

## Great Bridge Presbyterian Church Wedding Policies and Forms

Christian marriage is a covenant through which a man and woman are called to make a lifelong commitment to each other and takes place in a special service, which focuses upon marriage as a gift of God and an expression of the Christian life. A wedding at Great Bridge Presbyterian will conform to the mandates of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church and the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia. In keeping with the Book of Order (w-4.9003), "the marriage service is under the direction of the Minister and the supervision of the Session Great Bridge Presbyterian is available for weddings for members. The church may be used for the weddings of non-members if the Minister believes it to be appropriate.

### Scheduling Your Wedding at Great Bridge Presbyterian Church

- Call the church office (757-547-4706) to check the date availability on the church calendar.
- Contact the Pastor you are requesting to perform the ceremony to make sure they are available for your date. **A Pastor of Great Bridge Presbyterian Church must be contacted even if you intend to ask a pastor from another church to officiate.** Another pastor may officiate only with the approval of one of our pastors.
- **For scheduling your date the next step is critical.**
- Please **read this booklet thoroughly and carefully.** If you, the bride and groom, are in agreement with and wish to abide by the policies of Great Bridge Presbyterian Church and its governing body (the Session), **sign the accompanying Wedding Reservation Form and bring it with your reservation fee of \$100.00 to the scheduled meeting.**
- **Please note that the \$100.00 reservation fee is nonrefundable and does not apply to any other fees. Checks should be made out to Great Bridge Presbyterian Church.**
- **Receipt of your check and your signed Wedding Reservation form officially secures your wedding date on the church calendar. It is no longer tentative.**
- We recommend that you schedule as early as possible, as many activities and functions continue to schedule. For planning purposes, it is important to note that weddings **will not** be performed on the following days: Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Easter.

### Premarital Conferences

Premarital counseling is necessary and essential in preparation for marriage. Premarital conferences provide an opportunity for pastoral counsel and a time for the pastor and couple to become better acquainted, to discuss the meaning of marriage within the Christian context, and plan the marriage service.

The bride and groom need to arrange with the Minister at least 3-6 months in advance of the wedding for the counseling. During this process, it should be understood that the Minister is not obligated to marry couples when questions arise which, in his or her judgment, would be serious obstacles to a successful marriage.

Occasionally, a couple may desire that a pastor of another church officiate or assist in the wedding. **It is important that arrangements be made with the officiating Pastor for counseling sessions.**

The courtesy of our church shall be extended to clergy providing they follow the procedural ethics of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. As outlined in the Book of Order and abide by the policies of Great Bridge Presbyterian Church.

### Planning and Coordinating Your Wedding Ceremony

A pastor, by virtue of his or her office, will be the director of your church wedding service. It is the pastor's

responsibility and commitment to maintain your ceremony as a holy and reverent event.

**At the rehearsal, there will be a walk-through at the church. You will need to bring the form included in this packet signed by the Director of Music or Director of Contemporary Music.**

## Music for Your Wedding

“Music suitable for the marriage service directs attention to God and expresses the faith of the church. (Book of Order, W-2.1004) The congregation may join in hymns and other musical forms of praise and prayer. (Book of Order, W-4.9005) Music should be appropriate to the place of worship, enhance the worshipers’ consciousness of the reality of God, and reflect the integrity and simplicity of Christian life.”

Music used in your wedding service is overseen by our Director of Music, Billye Brown Youmans. In the case of a contemporary worship style of wedding service our Director of Contemporary Worship, Charity Stephens, will be contacted.

A wedding is a worship service and the music selected should be sacred and appropriate. **Our Director of Music or our Director of Contemporary Music will contact you either by email or phone as soon as your date is reserved.** Either of them will make arrangements to meet with you and suggest appropriate music and recommend musicians. **At this meeting, you will obtain their signature of authorization on the form included in this packet.** **The authorization for music must be finalized no later than 30 days prior to the wedding.**

Our church organist, Cheryl Madison, shall play for all weddings in the church. You can schedule with her through the Director of Music. If the couple wishes to invite another organist, pianist, or other musicians to play, the Director of Music will discuss this with you.

All music must be in keeping with the above guidelines.

Payment of the organist's or musician's fees is the responsibility of the couple. Musicians and or singers should be at the Rehearsal (if this is not possible, at least 1 hour or **earlier** on wedding day) as microphone adjustment may be necessary.

There will be 20-30 minutes of pre-nuptial music on the wedding day, and this will be guided by the number of guests that need to be seated and the amount of time needed before the actual processional.

