



PLANNING YOUR WEDDING

CUYAHOGA VALLEY CHURCH MARRIAGE POLICIES AND GUIDELINES





Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

Ecclesiastes 4:12



Congratulations on your decision to be married!

The staff at Cuyahoga Valley Church anticipates celebrating with you and working together to make your wedding day one that glorifies God!

Planning a wedding is an exciting but sometimes stressful task. Our goal is to answer any questions you may have right 'up front' in order to make your wedding ceremony planning as stress-free as possible. We hope you'll find the following policies and guidelines informative as you move toward your wedding day.

Again, congratulations!

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WEDDING POLICY

THE DEFINITION OF MARRIAGE

A marriage is more than a legal contract. It is a worshipful celebration that makes a statement before God and the congregation that the couple desires their marriage to honor and to be blessed by God. We believe that the term “marriage” has only one, legitimate meaning, and that is marriage sanctioned by God, which joins one man and one woman in a single, covenantal union, as taught by Scripture. Marriage ceremonies performed by any pastor of this church or in any facility owned, leased or rented by this church will be only those ceremonies sanctioned by God, joining one man with one woman as their gender was determined at birth. Whenever there is a conflict between the church’s position and any new legal standard for marriage, the church’s statement of faith, doctrines and biblical positions will govern. (Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 5:22-23; Mark 10:6-9; 1 Corinthians 7:1-9)

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of marriage as defined above. We believe that any other type of sexual activity, identity or expression that lies outside of this definition of marriage, including those that are or might become more accepted in the culture and the courts, are contradictory to God’s natural design and purpose for sexual activity. (Genesis 2:24; Leviticus 18:1-30; Romans 1: 26-29; 1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:9-10; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4)

MARRYING AT CVC

The following requirements must be met prior to an initial meeting with the officiating pastor:

1. **Fill out and return to *Greta Smith* at the church office the enclosed personal and spiritual history form.**
2. **After our office receives the above-mentioned form, you will be guided regarding taking an assessment designed to explore the relational strengths and growth areas of each couple. Cost for the assessment is \$35.00 per couple to cover processing, performed by an outside source.**

After completing the above 2 steps:

- 1) It is the couple's responsibility to contact and schedule an officiating pastor. Elders of CVC have asked the Lead Pastor to perform ceremonies for members only. Other members of the pastoral staff may perform ceremonies for members and regular attenders. As a general rule, our pastoral staff will not perform ceremonies for those outside the ministry of CVC. Upon request, a pastor from another church may be used with prior approval from our pastoral staff.
- 2) Prior to meeting with the officiating pastor, the couple will be required to fill out a personal history form (including a spiritual history).
- 3) All couples marrying at CVC are required to participate in a 7-week premarital course. This course, offered periodically throughout the year, gives couples a chance to prepare for marriage by discussing a number of topics with several trained members of our ministry team. Couples must contact the teaching leader to make arrangements to take any classes missed.

- 4) After meeting with the officiating pastor, and perhaps in counsel with the pastoral staff, a CVC officiating pastor reserves the right to decline to perform the ceremony if the pastor feels that the couple is not ready for the commitment of marriage.

The pastor may also decline to perform the ceremony if he senses:

- a) Either person in the couple are divorced and do not have biblical grounds for divorce and remarriage.
- b) Spiritual inequality. CVC pastors take seriously God's standards for marriage – that followers of Christ should not marry someone who is not a follower of Christ (See 2 Corinthians 6:14ff).
- c) Emotional immaturity.
- d) Financial instability.
- e) Sexual sin or the appearance of sexual sin. The elders of CVC will not permit a marriage to be performed that violates the Definition of Marriage (above). Additionally, in order to be obedient to God and benefit their relationship, any couple that is sexually active or living together will need to discontinue these activities for the remainder of their engagement or the pastor will decline to officiate their marriage.
- f) That the couple is incompatible for any other reason.

If the music minister at CVC has previously agreed to handle the music at the ceremony and the officiating pastor declines to do the ceremony for one of the above reasons, then the music minister will not be able to perform the music.

- 5) Candidates for marriage are urged to be in the process of membership.

GUIDELINES IN PLANNING YOUR WEDDING DAY

RESERVING THE CHURCH

Those who are members or regular attenders may reserve the church up to one year in advance, after the initial requirements noted on page 5 have been met. Our Worship Center seats approximately 600 on the main level and 140 in the balcony.

PASTOR

It is the couple's responsibility to contact and schedule an officiating pastor. Elders of CVC have asked the Lead Pastor to perform ceremonies for members only. Other members of the pastoral staff may perform ceremonies for members and regular attenders. The officiating pastor will not attend the reception unless invited to do so. As a general rule, our pastoral staff will not perform ceremonies for those outside the ministry of CVC. Upon request, a pastor from another church may be used with prior approval from our ministry staff.

