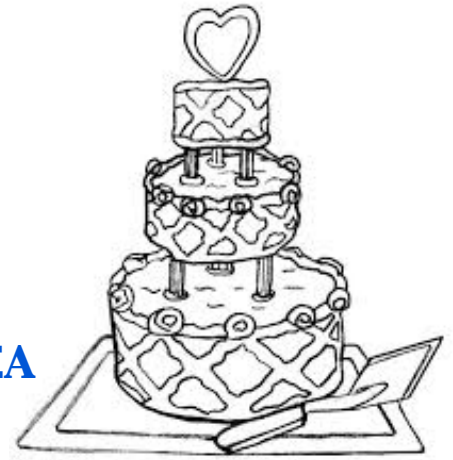




Policies and Practices of
COMMUNITY CHURCH
OF LAUDERDALE BY THE SEA
----- Wedding Services -----



Community Church of Lauderdale by the Sea is a very open and liberal congregation, and we want your wedding to represent your shared lives and hopes. We are committed to creating an atmosphere where the mutual commitment of two individuals in love is welcomed regardless of gender, sexual orientation, race, religious background, ability or national origin. In order to do this “decently and in order”, the Session (the governing body of Community Church of Lauderdale by the Sea) and the Pastor, have established the following policies and practices to make it a joyous and live-giving experience for the church and for you both.

SCHEDULING AND TIMES--Weddings at Community Church are scheduled through the Wedding Coordinator at a time when the spaces to be used are free for such use. The wedding fee for the Sanctuary, (which must be paid no later than 2 months prior to the wedding day), include use of the sanctuary for 2 hours on the day of the wedding. The building will be open one hour prior to the start time of the wedding. If you need access to the sanctuary earlier, you will need to make special arrangements with the Community Church Wedding Coordinator and an additional fee may be charged. The fee also includes use of the sanctuary for the wedding rehearsal. The building will be open 30 minutes prior to the beginning of the rehearsal, and will be closed exactly one hour after the agreed upon start time. Therefore, it is imperative that all the wedding party be on time.

THE CEREMONY--The Session of the church sanctions all marriages, and the Pastor of Community Church has final word on all wedding services, but will happily collaborate to provide the couple with a marriage ceremony that includes many choices in prayers to be used, forms of marriage vows, statements on the gift of marriage, symbolic acts and Scriptures to be read. As a congregation, we are open to many traditions, cultures, and religious observances and there is wide latitude in the possible choices. The couple is encouraged to make meaningful and creative choices in consultation with the Pastor.

OFFICIANT(S)-- Presbyterian polity states that normally the Pastor of the church is to conduct the ceremony. However, when this is not possible or when the couple would like to use another minister, that minister (male or female) may be invited to conduct the service upon the invitation of our Pastor. Whoever is selected, the principal celebrant of the ceremony shall be a duly-ordained minister of a church or religious community in correspondence with the Presbyterian

Church (USA), and must present proof of their good standing in their religious community. This person must be registered with the State of Florida, and the service should be consistent with the ones suggested in *The Book of Common Worship*. Under no circumstances do we recognize any online ordinations, or allow persons holding an online ordination to officiate at the Community Church of Lauderdale by the Sea.

PREMARITAL COUNSELING--Those who seek to hold their wedding at Community Church must provide proof of pre-marital counseling. As a practicality, the State of Florida gives big discounts on license fees to those couples who have a certificate of premarital counseling. This does not have to be done by the Pastor at Community Church, though s/he will be glad to try to schedule it with you if time permits. Such counseling aims only to strengthen the relationship and the marriage of the couple to be married. There will normally be at least three sessions, two or more to get to know the couple and discuss family background, marriage expectations, finances, religious background and other matters. The last session will be devoted to determining how the service will be conducted (special additions to the service, music, scripture, etc).

LICENSE--Those who present themselves for marriage must, without exception, make application for a marriage license in Florida by personally going to a Florida Clerk of Court (normally the one in Broward County where the church is located). This application must be dated within 60 days prior to the service authorizing the marriage. The Marriage license issued by the Clerk of Court must be brought to the wedding rehearsal to be filled out (but not signed) by the officiant prior to the service.

The marriage license will be signed immediately after the marriage ceremony by the couple, the officiant, and two witnesses. As required by law, the officiant will mail the completed certificate to the Florida Vital Records Registry. The church will retain a permanent copy of this certificate, and the marriage will be entered into the official church register, which contains all marriages at Community Church of Lauderdale by the Sea since 1954. The marriage license (and certified copies ordered at the time of application) will be processed by the Broward Clerk of Court and should be mailed to the couple within two weeks after the wedding.

