

Pines Presbyterian Church Wedding Booklet



WEDDING GUIDELINES
PINES PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
An inviting community of Christ's disciples
12751 Kimberley
Houston, Texas 77024
(713) 467-2234

For a well-coordinated wedding, the wedding couple and their families must read and follow these guidelines. If you have any questions regarding these, please consult Cindy Houlihan in the church office or your Pines Wedding Coordinator.

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PREFACE

When a couple begins to plan for their wedding, there are a number of questions that must be answered. One is: Shall we have a Christian marriage? A Christian marriage differs from just “marriage” in several ways. The state recognizes marriage as a civil contract for the protection of society, any children, and the rights of property. Christian marriage is of a different quality.

Christian marriage is ordinarily solemnized by a lawful Minister of the Word and Sacrament in the presence of God’s people. “Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage involves a unique commitment between two people, traditionally a man and a woman, to love and support each other for the rest of their lives. The sacrificial love that unites the couple sustains them as faithful and responsible members of the church and the wider community. In civil law, marriage is a contract that recognizes the rights and obligations of the married couple in society. In the Reformed tradition, marriage is also a covenant in which God has an active part, and which the community of faith publicly witnesses and acknowledges.”* This covenant we call “Christian marriage”.

If this is your intention, the congregation and the Ministers of Pines Presbyterian Church are here to help you. This booklet is designed to answer your questions and give you guidance as you begin to put this intention into practice. It is a privilege to have this opportunity to be involved at the beginning of your Christian marriage as witnesses and participants as far as we are able.

PLEASE READ THIS BOOKLET CAREFULLY before you make your intentions known and make your first appointment with our Ministers.

OBLIGATIONS OF THE MINISTER

“If they meet the requirements of the civil jurisdiction in which they intend to marry, a couple may request that a service of Christian marriage be conducted by a Minister of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), who is authorized, though not required, to act as an agent of the civil jurisdiction in recording the marriage contract. A couple requesting a service of Christian marriage shall receive instruction from the Minister of Word and Sacrament, who may agree to the couple’s request only if, in the judgment of the Minister of Word and Sacrament, the couple demonstrate sufficient understanding of the nature of the marriage covenant and commitment to living their lives together according to its values. In making this decision, the Minister of Word and Sacrament may seek the counsel of the session, which has authority to permit or deny the use of church property for a marriage service.”*

The Minister will work with the bride and groom as to the content of the service. “The marriage service shall be conducted in a manner appropriate to this covenant and to the forms of Reformed worship, under the direction of the Minister of Word and Sacrament and the supervision of the session. In a service of marriage, the couple marry each other by exchanging mutual promises. The Minister of Word and Sacrament witnesses the couple’s promises and pronounces God’s blessing upon their union. The community of faith pledges to support the couple in upholding their promises; prayers may be offered for the couple, for the communities that support them, and for all who seek to live in faithfulness.”*

*All quotations are from The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Part II, Book of Order.

PREMARITAL COUNSELING

In order to fulfill the Minister’s obligations to the Constitution, to enable the couple to have a marriage which gives promise of God’s blessing upon their union, and as a gift of the community of Pines to the couple being married, the Minister will meet with the couple well in advance of the wedding date to counsel with them. The couple is required to complete 6 hours of premarital counseling.

The purpose of this counseling is to instruct the couple in the nature of Christian marriage and to give them a structured opportunity to discuss, before marriage, questions and areas of importance to the success of their marriage, such as faith, values, responsibilities, children, in-laws, budget, personal compatibility, and sexual relations.



ARE GUEST MINISTERS ALLOWED AT PINES / INVITING OTHER MINISTERS

Ministers who are not part of the Pines staff may participate in officiating a wedding at Pines upon the invitation of the Pines senior pastor and approval of the Session. The wedding couple should coordinate closely with the Pines pastoral staff and any minister that the couple may wish to invite to assure that civil legal requirements are fulfilled and that roles in the service are clearly defined. Pines pastoral staff has final authority with respect to any questions about the service.