BEFORE "I DO" PREMARITAL COURSE

We require all couples marrying at CVC to complete the *Before "I Do"* premarital course. This 7-week course, offered twice a year, gives couples a chance to prepare for marriage by discussing a number of topics with several trained members of our ministry team. Couples must contact the teaching leader to make arrangements to take any classes missed.

FACILITY COORDINATORS

Our facility coordinators will answer questions about our facility, help you with selection of church equipment you may want to use, and make suggestions for decorations. Shortly after you reserve the church, you will want to make arrangements for a "walk through" of the facility and seek answers to any questions you may have.

MUSIC AND TECHNICAL NEEDS

You may choose special live vocal and/or instrumental music for your wedding. Choosing and contacting the musicians and sound technicians is the couple's responsibility. These arrangements should be made at least six months prior to your wedding.

DEPARTURE TRADITIONS

Bubbles, rose petals or helium balloons may be released on the couple's departure. Rice, bird seed, and sparklers are not permitted on the church property.

RECEPTIONS

The Lower Level of our facility is available with a seating capacity of approximately 200 people. Our custodial staff will set up/tear down the tables and chairs. Decorations are the couple's responsibility. Saturday receptions must be concluded by 9pm to allow time to prepare for Sunday services.

ALCOHOL POLICY | DESIGNATED SMOKING AREA

Cuyahoga Valley Church does not permit the storage or consumption of alcoholic beverages on church property. Smoking is permitted only in designated areas outside the church building.

REHEARSAL

The rehearsal is typically held the night before the wedding and lasts about an hour. Participation in the rehearsal will help to ensure that your wedding ceremony goes smoothly. Please be sure to contact all participants of the wedding and all family members who will be taking part. Remember to notify the sound technician and musicians of the time of the rehearsal.

DECORATIONS | SEASONAL DECORATIONS

Lighted candles (other than for a unity candle arrangement) are not permitted in the Worship Center or Lower Level reception area.

During the month of December, the Worship Center and foyer will be decorated for Christmas. Weddings held during this time must use, but may add to, the existing decorations.

PHOTOGRAPHY | VIDEOGRAPHY

The focus of the wedding should be on the ceremony, not the photographer. Photographers are encouraged not to use flash during the ceremony and to be unobtrusive. Videotaping equipment should be set up in a stationary location to one side or in the balcony.

MARRIAGE LICENSE

The couple must secure a marriage license prior to the rehearsal. Contact any Ohio county courthouse for more information. Ceremonies cannot be performed without this license.

The bride and groom are responsible for reserving the use of the building and the staffing needed for their wedding.

If you choose to have your wedding event at CVC, please note that we cannot confirm your date until you have met with your officiating pastor.

For additional information/questions, please contact:
Greta Smith, Pastoral Assistant, Community Life
440.972.2267 | gsmith@cvconline.org

FEE SCHEDULE

The Cuyahoga Valley Church staff and family consider it a privilege to be asked to assist with weddings. Such services require that both CVC staff and the volunteers they enlist to work additional hours within the framework of their regular ministry. The honorariums listed below will help compensate them for the time invested into preparing and participating in this service.

Pre-martial Course

- PREPARE Test \$35
- CD Set \$20

Required by all who plan to be married by a CVC Pastor
Payment is due the first day of class.

Wedding Service (Facility Usage) -0-

Wedding Receptions \$200
Saturday receptions must conclude by 9pm.

Rehearsal Dinners \$50

Officiating Pastor \$150

Wedding Coordinator (Required) \$100

Instrumentalist \$100

Vocalist \$75

Producer (Required) \$100
Responsible for powering equipment and overseeing rehearsal and event

Audio Technician (Required) \$75
Responsible for controlling sound mixer for rehearsal and event

Lighting Technician (Required) \$25
Responsible for changing light cues for event

Presentation Technician (Optional) \$50
Responsible for presenting lyrics and/or videos for event

Video Director (Optional)* \$75
Responsible for switching cameras for video capture of event

Back of House Audio Technician (Optional)* \$75
Responsible for mixing the sound if the service is Live Streamed

Video Editing (Required if recorded) \$35/hr.
Necessary if video of event is captured / Includes uploading to Vimeo

Static Image Creation (Optional) \$25
Necessary if image is to be projected to screens for event

PowerPoint Creation (Optional) \$35/hr.
Necessary if multiple photos are to be shown during event

PowerPoint Correction (Optional) \$50/hr.
Necessary if a provided PowerPoint does not conform to CVC standards

Wedding Program (Optional) \$25

Lower Level Technician (Optional) \$50
Responsible for powering and operating all equipment for reception

Reception Coordinator (Required if reception is being held at CVC) \$100

If you choose to have a reception at CVC, we will connect you with one of our Reception Coordinators. The coordinator will work with your family on reception details including use of the facility, set up, catering, and any other hospitality needs.

