

Non Members (A security deposit of \$150 must be made at the time the wedding is scheduled. This sum maybe applied to the total expenses or returned.)

_____ Prepare/Enrich Inventory (\$35)

_____ Sanctuary (\$250)

_____ Aisle Candelabra (\$25)

_____ Sanctuary/Chapel Custodial Services (\$75)

_____ Organ Prelude/Wedding Music (\$125)

_____ Wedding Coordinator (\$125)

_____ Sound Technician (\$100)

_____ Pastor (\$225)

Our Premarital Partnership

*Pondering,
Preparing &
Planning Marriage at
Federated Church*

Wedding Partnership



Thank you for considering making our church family a part of your wedding. We take our role in the preparation and celebration of this occasion with joy and reverence. For this reason we propose the following wedding partnership.

As a part of God's family we offer our support to _____
and _____ as they prepare to be married. In particular, we promise to support them in the following ways.

1. Complete access to our facility, staff and wedding services.
2. Our best efforts to help prepare, celebrate and honor the vows of selfless love that they will make to each other and to God.

Church Representative

Date

We accept Federated Church's supportive role in our marriage. As a part of our acceptance, it is our intention to

1. Participate in the Prepare/Enrich Inventory and the subsequent counseling sessions.
2. Familiarize ourselves with the people and programs of a church family by worshipping with that congregation at least twice a month.
3. To pay all incurred expenses completely and promptly. (See page 13 for a itemized listing of fees)

Bride

Date

Groom

Date

Dollars & Sense

Members: (Church policy describes members as *persons who unite by profession of faith and baptism, or by transfer from another church statement of letter.* Bylaws of the Federated Church Article I, Section 1)

_____ Prepare/Enrich Inventory (\$35)

_____ Sanctuary (No Charge)

_____ Aisle Candelabra (\$25)

_____ Chapel (No Charge)

_____ Sanctuary/Chapel Custodial Service (\$50)

_____ Trimmer Hall (\$100)

_____ Trimmer Hall Custodial Services (\$50)

_____ Organ Prelude/Wedding Music (\$125)

_____ Wedding Coordinator (\$100)

_____ Sound Technician (\$50)

_____ Pastor (\$200)

Wedding Party

Bride: _____

Groom: _____

Attendants:

1. _____ 1. _____
M. of Honor Best Man

2. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 3. _____

4. _____ 4. _____

5. _____ 5. _____

6. _____ 6. _____

7. _____ 7. _____

8. _____ 8. _____

Flower Girl

Ring Bearer

Mothers/Grandmothers/Great-Grandmothers

1. _____ 1. _____

2. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 3. _____

4. _____ 4. _____

"Seeing the forest..."



We have all heard the old adage; "*he or she can't see the forest for the trees*". It refers to a person who gets so caught up in details that they are unable to see the big picture. You have probably already discovered that there are innumerable details that come with getting married. Before we turn to them, it is a good idea to take a look at the big picture. Read over; think about and together discuss the "big picture" or "forest" perspective on marriage that our church family embraces.

Like most church families, we derive our wedding service from the 1662 Anglican *Book of Common Prayer* (a copy of this service may be found on pages 4-6). After you have looked it over, we think you will agree that it seeks to impress on the participants that there is a spiritual dimension to marriage. In short, it says that the relationship between a man and a woman is a metaphor for understanding how human beings and God are supposed to relate to one another. Specifically these vows stress that that the best place to understand how human beings should interact with God and each other is found in Jesus Christ since he is at once a man and God.

To us such thinking makes sense, but what about you? When you think about what you are preparing to do, is this your "big picture" or "forest" perspective or do you think of something else? Take a few moments to think and talk about these questions. Feel free to jot down any thoughts you may have below.

"..For the trees"



Now that we have taken a look at the forest, or long term implications of your pending

marriage, let's tackle some of those troublesome trees, or the many details that will make up your wedding. We will do this in two ways. First, take some time to familiarize yourself with what goes into a wedding service by reading *Wedding Play-by-Play*.

Wedding Play-By-Play



When you get right down to it, the wedding service prescribed in *The Book of Common Prayer*, like a milking stool, has three legs. Each leg of the ceremony involves a special set of vows. First come the vows of consent.

