



**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
WEDDING POLICY, SUMMARY CHECKLIST, AND CONTRACT**

Date of Wedding: _____ Time: _____

Wedding Couple's Names

Bride _____

Address: _____

Telephone: Home: _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____ Member of FPC: _____ Yes _____ No

If not a member of FPC name of church _____ No Affiliation _____

Groom _____

Address: _____

Telephone: Home: _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____ Member of FPC: _____ Yes _____ No

If not a member of FPC name of church _____ No Affiliation _____

Parents of Bride _____ Members of FPC: _____ Yes _____ No

Address: _____

Telephone: Home: _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____

Email(s) _____

Parents of Groom _____ Members of FPC: _____ Yes _____ No

Address: _____

Telephone: Home: _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____

Email(s) _____

Address of Couple after the Wedding (For Church office information only)

WEDDING OFFICIALS AND PERSONNEL

Will First Presbyterian Church Pastor Officiate ____ Yes ____ No

Guest Pastor Name: _____ Denomination _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Cell _____

Organist: Phone: _____

Pianist: Phone: _____

Soloist: Phone: _____

Florist: Phone: _____

Wedding Consultant: Phone: _____

Photographer: Phone: _____

Videographer: Phone: _____

Other Musicians: Number and Type Instruments: _____

REHEARSAL

Date: _____ Time: _____ to _____

Rehearsal Dinner Location: _____ Time: _____

Do you wish the Pastor and spouse to attend the rehearsal dinner? ____ Yes ____ No

DECORATING FOR WEDDING

Date: _____ Time: _____ to _____

WEDDING INFORMATION

Number of guests expected: _____

Arrival time at church, day of wedding: _____

Wedding Party will dress at the church: Yes _____ No _____ Time: _____

Candles will be used during the ceremony: Yes _____ No _____

Flowers will be left in the sanctuary for Sunday Worship Service: Yes _____ No _____

RECEPTION INFORMATION

Reception Location: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
COVINGTON, GEORGIA

WEDDING POLICY CONTRACT

I have read the First Presbyterian Church Wedding Policy and agree to abide by it. I will also give a copy of the Wedding Policy Checklist to every member of the wedding party and will assume responsibility for their compliance with it.

I hereby agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Church and all of its employees, members and staff of and from any and all liability and loss which the within use gives rise to for any reason whatsoever other than from the gross negligence of the Church, its members, employees and staff. The User shall be responsible for the immediate repair of all damage to Church property arising out of its use of the Church's facilities.

Wedding Couple's Signatures

_____	_____
	Date
_____	_____
	Date

This contract is not official and ready for submission to the Session for approval until signed by the Pastor of First Presbyterian Church.

_____	_____
Pastor's Signature	Date

The Church Session, which meets monthly, must approve all wedding ceremonies. This contract is not final and the date WILL NOT be entered on the church calendar until it is signed by the Pastor and the Session Leader and submitted to the Church Office.

_____	_____
Session Leader	Date of Approval

**First Presbyterian Church
1169 Clark Street
Covington, Georgia 30014**

WEDDING FEES

		Amt. Paid	Date
1.	*Sanctuary and Dressing Rooms	\$750 _____	_____
2.	Wedding Coordinator	\$200 _____	_____
3.	Organist Fee	\$250 _____	_____
4.	Outside Soloist	\$ 50 _____	_____
5.	Custodial Fee	\$100 _____	_____
6.	Tech Team	\$150 _____	_____
7.	*Fellowship Hall without the kitchen	\$300 _____	_____
8.	*Kitchen	\$100 _____	_____
9.	*Fee of \$100 / hr for extra hours	# of hrs. _____	_____
10.	**Refundable Damage Deposit	\$150 _____	_____
11.	Minister Honorarium (Discretion of wedding party)		

TOTAL FEE \$ _____

Deposit Paid Amount \$ _____ Date _____

Balance Due by Amount \$ _____ Date _____

Balance Paid Amount \$ _____ Date _____

A \$50 deposit is due when the wedding is scheduled. The remainder is due **four weeks prior to the wedding date**. This fee minus \$50 is refundable if the reservation is canceled two weeks prior to the wedding date.

Make checks payable to: **First Presbyterian Church** and deliver to the Church Administrator

*Fee will be waived by the Session for an active church member/ active visitor (6 months of participation).