Our Sound System is fully controlled from the sound booth at the rear of the Sanctuary by our trained Sound Technician. This technician must be present during the **rehearsal and wedding**. Church staff will make arrangements for the Sound Technician to be present. The couple is responsible for the fee of the Technician.

## Decorations and Accessories

“Flowers, decorations, and other appointments should be appropriate to the place of worship, enhance the worshipers’ consciousness of the reality of God, and reflect the integrity and simplicity of Christian life (w-4.9005).”

- The Communion table is not to be used for flowers or objects.
- Our church owns a wedding banner that is available for use in the Sanctuary.
- The church Flower Guild is willing to coordinate floral colors of the wedding service for the Sunday Worship arrangement if possible. The church owns a large urn for the arrangement. Flower colors should be in keeping with the liturgical season. Using **white fresh** flower petals during the processional is acceptable if a runner is used. Artificial petals of any color may be used without a runner.
- **Please complete the “Instructions for the Florist” form contained in this packet, and submit it to**

**your florist at the time of initial consultation. Your florist is expected to know and abide by these guidelines.**

**The following accessories are available for use at your wedding:**

2 seven branch candelabra (black)  
 1 brass table top unity candle holder (for 2 tapers and 1 pillar candle)  
 Table or podium for guest registry  
 Table for flowers or other memorial tributes

The church will provide the candles (white or ivory) for the candelabra. The candles for the unity candle stand must be provided by the couple.

Candles on ends of pews are permitted as long as they are clamp on type and have globes. There will be **no** candles in windows or elsewhere in the church without glass globes. Care must be taken that candle wax does not get on the carpet, furniture, or brick work.

**No** nails, tacks, wire, or tape may be used on walls, woodwork, pews, or carpet. **No** decorations are permitted that will mar the pews, walls, carpet, floors, or other property of the church.

Removal of flowers and other decorations from the Sanctuary should begin immediately following guests' departure. Arrangements for this should be made ahead of time with the florist or someone appointed by the couple. If it is not possible for the removal by the florist or rental items, they will be stored and **must** be picked up on the next business day.

The cleaning service will be scheduled to clean the Sanctuary, bathrooms and any other areas used by the wedding party immediately following wedding photography.

## Photography and Video

Please complete the "Instructions for the Photographer" form contained in this packet, and submit it to your photographer at the time of initial consultation. Your photographer is expected to know and abide by these guidelines.

We are reminded that the wedding is a worship service and is not intended to be a photographic production. In that regard we share with you these policies of Great Bridge Presbyterian.

**NO FLASH PICTURES MAY BE TAKEN DURING THE SERVICE.** Specifically, this means from the end of the Processional to the beginning of the Recessional. Non-flash pictures are permitted from the back of the church. **No** photography shall detract or intrude into the service. We ask that motor drives be disengaged.

Pictures of the wedding party may be taken **before** the wedding but **must be completed at least 45 minutes prior to the start of the wedding service.** Photography at the conclusion of the wedding service should be completed as quickly as possible. This will enable you to join your guests at the reception in a timely manner for the celebration.

Videotaping of the service is permitted only if it does not interfere with the worship experience. If a video camera is to be placed at the front of the Chancel area, it is to be stationary (on a tripod) with no movement during the ceremony.

## Other Important Information

- The family of the bride/groom will be responsible for any property damage or cleaning expense incurred due to failure to comply with the guidelines of the church.
- Please no rice or confetti thrown on church grounds. No balloons may be released.

- We recommend a reminder in your bulletin for guests: turn off electronic equipment. Remember the no flash photography during the service rule.
- Have the Groom and Groomsmen check the tuxedos the day before the wedding to make sure that they fit and everything is in order (make sure all accessories are included).
- Emphasize punctuality for the starting time of the Rehearsal and Wedding. We start on time.
- Our Sanctuary seats 500 and the Fellowship Hall can accommodate approximately 250 for a reception.
- The church will not be responsible for personal items that you bring or leave at the church (e.g. articles of clothing, purses, wallets, cameras, etc.).
- Smoking is **not** permitted in the building.
- **Alcohol consumption is not permitted in or on church grounds.**

## Wedding Rehearsal

- Be prompt. The Rehearsal will begin at the designated time.
- Remember to purchase your marriage license and bring it with you on rehearsal night and give it to the Pastor.
- The rehearsal usually lasts about 1- 1 ½ hour.
- Do not bring wedding gown or any other clothing or accessories to the rehearsal to remain at the church.
- You should bring your bulletins (they are used for conducting the rehearsal), guest registry, unity candle (if being used).
- Rehearsals will be conducted exclusively by the officiating pastor(s).