WEDDING COORDINATOR

Pines Presbyterian Church has a Wedding Coordinator who will consult with the wedding couple once dates are set with the church. The wedding couple must communicate with the Wedding Coordinator at least 30 days prior to the wedding. The Wedding Coordinator will ensure that Pines wedding policies are

understood and followed by the bride and groom, wedding party, family members and vendors. Involved parties and vendors must agree at the outset of planning to adhere to all Pines policies. Wedding Coordinator/s are required to assist the officiating Minister with details both at the rehearsal and at the wedding. The office manager will provide you the name and phone number of the wedding coordinator. Depending on the size of the wedding party, a second wedding coordinator may be required.

Scheduling a Wedding

1. **Submit a Wedding Inquiry Form**, available in the church office. Within one week of submission of the form, you will be contacted regarding a possible date.

2. **Complete Forms and Pay Deposit and Down Payment.** Once you have been contacted, you will be given one or more registration forms and required to pay a deposit and down payment. Send the completed forms and 2 checks: **\$100 deposit** (to be returned if building left in good condition), and **down payment of wedding fees of \$250** to the Church Office. Fees are described in detail on the next page. (Note that a member is defined as “a member and their children”.) Make checks payable to Pines Presbyterian Church, and indicate the bride and groom’s names in the Memo section of the check. Upon form and payment submission and approval, your wedding and rehearsal dates will be scheduled on the church calendar. The balance of the wedding fee is due no later than 60 days prior to the scheduled wedding date. No exceptions please.

3. **Cancellation.** Cancellation must be done via e-mail to the wedding coordinator. Attempted cancellations via any other method will be considered invalid. Any cancellation less than 60 days prior to the scheduled wedding date will result in a forfeit of the \$350 deposit and down payment.

4. **Schedule with the Pastor.** The Pines Minister who will officiate should be consulted at least 60 days in advance. Contact information is located in the back of this booklet.

5. **Schedule Musicians.** Please immediately contact our Music Director at Pines, (713) 467-2234, to schedule a consultation regarding your wedding music. Outside musicians or vocalists require approval from the Music Director and Pastor.

Fees

Wedding in the Sanctuary and Rehearsal the Night Before:

- **Members: Honorarium to Pastor, plus \$535 to Pines, plus a separate check for the deposit of \$100.**
- **Non-Members: \$1,550 to Pines, separate check for \$450 to the Pastor, plus a separate check for the deposit of \$100.**

Fee numbers above are inclusive of the \$250.00 down payment, which is due with the registration form and deposit.

Fees include:

- Organist fee (You must use our church organist)
- Wedding Coordinator/s
- Sound and light technician
- Custodial Services
- Facility Usage Fee (Limited to a **4 Hour** Time Limit: for example, set-up 2 hours, wedding 1 hour, pictures and clean-up 1 hour)

Additional fees that may apply:

- **One hour is allotted for the wedding ceremony.** Should a wedding exceed one hour, there will be an additional fee of \$500.
- If a Non-Member wedding party wishes to use the Fellowship Hall or Family Life Center for the Reception, there will be an additional fee of \$500. Please note that there is a **time limit of 2 hours for the Reception**, which begins when the bride and groom enter the room. Should the reception last longer than 2 hours or require additional custodial services, there will be an added fee of \$250 (in addition to the \$500 fee for the first two hours).

Deposit refund:

- The deposit will be refunded after the wedding, **unless** the facility is left in poor condition. The amount of the deposit returned is at the sole discretion of the Pines Wedding Coordinator/s. There is no refund of the fee for use of the Fellowship Hall or Family Life Center.

Payment Schedule:

Deposit and Down Payment: Due at time of reservation

Balance of Wedding Fees: Due no later than 60 days prior to the scheduled wedding date.

Cancellation Policy: Cancellation must be communicated via e-mail to the wedding coordinator/s. Attempted cancellations via any other method will be considered invalid. Deposit and down payment refunds are at the discretion of the wedding coordinator; however, all efforts to understand and accommodate the particulars of a given situation will be undertaken. Any cancellation less than 60 days prior to the scheduled wedding date will result in a forfeit of the entire deposit and down payment.

RESERVING A DATE

The wedding date will be reserved on the church calendar after the deposit and down payment are paid and the date has been confirmed to be available on the church calendar.