**A refundable damage deposit is due with the remaining balance to be paid four weeks before the wedding. It will be returned one week after the wedding if no damage occurred as a result of the wedding event.

First Presbyterian Church of Covington Wedding Policy Summary & Checklist

1. Give the marriage license to the Pastor at least one week before the wedding.
2. Tacks, nails, and tape may not be used on church property due to the risk of damage.
3. Dripless candles must be used and care should be taken that candles not be allowed to drip on the furniture or carpet. Candles must be placed on a runner. Candles must be extinguished after the ceremony.
4. The Baptismal Font, Communion Table, Bible, and Pulpit may not be moved from the plain view of the congregation or obscured by flowers, candles, or other decorations. The Pulpit and Organ may not be moved under any circumstance.
5. Flowers may not be placed on the Pulpit or Communion Table. The entrances and exits, as well as the sanctuary should not be cluttered with floral or other decorations.
6. Flower petals spread for the bride must be silk to prevent carpet stains and must be removed after the wedding. Real flower petals may be used if an aisle runner is used.
7. Flowers used for weddings must be removed immediately following the service unless the couple wishes to provide flowers for Sunday worship.
8. The Pastor shall be the director of rehearsal. The rehearsal shall be conducted reverently and without undue confusion.
9. The wedding party, their guests and children are expected to preserve the dignity of the church.
10. Wedding parties will be responsible for the order of the church property for the next service. All properties of florists, caterers, or other persons employed to assist with the wedding must be removed immediately after the wedding. Rooms used for dressing, etc., must be left as they were found.
11. There is no assigned or reserved seating at wedding ceremonies. There will be general seating behind the first few pews reserved for the family.
12. Flash photos may not be taken during the service.
13. No birds or animals are allowed in the sanctuary.
14. No rice or bird seed may be thrown inside the buildings or on the walkways of the buildings. Bubbles are a suitable alternative outside the church.
15. Call the Facilities contact to adjust the thermostat. Do not adjust the thermostat, or open windows.
16. In compliance with Fire Marshall regulations do not prop fire doors open. i.e. the door between the church office and the sanctuary hallway.
17. The Technology person is the only person authorized to touch the sound system and adjust the microphones levels.

Wedding Committee Couple's Interview Worksheet

1. Review Wedding Policies with the couple and provide copies of the Checklist for the wedding party.
 - Assess the number of attendants for fit in the front of the church. # _____
2. Answer the couple's question.
3. Date & Time for:
Rehearsal:
Decoration:
Time for opening church on wedding day:
4. Determine ceremony needs:
 - furniture placement:
 - Piano
 - Flower Pedestals No Yes
 - Tour of facilities:
 - Dressing areas: Parlor and lower-level classroom area
Church map to be provided
 - Identify areas needing Heat/AC temperature control.
 - flowers and candle placements (use the Sanctuary floor plan)
5. Will leave flowers for Sunday: Yes No
6. Complete the Wedding Worksheet and provide a copy to: Minister, Church Administrator, Worship Elder, Music Director, Organist, Tech Team, Facilities Elder

**First Presbyterian Church
1169 Clark Street
Covington, Georgia 30014**

STAFF OF FPC COVINGTON

Pastor
The Rev. Neeley Rentz Lane
770-786-7321 ext. 1013
neeley@fpccov.org

Associate Pastor
The Rev. Erin Morgan
770-786-7321 ext. 1012
erin@fpccov.org

Director of Communication and Operations
Catherine Laseter
770-786-7321 ext. 1010
catherine@fpccov.org

Director of Music and Worship Art
Alicia Taylor
770-786-7321 ext. 1017
alicia@fpccov.org

Financial Administrator
Peni Kehoe
770-786-7321 ext. 1011
peni@fpccov.org

Organist
Alice Walker
Awalker.atl.pres.5@gmail.com

FPC Office Hours
Open: Monday-Thursday 9:00am-5:00pm; Friday 9:00am-12:00pm
Closed for Lunch: Monday-Wednesday 12:30pm-1:15pm; Thursday 11:30am-1:15pm
Please call to set a time to visit the church.

The completed form with a deposit check should be returned to the Director of Communication and Operation as soon as possible to have your wedding approved and reserved on the church calendar.