FLOWERS, DECORATIONS AND WEDDING SUPPLIES --All decorations, programs/orders of service, unity candles, ring pillows, pew bows, and all other wedding accoutrements must be provided by the couple or their designees, and must be removed from the church when the wedding party leaves. Neither the church nor it's staff are responsible for anything left after the wedding or left by wedding guests. (though we do have a 'lost and found' box in the office)

If you would like to leave a floral spray or flowers for the worship service on Sunday, we will gladly announce your gift and your wedding to the congregation in the worship bulletin the Sunday following your marriage. Please notify the church secretary well in advance and tell us how you would like your married name listed in the bulletin announcement.

Those who are to have their wedding service at Community Church will be expected to plan their floral decorations so that they do not interfere with the proper arrangements of the chancel furniture for the wedding, which is first and foremost, a service of worship. Water-filled or soaked floral arrangements may *never* be placed on wood surfaces anywhere in the church. Candles may be used so long as they are contained in glass containers, and so long as safety factors are taken into consideration. The candles on the communion table in the sanctuary are available to be used in the service, but may not be moved from this table. No lighted candles may be carried by anyone in the wedding party. The chancel furniture may not be moved, with the exception of the communion table.

You are welcome to throw flower petals, birdseed, rice, etc., as long as a person of your designation cleans up the remnants of such festivities. Artificial flower petals may NOT be thrown outside of the church.

PHOTOS AND VIDEOS--Pictures may be taken before and after the wedding service.¹ It is our suggestion that any timed exposures be taken from the back of the sanctuary during the service. Flash cameras may be used while the wedding party is making its entrance up the aisle, but after the grand entrance of the couple to be married is over, only non-flash photography may be used during the rest of the service. Photographers may not move about taking pictures during the service. If a photographer or videographer encroaches upon the chancel during the ceremony, the Pastor has the right to halt the service until the interruption ceases. Video cameras may be used during the service so long as they operate from a fixed position either in the back or front of the sanctuary. No special video lights are to be used during the service itself. The officiant will be glad to take pictures after the completion of the service with the wedding party. Additional lavalière mics or headset mics for the Pastor and/or couple that some videographers provide are completely acceptable.

CHURCH FEES-- A deposit of \$300 is necessary to hold the date for a wedding. This deposit is refundable up to 3 months from the date of the wedding with the balance must be paid no later than 2 months prior to the wedding date. If full payment is not received within 2 months of the wedding date, the wedding will be canceled and the \$300 deposit will be forfeit. All fees, including those for Pastoral or church staff musicians are to be paid to the church by cash, check or credit card payments². If you make arrangements with musicians outside the church musical staff, you will need to pay those musicians directly.

MUSIC--There is an excellent baby grand piano in the sanctuary, and you are welcome to contract with soloists and instrumentalists as well. If you would like to make use of our organ, a list of qualified organists is available. You may use your own organist, but please check with the church to certify the organist.

¹ Guest officiants may choose to impose other restrictions. Please check with the presiding officiant.

² If paying any sums in cash, please make sure that you receive a signed and dated receipt on church letterhead. Please note that there will be a 3% processing fee if you pay with a credit or debit card.

The church will be glad to provide a list of other instrumentalists and soloists that may be contracted. Please remember that the marriage service in a Christian church is a worship service and music should be chosen that is consistent with that purpose. A CD player and inputs for iPad and iPhone are available, but please let us know well beforehand to make sure that what you are using will be compatible with our sound system. Someone in your wedding party must be responsible for coordinating such music as well as the points in the service where it will be started and stopped.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION--Please understand that the officiating minister, assisted by the Community Church Wedding Coordinator, is in charge of the rehearsal and wedding service. He/she will seek to direct it in accordance with the wishes of the couple insofar as propriety and the Presbyterian Church (USA) Book of Order dictate. The service should be consistent with the worship of Almighty God.

It is **STRONGLY** recommended that the couple have orders of worship printed, including all parts of the wedding ceremony and anything that will be said or sung by the congregation. Order of Service and lists of wedding party participants enable guests to engage fully in the service and know what is going on.

It is vital that any changes that the couple wishes to make, especially in the time of rehearsal or wedding, or in the order of the ceremony, should be made known to the officiating minister and Community Church wedding coordinator in writing well in advance of the ceremony.

The Community Church Wedding Coordinator will always be present at the rehearsal and the ceremony to assist the Pastor and the wedding party. Additional bridal consultants are sometimes necessary, especially for large, complex or destination weddings, but if present at the church, they should not be asked to do more than assist the couple and their attendants before they enter the sanctuary and as they leave for the reception.

These policies shall be provided to all persons who seek information about marriages at Community Church of Lauderdale by the Sea.

The Session of Community Church of Lauderdale by the Sea
the Revd Fred J Powell, III, Pastor