Due to the observance of holidays and special events, and the availability of Pines staff, we regret that weddings cannot be conducted on the following days:

- Sundays
- Easter weekend (Thursday through Monday), Thanksgiving weekend (Thanksgiving Day through Monday), Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, New Years Eve or New Years Day
- National holiday weekends (exceptions may be considered)
- Dates not listed above may be unavailable due to church events or scheduling conflicts. The Pines Office Manager will address any conflicts upon review of your Wedding Inquiry Form.
- Please note that Pines enhances the facility with seasonal decorations. It is the responsibility of the wedding party to inquire whether or not the decorations will affect their events, if it is possible to remove the decorations, and, if it is possible, what fees are associated with their removal and replacement.

REHEARSAL SCHEDULING

The rehearsal is normally scheduled for 5:30 or 6:00 PM on the evening before the wedding.

It will consist of:

- practicing the processional and recessional
- reviewing the wedding ceremony,
- usher training,
- an orientation of Pines facilities and procedures.

One hour is allocated for the rehearsal. Please be sure your wedding party is present and ready to begin at the appointed time.

The Pines Minister is in charge of the rehearsal.

MARRIAGE LICENSE

It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to secure a marriage license from the Harris County Clerk's Office (713-755-6405 or <http://www.cclerk.hctx.net/>). The marriage license should be delivered to the Pines Minister at the rehearsal.

ALCOHOL AND SMOKING

Session policy of Pines Presbyterian Church does not permit the serving of alcoholic beverages at any time anywhere on church property, nor does it permit smoking in the building. While we want your wedding to be a joyous celebration, we also want your wedding party and guests to remain focused on the sanctity of the occasion.

Any violation of this policy may cause cancellation of the ceremony at the discretion of the Pines Minister.

WEDDING BULLETIN

Bulletins may be copied by the Pines church office for a small charge or you may have them produced elsewhere. You may secure your own bulletin covers or purchase Pines' covers. If Pines will be producing the bulletin, content for it must be provided to the church office at least 2 weeks before the ceremony.

PERSONAL ITEMS OF WEDDING PARTY /DELIVERIES

Wedding dress, flowers, etc. may be delivered to the church on the day of the wedding and must be received by a person designated by the wedding party. Pines cannot accept responsibility for these items. Please check with the Wedding Coordinator/s to confirm the time that the florist or bridal shop may decorate or make deliveries.

The Bride's Room/Library is available for storage at one's own risk. We encourage you to secure all valuables left in these rooms.

Pines will not be responsible for personal possessions left in the Bride's Room or other dressing rooms at any time. These should be removed immediately after the wedding or reception.

GIFTS

The wedding couple should appoint someone to be responsible for any wedding gifts brought to the church. Please arrange for gifts to be delivered to the family after the ceremony or reception.

Pines is not responsible for gifts left at the church.

FLORAL DECORATIONS AND CHURCH FURNITURE

Florists decorating for your wedding must be finished and out of the Sanctuary at least one hour prior to the ceremony. The florist must not use thumb tacks, Scotch tape, etc. on any of the pews, furniture, or appointments.

Only the communion appointments may be placed on the communion table: the church's chalice, bread tray, and two candles. **No** flowers or other decorations may be placed on the communion table.

Candles must be only the non-drip variety, placed in regular candelabra and must not be placed closer than eighteen inches to woodwork, columns, or other furnishings. Plastic or carpet squares must be placed on the floor under the candelabra to further guard against damage by candle drippings.

Any furniture moved for the wedding may only be done with the supervision of the church's Wedding Coordinator/s, and if moved, it is at your own risk. The communion table may be moved under the cross, but never lower than where it regularly sits. The pulpit and baptismal font must never leave the landing they are on, but may be moved to one side. Neither the pulpit nor the communion table nor the baptismal font may be moved from the chancel area.

Any furniture that is moved must be returned to its original location within 24 hours of the wedding; if there is a Saturday wedding the furniture must be moved back **IMMEDIATELY**. This is to be arranged by the wedding couple's or Pines member's family.

All flowers must be taken away after the wedding. No flowers should remain in the church after the wedding, unless arrangements are made in advance.

The wedding couple's family is responsible for supplying the florist and the wedding coordinator (other than the Pines Wedding Coordinator/s) with a copy of the wedding policy concerning floral decorations. The church uses Colony Florist and their phone number is 713-468-9676. They are familiar with our church and are located across West Bough should you choose to use them.