First Presbyterian Church Wedding Policy

A. Introduction

Christian marriage is a joyous and celebratory event. To assist in planning for such ceremony and to ensure the meaningfulness of the service itself, the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Covington offers the following guidelines for couples planning a Christian wedding ceremony in our church.

B. Who may be considered for marriage at First Presbyterian Church of Covington?

Because marriage takes place within the life and work of a Christian community, couples should ordinarily be active members/active visitors of First Presbyterian Church for six months prior to the wedding or immediate family of active members.

Exception: Non-members and former members of First Presbyterian Church who wish to be married in the sanctuary must apply to the Pastor, who may exercise discretion in deciding who may enter the discernment process.

C. Marriage License

A marriage license is required as per Georgia state law (as in other states in the USA). Newton County has issued these directions for couples wishing to obtain a Marriage License:

- 1) The couple must go to the courthouse to complete the marriage license application.
Newton County Probate Court
1132 Usher St
Covington, GA 30014
- 2) If either party has been married, the Court requires a copy (not certified) of either a final divorce decree or a death certificate, whichever applies.
- 3) There is a marriage license fee and it must be paid for in cash. No exceptions. You may want to call the Probate Judge's office to obtain the current price.
770-784-2045 (Newton County)

The couple should give the marriage license to the Pastor at least one week before the wedding. If the marriage license is not present, the marriage cannot take place (nor would it be legal)!

After the wedding the Pastor will make sure the signed copies are returned to the Probate Judge. The couple then may go to the office of the probate judge to obtain a certified copy. The certified copy will enable you to get a new driver's license, change credit cards, and for the couple to obtain insurance and other benefits accorded a married couple.

First Presbyterian Church Wedding Policy

D. Discernment Process (premarital counseling)

The Presbyterian Church U.S.A. considers premarital counseling as an important foundation for building a mature Christian marriage. Thus, in normal cases, the Pastor will spend several hours with the couple prior to the wedding. During these sessions an attempt will be made to give to the marriage event a deep Christian meaning and to facilitate the open discussion of all the facets of a fulfilling relationship between husband and wife.

The discernment process may begin as early as one year, but no later than four months, prior to a proposed marriage date. All premarital counseling must be completed no less than 6 weeks prior to the wedding.

- 1) Those wishing to begin the process of discernment must first complete an application. When the application papers are returned to the church office a *tentative* date for the wedding may be placed on the church calendar. **This date should not be publicized, nor should invitations be sent until the discernment process is completed and the Pastor's and the Session's approval have been given.**
- 2) The couple meets with the Pastor of First Presbyterian Church. Our Senior Pastor uses Prepare/Enrich Premarital Counseling. Cost for initial assessment is \$30.00. This is free for members/active visitors.
- 3) The Pastor may refer the couple to a counselor to help the couple prepare for marriage, or the Pastor may conduct the counseling. If the counseling is not conducted by the Pastor, the couple must give permission for the counselor to provide a report to the Pastor.
- 4) The couple meets again with the Pastor. If the Pastor is convinced of the couple's commitment, responsibility, maturity, and Christian understanding, she may approve the marriage and sign the contract page of the application. If the Pastor deems the marriage unwise, she shall assure the couple of the Church's continuing concern for them and not conduct the ceremony. (Book of Order W-4.9002b).
- 5) If the Pastor approves the marriage, the application will be submitted for approval at the next monthly meeting of the Session. If the Session approves of the ceremony, the wedding date is confirmed on the church calendar and the bride will meet with the Wedding Committee.

E. Setting the Date and Paying the fees

The Church's calendar and the Pastor's calendar both need to be consulted prior to setting a date for your wedding. Reservations may not be made more than a year ahead of time. A \$50 deposit is due when the wedding is scheduled. All fees must be paid in full at least 30 days before the date of the wedding. This fee minus \$50 is refundable if the reservation is canceled two weeks prior to the wedding date. The custodial fee covers clean-up of the sanctuary and Fellowship Hall (if used). The church's wedding committee should be notified to negotiate the fee for any additional services required by the wedding party.

Ordinarily there will be no weddings scheduled between Ash Wednesday and the 2nd Sunday of Easter (Lent and the week following Easter), nor between December

First Presbyterian Church Wedding Policy

6th and January 6th (Epiphany). The seasons before Christmas and Easter are typically extremely busy times for the church.