Once the bride has made her entrance and everyone is in place, the presiding cleric makes an opening statement. Through these opening remarks the cleric points out what should be obvious and what is often overlooked; a wedding is about to take place and God himself will be a part of it. The cleric goes on to note that this should be a time of great joy and also a time of reverence. Following the opening statement, the first set of vows is administered. They are as follows:

Do you take this (man/woman) to be your (husband/wife); to live together in the holy covenant of marriage? Will you love (him/her) honor and keep (him/her) in sickness and in health, forsaking all others, being faithful to (him/her) as long as you both shall live?

As you can see, both the bride and the groom are being asked to give their consent so that the ceremony may proceed. When you say, "I do", you are saying in effect, "I do understand what I am getting myself into and I do want to proceed."

I think you will find that once you have been married a while that it is impossible to attend another wedding without thinking of your own. It is for this reason that in addition to being administered to the bride and groom the vow of consent is also given to those attending the service. They are

knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when the perfect comes, the imperfect disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I fully known.

And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him. And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us.

1 John 4:7-12

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

1 Corinthians 13

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is

Will all of you witnessing these promises do all in your power to uphold these two persons in their marriage?

Personally, we think this is a nice touch since you are gaining not only a spouse but also an entirely new family and network of friends. Since these people are going to be a part of your life, it seems right to include them in the vows.

It is usually at this point that, according to tradition, the bride is "given away." It harkens back to the days when men treated women as property to manage and marriages were arranged. Even though those days are long past, there is still a bit of chivalry that clings to this part of the wedding. Standing between the bride and groom, the bride's escort is understood as protecting the bride's interests until she gives consent. However they view being given away, in my experience most brides and fathers enjoy the tradition. Ultimately the decision is up to the bride. If she wants to be given away, that is fine. If not, it will not be difficult to omit this tradition from the service.

Next come the vows of commitment, which are, in my opinion, the real heart of the service. Here the bride and groom go beyond declaring that they want to merge their lives and actually do it. To underscore the serious nature of these vows the cleric takes a moment and puts them in their spiritual context by saying,

Our Lord Jesus Christ taught us that at the beginning God `made them male and female,' and that for this reason a child shall leave their parents and cleave to his or her spouse; and the two shall become one flesh. Consequently, there are no longer two, but one.

This statement is followed by the actual vows that are repeated after the cleric first by the groom and then the bride.

I, _____, take you, _____ to be my wife/husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, until we are parted by death; as god is my witness I give you this promise.

The last sets of vows revolve around symbols of the bride and groom's commitment. While the giving and receiving of rings is the most widely used symbol but it is certainly not the only symbol. Quite often the rings are supplemented with the Unity Candle and even the Lord's Supper. The significance of each symbol is explained by the cleric and then used in the appropriate manner. *The Book of Common Prayer* supplies the following vow for the giving and receiving of rings.

I give you this ring as a symbol of the promises that I have made today, and with all that I am, and all that I have I honor you. Amen

Regarding wedding symbols, a quick word of warning. If there is one place where Murphy's Law applies to weddings, it must be the use of symbols. Whatever happens, remain calm. Let the cleric get the dropped ring, relight a smoldering unity candle and/or attend to the Lord's Supper.

Following the symbols the cleric blesses the couple, summarizes what has just happened and formally introduces the new family to those present.

Now that you have seen the basic structure of the service (Vows of Consent, Vows of Commitment & Ring Vows) you can embellish the basic service with any number of additional features. Please keep in the mind the more features you choose to include, the longer the service will take.

1. Scripture/Poetry Readings: An effective and time honored way to emphasize the spiritual nature of your commitment. Scripture and or poetry readings are also a good way to involve friends and family in the service. A selection of frequently used Biblical passages may be found on pages 9-10.
2. Personalized Vows: Couples with a dramatic streak sometimes conclude the vows of commitment by declaring in their own words their commitment to each other. If this is an option you wish to pursue, we

- c. Will your wedding party form a receiving line at the church or at the reception? (Y or N)

A Wedding Lectionary



Song of Songs 2:8-10:

Listen! My lover! Look! Here he comes, leaping across the mountains, bounding over the hills. My lover is like a gazelle or a young stag. Look! There he stands behind our wall, gazing through the windows, peering through the lattice. My lover spoke and said to me, "Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, and come with me.