RICE, BIRDSEED, OR CONFETTI

We do not allow items such as rice, birdseed, confetti, sparklers, canned string, bubbles, etc. inside or outside the building. Such items add to the work of the custodian and can endanger those in attendance.

The bride and groom are responsible for communicating this policy to the wedding party and all outside vendors.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY

Since the service of Holy Matrimony is a worship service, all photographers (amateur and professional) are asked to show reverence for the ceremony and the place. Photographers (whether professional, family or friends) may take group pictures before the ceremony in any areas of the church. No flash pictures may be made during the ceremony. Time exposures may be made from the rear of the Sanctuary, or from the choir loft, providing such is done quietly and with the proper equipment. The photographer should avoid being conspicuous and distracting.

If pictures are to be taken in the Sanctuary before the wedding, these must be completed one hour prior to wedding. This gives the organist and soloist time to prepare.

The bridal party may reassemble in the Sanctuary after the service and pose for any part of the ceremony desired.

The wedding party is responsible for supplying the photographer with a copy of the wedding policy concerning photography.

USHERS

- Graciously welcome and seat your wedding guests
- Work closely with the Wedding Coordinator/s on ushering responsibilities. Pines asks that you designate a person to serve as Head Usher. It is helpful if this person is familiar with the families of the bride and groom.



MUSIC

When the wedding date has been reserved on the church calendar and with the Minister, the wedding should make an appointment with the Music Director, to discuss what music will be used. All music selected will be subject to final review and approval by the Music Director and a Minister of Pines Church.

A marriage ceremony in the church is a worship service. In view of this, all music used during the ceremony should be suitable and reverent, at least to the same degree and in the same sense as the music that is used in any worship service in this church.

Music for the wedding ceremony should direct attention to God and to the joining together of a couple in holy matrimony in the sight of God and of men and women. With this in mind, most operatic music is not suitable, although there are a few exceptions allowed, such as the “Bridal Chorus” from Lohengrin by Wagner and the “Wedding March” by Mendelssohn. Similarly, most contemporary, light, or secular music is not suitable, such as “I Love You Truly” or “Because.” These selections, in particular, have become associated with weddings by some people but, in reality, are simply love songs with no special significance or reference to either God or to the wedding.

For your reference and as a guide, the music selections listed below are some of the choices that can be used; however, this is by no means to be considered a complete listing. The Music Director should be contacted with questions as to the suitability of music selections not on this list.

Pre-nuptial Recital:

Any preludes, toccatas, fantasies, fugues, and many partitas and chorales of Bach, Buxtehude, Walther, and Karg-Elert can be used.

“Water Music Suite,” Concertos, and other works of Handel, many works of Franck, Vierne, Widor, Dupre, Beethoven, Mozart, Brahms, and Mendelssohn are acceptable. Hymns, or arrangements of them, as contained in **The Presbyterian Hymnal** of Pines Presbyterian Church, such as: Nos. 482, 555, 464, 220, 478, 263, 488, 260, 306, 510, 281, 420, 376, 533.

Processional and Recessional:

Many hymns, or arrangements of them such as those listed above are suitable, plus:

“Trumpet Tune” Purcell

“Trumpet Voluntary” Purcell

“St. Anthony’s Chorale” Brahms

“Psalm XIX” Marcello

“Hornpipe” (Water Music) Handel

“Bridal Chorus” Wagner

“Wedding March” Mendelssohn

Vocal Music:

“O Perfect Love” Sowerby, Clokey, Willan

“The Greatest of These Is Love” Bitgood, Moe

“The Lord’s Prayer” Bingham, Ley

“Wedding Song” Schuetz

“O Lord Most Holy” Franck

“The God of Love My Shepherd Is” Thiman

“Eternal Love” Willan

“God Is My Shepherd” Dvorak

“Set Me As a Seal Upon Thine Heart” Clokey

“We Lift Our Hearts to Thee” Lovelace

KEY NAMES AND CONTACT INFO

Reverend Andy Gans andy@pinespc.org (Sr. Pastor)

Reverend Barbara Retzloff barbara@pinespc.org (Associate Pastor)