Ordinarily, there will be no weddings scheduled during Memorial Day weekend, Fourth of July weekend, Labor Day weekend, or Thanksgiving weekend.

F. The Marriage: A Service of Worship

All parts of the ceremony should be appropriate to Christian worship and acceptable offerings to God. The information provided here, including all policies and procedures, should assist couples to plan for a wedding ceremony that is simple, joyful, beautiful, and appropriate for our faith tradition.

- 1) **Ministerial Leadership** - Ordinarily the Pastor of First Presbyterian Church will have the privilege of conducting weddings in its sanctuary. If it is the desire of the couple to ask another minister to conduct or assist in the marriage service, the Pastor of First Presbyterian Church should be consulted and should extend the invitation to the visiting minister. The visiting minister should consult with the Pastor of this church about the service he or she plans to use.
- 2) **Order of Service** - All wedding services will be under the direction of the Pastor of the church and the Pastor must approve the order of service. The liturgy of the Book of Common Worship is preferred.
- 3) **Communion** - If communion is requested, it must be approved by the Session of First Presbyterian Church, and it must be served in accordance with the PC(USA) Book of Order. Care shall be taken that the invitation to the Table is extended to all Christians present.
- 4) **Music** – Music suitable for the marriage service directs attention to God and expresses the faith of the church. (Book of Order W-2.1004). Music selections must be approved by the FPC Organist.
- 5) **Musicians** - Like the Pastor, the organist of First Presbyterian Church has the privilege and responsibility of leading worship at weddings, and shall ordinarily play for all weddings. Another organist or other musicians may be invited to take part in weddings at the discretion of the organist of First Presbyterian Church.
 - a. Guest organists and musicians must be approved by the church organist. Instrumentalists and vocal soloists shall be under the direction of the organist of First Presbyterian Church.
- 6) **Children in the Wedding Party** – must have an adult buddy.
- 7) **Symbols and Decorations** - 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. (Book of Order W-1.3034; W-1.4004–.4005; W-5.5005) The following stipulations apply:
 - a. Tacks and nails may not be driven into church property, and tape may not be used due to the risk of damage to painted surfaces.

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- b. Dripless candles must be used and candles must be extinguished after the ceremony.
 - c. Flowers used for weddings must be removed immediately following the service unless the couple wishes to provide flowers for Sunday worship. The Wedding Committee should be notified if that is the case. Two pedestals are available upon request for flowers.
 - d. Because of the serious safety hazard that they pose, no rice or bird seed may be thrown inside the buildings or on the walkways of the buildings. Bubbles are a suitable alternative outside the church.
- 8) **Facilities** - The wedding party, their guests and children are expected to preserve the dignity of the church. Children under 12 years old must be accompanied by an adult at all times.

Wedding parties will be responsible for the order of the church property for the next service. This is especially important for weddings held on Saturdays. All properties of florists, caterers, or other persons employed to assist with the wedding must be removed immediately after the wedding.

- a. The sanctuary will seat 275 guests. A folding chair may be placed on the outside end of the pews for 26 additional seats. The combined total of the wedding party and guests must not exceed the Fire Marshall's specified building capacity of 300 people.

There is no assigned or reserved seating at wedding ceremonies. Behind the first pew which will be reserved for the family, there will be general seating. Because the wedding ceremony is a worship service, people will be seated on both sides of the church, rather than by dividing the guests into a bride or groom's side.

- b. The Baptismal Font, Communion Table, Pulpit, and Bible are symbols of the faith. They may not be moved from the plain view of the congregation or obscured by flowers, candles, or other decorations. The pulpit and organ may not be moved under any circumstance.

The FPC Worship team will evaluate the intended size of the wedding party to ensure that the number of bridesmaids and groomsmen can stand in the front of the church with the furniture repositioning allowed.

Flowers may not be placed on the Pulpit, Communion Table, or pianos. The entrances and exits, as well as the sanctuary should not be cluttered with floral or other decorations. The placement of flowers, candles, or other decorations must be approved by the Worship team.

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The Tech Team member is the only person authorized to touch the sound system and adjust the microphone levels. Weddings with more than 40 guests are required to use microphones and the Tech Team.

