questionnaires have been developed that can predict with 80% accuracy which couples will divorce during the first three years of marriage. Premarital counseling is part of the process of avoiding unnecessary conflicts and divorces.

Please see our *Premarital Counseling Policies and Procedures* for details. A *Wedding License* is required by the State of Pennsylvania. You must request and secure a wedding license within 60 days of the wedding service and provide the minister with that document at the rehearsal. Wedding licenses may be obtained at the Mercer County Court House.

# The Wedding Ceremony

Your minister will provide you with a selection of ceremonies that are appropriate. Any variations to these ceremonies must be approved by the officiating minister and provided to him in writing at least one week prior to the wedding.

The wedding ceremony is a matter of taste. Each bride will choose the elements of the service that please her. She is free to adapt and rewrite parts of the service with the minister's consultation and approval.

Arrangement of the wedding party, decorations, participants, musicians, music, etc. shall be at the discretion of the bride with the approval of the minister. This is your wedding and we want it to be all that you dreamed it to be.

## Basic Elements of a Wedding

- Prelude
- Invocation
- Scripture
- Challenge to the Groom and Bride
- Giving of the Bride
- Vows
- Presentation of the Rings
- Pronouncement of Marriage
- The Kiss
- Unity Candle
- Prayer
- Benediction
- Presentation of the Newly Wed Couple
- Recessional

## The Florist

We do not provide any candelabras, candles, kneeling altars, or decorations of any kind. Florists may have access to the facilities to decorate two hours in advance of the wedding hour.

Clean-up should be completed within two hours after the scheduled beginning time of the ceremony.

Candles should be secured in candleholders. Low residue candles should be used with plastic sheets under any candelabra in order to prevent the possibility of wax dripping on the carpet.

Furnishings within the Sanctuary **may not be moved**.

Guests should be informed that birdseed is not to be thrown inside the building. It may be used outside in the parking area only (Rice and confetti are not permitted in any

area.) The crash provided by a florist must be anchored with weights, not tacks, staples, etc. Decorations must be hung only from hooks provided. Tack, tape, nails and staples are not permitted anywhere. Prompt removal of decorations following usage is required.

Only authorized persons shall operate the public address system, thermostat, lights, screen projectors, musical instruments. An authorized person is one authorized by the Senior Pastor, Worship Pastor, or Trustees.

## **The Photographer and Videographer**

The photographer may take as many pictures *BEFORE* the ceremony as needed. Your photographer should be instructed to be as non-intrusive as possible during the service. The wedding ceremony begins with the bridesmaid processional and ends at the kiss. Timed exposures may be taken during this interval. The photographer should be positioned at the rear of the Sanctuary during the ceremony.

We ask that the photographer be as unobtrusive as possible and be dressed appropriately for a wedding.

All policies and restrictions that apply to the photographer also apply to any friend or member of the family who may be planning to use his or her own personal camera for taking pictures. Ushers are responsible for instructing guests who carry in cameras regarding the flash policy.

The photographer and videographer may have access to the facility 1½ hours in advance of the wedding time. Photography services are to be completed and dismissed within two hours after the scheduled beginning time of the ceremony.

## **Wedding Music**

The music you choose for your wedding plays a very important part in your special day. It should reflect the spiritual nature of the occasion, although you may want to include a few secular songs. The secular song must be appropriate for a church setting (no foul language or sexual connotation).

The Music Information Form (included in the wedding application) must be completed and submitted to the church office at least six weeks prior to your wedding date. Any desired wedding musicians are your responsibility to seek and hire. The church does not automatically provide music for weddings.

A Grove City Alliance Church trained sound engineer will do a sound check for soloists during rehearsal. If you are using a tape or CD, this needs to be given to the sound engineer at or before the rehearsal.

Only authorized persons shall operate the public address system, thermostat, lights, screen projectors, musical instruments. An authorized person is one authorized by the Senior Pastor, Worship Pastor, or minister in charge.

# Wedding Fees

All wedding fees are listed below. Upon receipt of your application and deposit, a written date and time confirmation will be mailed to you. Weddings and receptions will be scheduled with a four-hour time limit. This gives a two-hour period prior to the wedding for decoration and setup and a two-hour period after the scheduled beginning time of the wedding for completion of the ceremony and reception.

**Members** are people who regularly attend and worship with us at Grove City Alliance Church and they are listed on our telephone and address list. They need not be official members. It does not apply to non-attending members of their family or extended families. Members are people who consider this their church home.

**Non-members** are people who do not attend here at Grove City Alliance Church. They will be given secondary choice to wedding dates with priority given to Grove City Alliance Church members and programs.

	<b>Members</b>	<b>Non-Members</b>
<b>Security Deposit:</b>	<b>\$ 100</b>	<b>\$ 100</b>

This fee is to confirm the reservation on the building. It is due at the time the building reservation is requested. This deposit is required at the time you submit your application for a wedding at the Grove City Alliance Church. This check will be held and returned immediately following your wedding date under these conditions:

- a. Grove City Alliance Church Wedding Policies are followed and adhered to.
- b. There is no cause for excessive clean-up following the wedding or reception.
- c. No damages have occurred to the premises.
- d. Reserved beginning and ending times have been respected.
- e. The fees were paid in full.

	<b>Members</b>	<b>Non-Members</b>
<b>Sanctuary Use</b>	<b>\$ 150</b>	<b>\$ 250</b>

This covers the use of the main part of the building for both the rehearsal and wedding, custodian preparations and clean up, a sound technician, and a audio recording of the service. This DOES NOT cover costs of minister's services, flowers, musicians, or video services, or any other participant in the service. We do not rent the facilities for any wedding over which one of our pastors is not officiating.

	<b>Members</b>	<b>Non-Members</b>
<b>Minister's Services</b>	<b>\$ 150</b>	<b>\$ 200</b>

Your minister puts in many hours of preparation, counseling, and rehearsals, as well as officiating the wedding ceremony.

## **Use of the Gym for Receptions**

Due to the use of the gym for Sunday services it is no longer available for wedding receptions. We apologize for that inconvenience. Exceptions can be made for weddings not on Saturday. The usage fee for a reception in the gym is **\$125.00**.