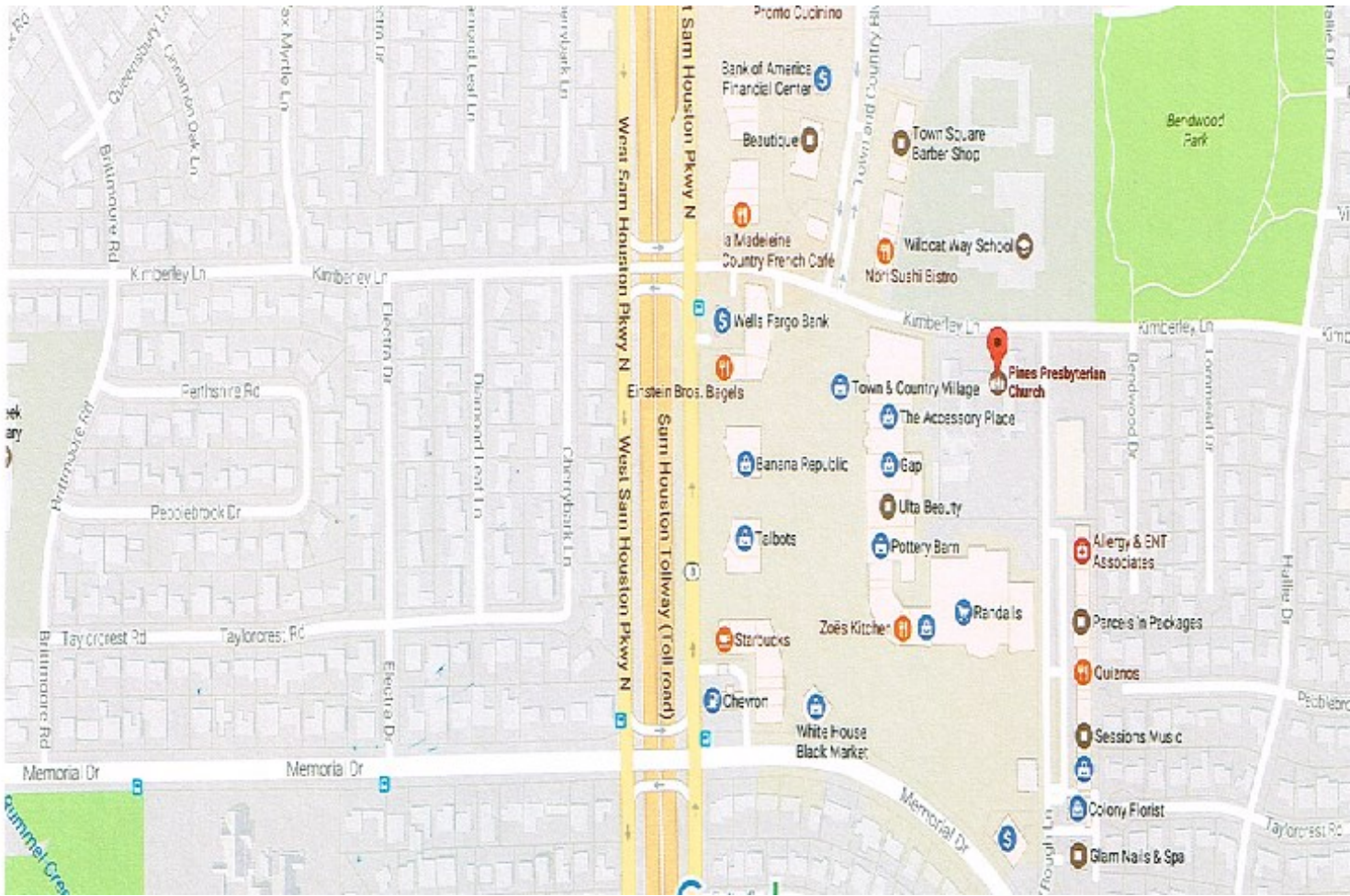
Tim Holder tim@pinespc.org (Director of Music Ministries)

Cindy Houlihan cindy@pinespc.org (Office Manager)

Want to learn more about Pines?

If you are looking for a church home or interested in learning more about Pines, please contact one of our pastors.

You may also access our website at www.pinespc.org for more information.



NOTES



We have received the wedding booklet and understand what is expected of us in order to be married at Pines Presbyterian Church. We will be asked to contribute an honorarium to the pastor in addition to the listed fees.

X _____ Date: _____
Groom/Bride