## The Wedding Day

- The Bride and her attendants may dress at the church. The church will be opened 2 hours prior to the wedding.
- If dressing at the church, the groom and his attendants typically dress in the church library, and may arrive between 1-1 ½ hours before the ceremony.
- Ushers/ groomsmen will begin seating guests no more than 30 minutes prior to the hour of the wedding.
- Grandparents, parents, and special guest should be in the narthex at least 10 minutes prior to the start time.
- If you choose to provide a guest registry at the ceremony, a table or stand is available. Please designate someone to oversee this and take to the reception. If the narthex gets overly crowded prior to the start time of the ceremony, the registry will be removed in order to get guests seated.
- If bulletins will be used, remember to bring them to the rehearsal. Please make sure you have designated someone to oversee their distribution. The distribution will begin approximately 30 minutes

prior to the wedding.

## Fees

All fees are to be paid at the rehearsal.

Non-members – \$800.00 for Sanctuary and ceremony related spaces.  
\$300.00 for Fellowship Hall (Reception) (with kitchen use)

Minister- It is recommended that a minimum \$300.00 honorarium be offered to the pastor for premarital counseling and the ceremony.

Sound Technician- \$75.00 (rehearsal and wedding)

Sexton- \$75.00 (wedding only) \$75.00 (reception only), \$150.00 (for both wedding and reception)

Organist and other musicians- prearranged fee to be determined by those performing

## WEDDING RESERVATION FORM

Great Bridge Presbyterian Church 333 Cedar Road Chesapeake, VA 23322

Telephone: (757) 547-4706

Date issued: \_\_\_\_\_

This form must be returned to the church with a check for \$100.00 (non-refundable) within 2 weeks after it is issued to hold the facilities for your wedding. Otherwise this date will be released for someone else. Please make the check payable to GBPC. All other fees are due as specified as page 2.

### Wedding of:

Bride: \_\_\_\_\_  
*First Middle Last*

Groom: \_\_\_\_\_  
*First Middle Last*

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, and Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone number \_\_\_\_\_ Cell phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Person to be contacted by Wedding Guild Member \_\_\_\_\_

Church member Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**Officiating Minister** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Rehearsal** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time desired** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Wedding** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time desired** \_\_\_\_\_

I/We hereby agree to be responsible for any damage to the building and /or equipment during its use. I/We have received and have read in its entirety the Wedding Book listing the Church's guidelines and policies concerning having a wedding at this facility and agree to abide by said policies.

**(Signature)** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**(Signature)** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

A member of the Wedding Guild of Great Bridge Presbyterian Church will be calling you about 6-8 weeks prior to your wedding. Members of the Wedding Guild are qualified members who will assist you during the rehearsal and wedding ceremony.

### **WEDDING PLANNING SHEETS**

(MUST be presented to the church office at the Walk Through Meeting.)

Wedding of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Rehearsal \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Wedding \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Officiating Pastor \_\_\_\_\_

Assisting Pastor \_\_\_\_\_

Organist/Pianist \_\_\_\_\_

Vocalist \_\_\_\_\_

Instrumentalist \_\_\_\_\_

Size of Wedding Party \_\_\_\_\_

Maid/Matron of Honor \_\_\_\_\_ Best Man \_\_\_\_\_

Bridesmaid \_\_\_\_\_ Groomsman \_\_\_\_\_

Bridesmaid \_\_\_\_\_ Groomsman \_\_\_\_\_

Bridesmaid \_\_\_\_\_ Groomsman \_\_\_\_\_

Bridesmaid \_\_\_\_\_ Groomsman \_\_\_\_\_

Bridesmaid \_\_\_\_\_ Groomsman \_\_\_\_\_

Bridesmaid \_\_\_\_\_ Groomsman \_\_\_\_\_

Bridesmaid \_\_\_\_\_ Groomsman \_\_\_\_\_

Bridesmaid \_\_\_\_\_ Groomsman \_\_\_\_\_

Bridesmaid \_\_\_\_\_ Groomsman \_\_\_\_\_

Flower Girl \_\_\_\_\_ Ring Bearer \_\_\_\_\_

- It is strongly suggested that Flower Girls and Ring Bearers be at least 4 years old.