****Subject to availability***

All applicable fees listed above must be paid prior to your rehearsal. Check should be made payable to Cuyahoga Valley Church.

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN PREPARING FOR MARRIAGE

The officiating pastor will be working with you as a couple to help you get to know each other better regarding some of life's most significant matters. Below are some additional questions that the pastor may be asking to help you better discern God's leading for your lives as you anticipate marriage.

He will not be able to cover all these topics with you. But we encourage you to discuss these matters together during your engagement period. If you find that you have significant differences in some of these important areas of life, then you will certainly want to discuss these with the officiating pastor or the pastor who is handling your premarital counseling.

THEOLOGY

What do you believe about the Bible? About God? About Jesus? About the Holy Spirit? About mankind? About salvation? About eternal things?

Perhaps it would be helpful for you to read through the CVC Essential Beliefs (www.cvconline.org) to see where each other is on various biblical doctrines.

How do you handle and live with differences in this area? How do you decide what can remain differences without jeopardizing the relationship?

WORSHIP AND DEVOTION

How important is corporate worship? Other participation in church life?

How important is it to be part of a LifeGroup/support group?

What is the importance of music in life and worship?

What are your daily personal devotional practices (prayer, reading, meditation, memorization)?

What would your family devotions look like? Who leads out in this?

Are you praying together about your lives and future, reading the Bible together now?

How do you handle and live with differences in this area?
How do you decide what can remain differences without jeopardizing the relationship?

HUSBAND AND WIFE

What is the meaning of headship and submission in the Bible and in your marriage?

What are expectations about situations where one of you might be alone with someone of the opposite sex?

How are tasks shared in the home: cleaning, cooking, washing dishes, yard work, car upkeep, repairs, shopping for food, and household stuff?

What are the expectations for togetherness?

What is an ideal non-special evening?

How do you understand who and how often sex is initiated?

Who does the checkbook—or are there two?

How do you handle and live with differences in this area?
How do you decide what can remain differences without jeopardizing the relationship?

CHILDREN

If and when, should you have children? Why? How many? How far apart? Would you consider adoption?

What are the standards of behavior?

What are the appropriate ways to discipline the children?

What are the expectations of time spent with the children and when they go to bed?

What signs of affection will you show the children?

What about school? Home school? Christian school? Public school?

How do you handle and live with differences in this area? How do you decide what can remain differences without jeopardizing the relationship?

LIFESTYLE

Will you own a home or not? Why? What kind of neighborhood? Why?

How many cars do you anticipate owning? New? Used?

What is your view of money in general? How much should be given to the church?

How do you make money decisions?

Where will you buy clothes: Department store? Thrift store? In between? Why?

How do you handle and live with differences in this area? How do you decide what can remain differences without jeopardizing the relationship?

ENTERTAINMENT

How much money should you spend on entertainment?

How often should you eat out? Where?

What kind of vacations are appropriate and helpful for you and your family?

How many “toys” will you possess? What will they be (i.e., home theatre system? A boat? The most current hand-held electronic device?)

Should you have a television? Where? What is fitting to watch? How much?

What are the criteria for movies and theater? What will your guidelines be for the children?

How do you handle and live with differences in this area? How do you decide what can remain differences without jeopardizing the relationship?

CONFLICT

What makes you angry?

How do you handle your frustration or anger?

Who should bring up an issue that is bothersome?

What if you disagree both about what should be done, *and* whether it is serious?

Will you go to bed angry at each other?

What is your view of getting help from friends or counselors?

How do you handle and live with differences in this area? How do you decide what can remain differences without jeopardizing the relationship?

WORK

Who is the main breadwinner? Should the wife work outside the home? Before children? With children at home? After children?

What are your views of daycare for children?

What determines where you will locate? Job? Whose job? Church? Family?

How do you handle and live with differences in this area? How do you decide what can remain differences without jeopardizing the relationship?

FRIENDS

Is it good to do things with your friends but without your spouse?

What will you do if one of you really likes to hang out with a certain friend and the other doesn't?

How do you handle and live with differences in this area? How do you decide what can remain differences without jeopardizing the relationship?

HEALTH AND SICKNESS

Do you have, or have you had any, sicknesses or physical problems that could affect our relationship? (Allergies, cancer, eating disorders, sexually transmitted disease, etc.)

Do you believe in divine healing and how would prayer relate to medical attention?

How do you think about exercise and healthy eating? Do you have any habits that adversely affect health?

How do you handle and live with differences in this area? How do you decide what can remain differences without jeopardizing the relationship?

The questions in this section have been taken from John Piper's new e-book, "Preparing for Marriage: Help for Christian Couples" (Desiring God Ministries). These questions are designed to aid couples - whether dating and considering marriage or engaged and preparing for marriage - to get to know each other better in some of life's most significant matters and be more equipped to discern God's leading for their lives.

CUYAHOGA VALLEY CHURCH

Inviting people to new life in Christ
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