Song of Songs 8:6-7a

Place me like a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm; for love is as strong as death, its jealousy unyielding as the grave. It burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame. Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot wash it away. If one were to give all the wealth of his house for love, it would be utterly scorned.

Romans 12:1-2,9-13

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

1 John 3:18-24

Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence

- a. How do you want to make your vows to each other?
 - i. Standard vows (see page 5)
 - ii. Personalized vows (see page 5)
 - iii. Standard vows augmented with personalized vows.
- b. Are you planning to conclude the Vows of Commitment and prepare for the Ring Vows with another scripture/poetry reading?
 - i. If so who will be reading?

5. Ring Vows (see page 6): This final portion of your wedding contains all the symbolic representations of the selfless love that you have vowed to each other. The wedding ring is, of course, the most venerable symbol of such love, but it is not the only one. Take some time to think about how you want your love/life illustrated in this portion of your wedding.

- a. Y/N Wedding Ring
- b. Y/N The Unity Candle
- c. Y/N The Lord’s Supper/Eucharist

6. Presentation & Departure: Your wedding is almost over, but there are still a few important details to manage. Give some thought to those final touches by answering the following questions.

- a. How do you want to be formally introduced as husband and wife?
-

- b. Are you planning to honor each other’s families on the way out? (Y or N)

encourage you to prepare your comments ahead of time and keep them brief.

- 3. Music: Like scripture readings, music (both vocal and instrumental) may be inserted between the vows. Music is another way to include special friends and family members in the service. Music also has staging value. By that, we mean that a soloist or musician can draw the audience’s attention away from the bride and groom enabling them to change position.

Resources To Help You Put It All Together



Now that you have a working knowledge of what generally goes into a wedding, it is time to put something on the drawing board. To help you do this we have provided five resources. The *Ten Things To Think About* section will help you think through many basic issues that confront every bride and groom. The *Wedding Party* sheet is a means of determining who will be making contributions to the service. *Planning Our Wedding – Worksheet* will guide you and the Pastor as you bring all the various components of your wedding service together. *A Wedding Lectionary* is made of scripture reading frequently used in wedding services. Finally the *Dollars & Sense* section will enable you to estimate the total cost of your service and make you aware of applicable building use guidelines.

Ten Things To Think About

- 1. How many people do you anticipate attending? (How many invitations were sent out?)
- 2. How long do you want the service to last?
- 3. Will this be a formal (tuxedos and gowns), dress (suits and skirts) or casual occasion?
- 4. Are there any difficult family dynamics (divorce, feuds, etc.) that will have to be taken into consideration?

5. What about music? Are there any special musical selections you want or do not want to include?
6. Do you have any family or friends that you would like to make a musical contribution?
7. Will your music be live or taped?
8. Do you require the services of our church family's instrumentalist?
9. Have you chosen a florist?
10. What are your plans for photography and or video?

Planning Our Wedding

1. Musical Prelude: What, if any, musical selections would you like played while your guests are arriving?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
 - f.
 - g.
2. Candle Lighting/Seating of VIPs Wedding Tradition holds that mothers, grandmothers and great-grandmothers are given special treatment at weddings. Specifically, they are the last guests seated and the first guests to leave. In recent years the task of lighting the outside candles on the unity candle has also been assigned to them. What are your plans for this segment of your wedding?

- a. No candles at all. Simply seat VIPs
 - b. Have mothers light outside tapers
 - c. Have ushers light outside tapers
 - d. Other _____
3. Vows of Consent (see page 5): After the bride and groom have given their consent the bride's escort withdraws and we prepare for the vows of commitment. What are your plans for this portion of your wedding?
 - a. Will you be using an aisle runner? (Y or N)
 - b. In your wedding who will be escorting the bride?

 - c. Quite often scripture or poetry is read while the bride's escort withdraws and the wedding party prepares for the next set of vows. Which of the following options would work best in your wedding?
 - i. No Scripture/Poetry reading
 - ii. Scripture/Poetry reading by

 - iii. In preparation for the Vows of Commitment many brides and grooms choose to switch places with the Pastor so as to give their guests and photographers/videographers a better vantage point for the heart of the service. In your opinion would making such a move enhance or detract from your wedding? (Y or N)
 4. Vows of Commitment (see page 5): As was previously stated, this is the heart of the wedding service. Take a moment to think about this part of your wedding.