Grandmother of Bride \_\_\_\_\_ Escorted by \_\_\_\_\_

Grandmother of Bride \_\_\_\_\_ Escorted by \_\_\_\_\_

Grandmother of Groom \_\_\_\_\_ Escorted by \_\_\_\_\_

Grandmother of Groom \_\_\_\_\_ Escorted by \_\_\_\_\_

Mother of Bride \_\_\_\_\_ Escorted by \_\_\_\_\_

Mother of Groom \_\_\_\_\_ Escorted by \_\_\_\_\_

Other special guests and their escorts:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How many rows of pews on each side should be reserved for family seating? \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Guests expected for wedding \_\_\_\_\_

Time of arrival of wedding party \_\_\_\_\_

*Reminder: The church is opened 2 hours before ceremony time for florist delivery & bride's arrival for dressing.*

Florist Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone# \_\_\_\_\_

*Reminder: Florist must use pew clamps for holding flowers or ribbons. No tape or wire is allowed.*

Floral Delivery time \_\_\_\_\_

Photographer \_\_\_\_\_ Arrival Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Video camera Yes/ No

*Reminder: Photographer and video camera operator must abide by church guidelines of no flashes during the wedding service and the videographer must remain stationery at all times.*

Reservation for special equipment:

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2 seven branch candelabra (black) yes no

Unity candle holder (gold) yes no **OR** Sand Ceremony yes no

Table in Narthex for guest registry yes no

Extra table for flowers or other memorial tribute yes no

## DIRECTOR OF MUSIC APPROVAL FORM

**Great Bridge Presbyterian Church  
333 Cedar Road  
Chesapeake, VA 23322  
(757) 547-4706**

**[MUSIC@GBPRES.ORG](mailto:MUSIC@GBPRES.ORG)  
[CHARITYSTEPHENSMUSIC@GMAIL.COM](mailto:CHARITYSTEPHENSMUSIC@GMAIL.COM)**

Bride's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Groom's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date & Time of Wedding \_\_\_\_\_

- Wedding music has been discussed and approved.
- Musicians/vocalists have been discussed and scheduled.

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Director of Music, GBPC \_\_\_\_\_ Date

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Director of Contemporary Music, GBPC \_\_\_\_\_ Date



This form must be signed by one of GBPC's Music Directors and returned to the church office (6 – 8 WEEKS PRIOR TO YOUR WEDDING).

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE FLORIST

**Great Bridge Presbyterian Church  
333 Cedar Road  
Chesapeake, VA 23322  
(757) 547-4706**

Bride's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Groom's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date & Time of Wedding \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Delivery \_\_\_\_\_

1. The church will be opened (2) hours before the wedding.
2. Nothing may be placed on the communion table (except ornamentation around unity candle stand).
3. Do not use tape or wire of any kind to secure bows or flowers on the ends of the pews. They may be affixed with ribbon, chenille stems, elastic bands or you may use clips.
4. Flowers may be used to decorate the candelabra and the pews (under conditions Noted in #3 above).
5. Arrange to remove decorations promptly following the wedding and photography. As the church may have 2 weddings in one day, prompt cleanup and removal of your property is important. We will dispose of all flowers left by the wedding party.
6. Property belonging to the florist must be removed from the church immediately after the ceremony, unless the items are to be stored until the next business day. The church must be left clean and in good order.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE PHOTOGRAPHER

Great Bridge Presbyterian Church  
333 Cedar Road  
Chesapeake, VA 23322  
(757) 547-4706

Bride \_\_\_\_\_ Groom \_\_\_\_\_

Wedding Date & Time \_\_\_\_\_

1. All pictures must be completed 45 minutes prior to the start of the wedding service.
2. The wedding service of worship officially begins with the seating of the mothers. The photographer may take a flash picture of the attendants, bride and father of the bride as they start down the aisle. In order to take these pictures the photographer may not go forward down the aisle more than the 3<sup>rd</sup> row from the back.
  - No flash pictures may be taken during the service-specifically from the end of the processional to the beginning of the recessional.
  - Time exposures with no flash may be taken from the back of the church. If the camera has a motor drive, please disengage it.
3. Only the existing lighting is used in the Sanctuary during the wedding.
4. After the wedding, flash pictures may be taken from the back of the Sanctuary as the wedding party exits the center aisle.
5. After the wedding, the pastor, bride, groom, and wedding party return immediately to the Sanctuary for pictures.
6. Photography following the wedding in the Sanctuary is limited to **30 minutes.**
7. Any photographer secured to videotape the wedding should coordinate with church staff.. These arrangements must be made at least 45 minutes before the wedding ceremony.