- c. Flower petals spread for the bride must be silk to prevent carpet stains and must be removed after the wedding. Real flower petals may be used if an aisle runner is used. If you wish to use an aisle runner, it should be arranged with your florist.
- d. All candles must be driplless and have runners placed underneath them to prevent getting any wax on the furniture or floor.
- e. The areas of the church to be used by the wedding party should be specified to the Wedding Committee to ensure proper Heat/AC settings. Call the Facilities contact to adjust the thermostat. Do not adjust the thermostat or open windows.
- f. The Parlor and the upper-level classrooms are available for the bride and her attendants in which to dress. The groom and groomsmen may dress in the lower-level classrooms. The locations of these dressing areas are indicated with stars on the enclosed map.
- g. Rooms used for dressing, etc., must be left as they were found.
- h. Fire Marshall regulations will be complied with. Do not prop fire doors open for any reason.) i.e. the door between the church office and the sanctuary hallway).
- i. No birds or animals are allowed in the sanctuary.
- j. Reservation parameters - Use of the church is reserved for:

Rehearsal - 2 ½ hours.

Decorating - 2 hours

Wedding Ceremony and Pictures- 3 hours

Fellowship Hall for the Reception - 3 hours

Kitchen – 3 hours

(Non-members will be charged a fee of \$100 / hr. for extra hours.)

- 9) Use of the Fellowship Hall for the Reception does not include the Kitchen. To use the kitchen, it must be reserved in addition to the Fellowship Hall.
- 10) **Rehearsal** - If a rehearsal is held, the Pastor shall be the director. If the couple wishes to use the services of a bridal or "Wedding consultants" or other persons to play a supportive role, they shall be under the direction of the Pastor. The rehearsal shall be conducted reverently and without undue confusion.

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- 11) **Bulletins** - The church does not provide bulletins for the wedding ceremony.
- 12) **No food or drink** – No food or drinks are allowed in the sanctuary. There will be no smoking on church property.
- 13) The bridal couple hereby agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Church and all of its employees, members and staff of and from any and all liability and loss which the use gives rise to for any reason whatsoever other than from the gross negligence of the Church, its members, employees and staff. The bridal couple shall be responsible for the immediate repair of all damage to Church property arising out of its use of the Church's facilities.
- 14) Please remember: a wedding is a worship service and ~~not~~ should be thought of as such. If the wedding is not performed by the FPC Pastor, or a member of FPC is not part of the wedding party, a member of the FPC Worship Team must be present during rehearsals and for the wedding ceremony.

G. Photographs and Video Recording

- 1) Photographs may be taken in the narthex before members of the wedding party enter the sanctuary. Photographers may not enter the main floor of the sanctuary during the service. The service begins with the first note of music played and ends with the last note.
- 2) Photographs are not ordinarily permitted during the marriage service. However, by prior arrangement and with the permission of the Pastor, time exposures not requiring flash or distracting noises may be taken from the narthex by a professional photographer or by some other designated person.
- 3) Permission from the Pastor is required to use electronic equipment such as video or tape recorders. The use of this equipment must not distract from the service of worship.
- 4) Flash photos may be taken in the sanctuary before or after the service by arrangement but not during the service.
- 5) It is the bridal couple's responsibility to make this policy known to their friends and the photographer. It is the Pastor's prerogative to stop the service if the photographer enters the main floor of the sanctuary or if the service is being interrupted by photographs or video operation. Ample time is available both before and after the service for picture taking.
- 6) If pre-wedding photographs are desired, the photographer should begin no earlier than 1½ hours before the service and end no later than 45 minutes before the service.
- 7) If post-wedding photographs are desired, the church asks that these be completed no more than 30 minutes after the conclusion of the service.
- 8) Videotaping of the wedding ceremony is permitted from the Narthex doorway, and arrangements should be made with the Wedding Committee at

First Presbyterian Church Wedding Policy

least a week prior to the ceremony. Extra lighting or other equipment is not permitted.

9) The unfinished balcony may not be used for any purpose.

H. Cordially requesting - Proper respect for the church is expected at all times:

- 1) No use of alcoholic beverages is permitted anywhere on the property, and
- 2) No inebriated individual will be allowed to participate in the rehearsal/wedding. This judgment will be made by the Pastor.

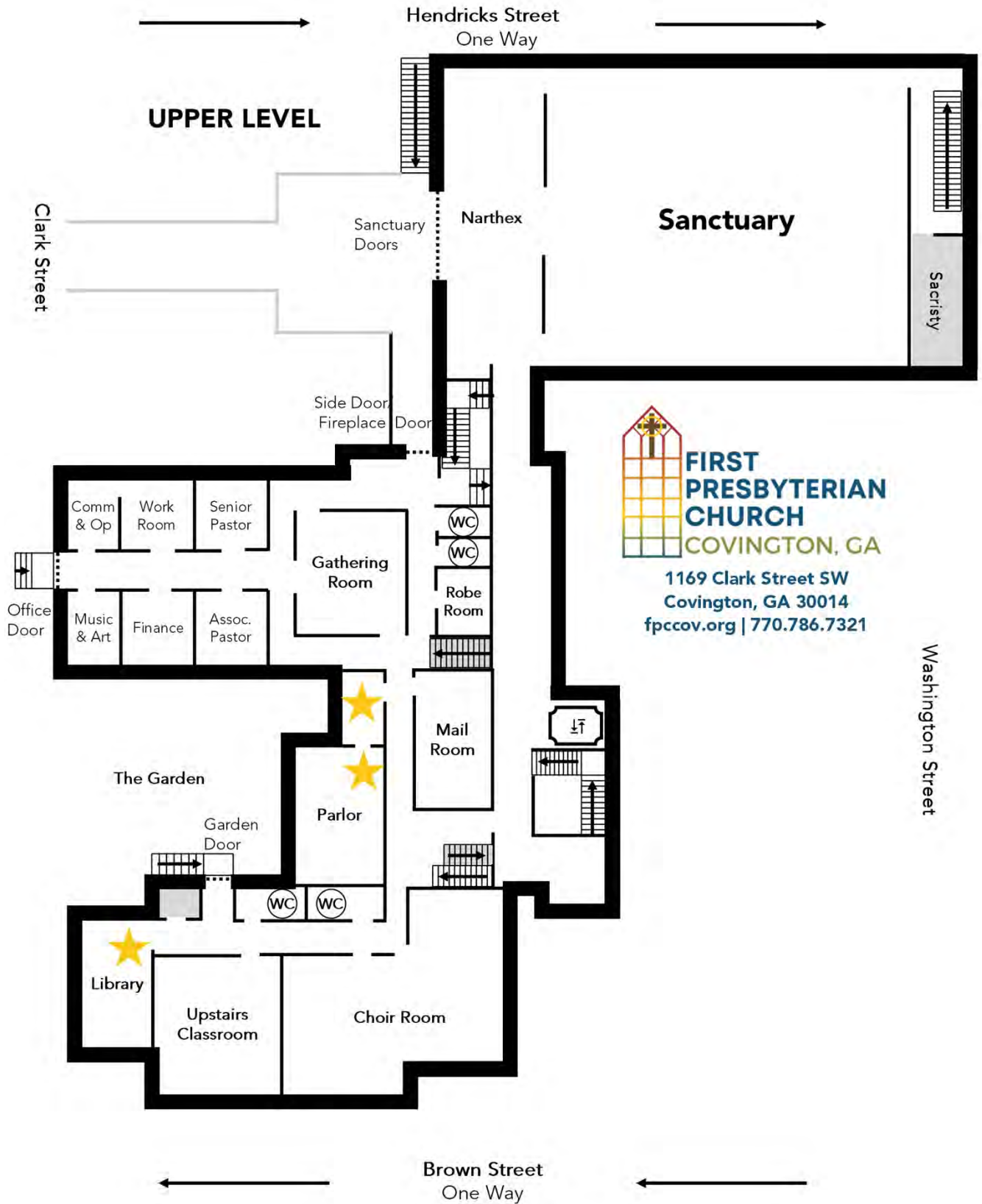
Please use the Church staff list for phone numbers to contact us with questions!

It is our goal to make your wedding a smooth and joyous occasion.

Reviewed and Approved by Worship Team May 8, 2023



First Presbyterian Church Wedding Policy



1169 Clark Street SW
Covington, GA 30014
fpccov.org | 770.786.7321

First Presbyterian Church Wedding Policy

