

**SESSION'S GUIDELINES FOR  
WEDDINGS  
AT  
NEWNAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**



**38 Greenville Street  
P. O. Box 1107  
Newnan, GA 30264  
770-253-4405**

**[ldenney@newnanpres.org](mailto:ldenney@newnanpres.org)**

**10 STEPS DOWN THE AISLE**  
**At**  
**Newnan Presbyterian Church**

**1. CHECK THE WEDDING DATE**

Call our Church Secretary at 770-253-4405 to see if your preferred date is available.

**2. APPOINTMENT WITH OUR PASTOR**

Call our Church Secretary at 770-253-4405 to set up appointment with our Pastor. At this time, our Church Secretary will mail you our SESSION'S GUIDELINES FOR WEDDINGS AT NPC, the Wedding Contract and the Wedding Coordinator Form.

**3. READ SESSIONS' GUIDELINES FOR WEDDINGS AT NEWNAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.**

**4. COMPLETE WEDDING CONTRACT AND WEDDING COORDINATOR FORMS.**

Return to:

Newnan Presbyterian Church  
Attention: Wedding Coordinator  
P. O. Box 1107  
Newnan, GA 30264.

**5. BRIDE AND GROOM MEETING WITH OUR PASTOR.**

**6. OUR PASTOR CONSULTS WITH THE SESSION AT NEWNAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH** about your plans to be married at our Church.

**7. SEND IN NON-MEMBER FEES APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR WEDDING.**

Please call our Church Secretary if you have any questions.  
These fees should be received by NPC before your wedding date is official.

**8. NEWNAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH RECEIVES FEES.**

**9. CHURCH SECRETARY OFFICALLY PLACES YOUR DATE ON THE CHURCH CALENDAR.**

**10. CALL CHURCH SECRETARY FOR APPOINTMENT WITH THE NPC WEDDING COORDINATOR.**

## Introduction

This booklet is designed to answer many of your questions regarding getting married at Newnan Presbyterian Church. We do not intend it to be a substitute for personal interaction, so please feel free to contact our Church Staff if you have further questions or if any item needs clarification.

Newnan Presbyterian Church takes marriage seriously and, therefore, the wedding ceremony. Marriage is a relationship instituted by God for the mutual happiness of His people and for the glory of His name. A wedding is a joyous and holy occasion as two people unite their lives to form a Christian union. It is a religious ordinance which the pastor performs under the ordination and authority of our church.

Newnan Presbyterian Church rejoices in this occasion, and is eager to make your wedding memorable and beautiful. The beauty of the wedding is NOT in the externals; rather, it is in the sincerity and devotion of those who take part in the ceremony.

The guidelines, as outlined in the following pages, have been compiled at the direction of our church elders and are meant to answer questions about your wedding at Newnan Presbyterian Church. Our pastors, Wedding Coordinator and Church Staff will assist in any way they can.

Serious study has gone into the preparation of these guidelines. The governing body of our church, The Session, has approved them on behalf of our congregation. Everything that is planned as part of the Wedding Worship Service should be done in accordance with the doctrines, beliefs and regular worship practices of Newnan Presbyterian Church.

So that you may have a sacred and dignified ceremony, we urge you to read these guidelines carefully and to make thorough preparation. Your cooperation and full compliance with these guidelines is appreciated. The bride and groom have the responsibility for acquainting all independent contractors (wedding party, guests, florist, caterer, Wedding Director, guest clergy, musicians and photographers) with these guidelines.

*"And the Lord said.... 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help mate....' Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one in flesh..." Genesis, Chapter 2.*

## For members of Newnan Presbyterian Church

The bride, the groom, the parents of the bride or groom, or grandparents of the bride or groom must have been members of NPC for a minimum of one year prior to scheduling the ceremony. If you are a member of Newnan Presbyterian Church, you are probably already familiar with the traditions, customs and policies of our church regarding weddings. The remainder of this booklet will refresh your memory on our guidelines.

## For guests of Newnan Presbyterian Church

We are happy to have couples who are not members of our congregation get married at Newnan Presbyterian Church. We welcome you and ask only that you respect our traditions, customs and policies. If you are planning to make your home in the Newnan area, we invite you to worship with us and join our church family.

## Planning Ahead

If you are thinking of using Newnan Presbyterian Church for your wedding, please plan ahead and let the church know of your plans at the earliest possible time. Please call the Church Secretary to reserve your wedding date and then follow the procedures as outlined under "Reserving the Church and Staff" on Page 4.

## Wedding Guild

Newnan Presbyterian Church has a Wedding Guild consisting of several Wedding Coordinators who will assist you with your wedding plans. The Church Secretary will assist the bride in scheduling a meeting with the Wedding Coordinator soon after the wedding date has been officially placed on the Church calendar.

As The Session's agent, the Wedding Coordinator will (a) ensure the bridal plans comply with rules in the Session's Guidelines, (b) give final approval for decorations, (c) approve the bride's selection of a professional Wedding Director, (d) be available for scheduled visits to answer the bride's questions about church property and church use, (e) approve layout of the Wedding Program, should the bride have one for the service (Printing is the bride's responsibility.), and (f) be present at the Church during the wedding ceremony, rehearsal and reception (if applicable).

## Reserving the Church and Staff

After the Church Secretary has verified your wedding date, she will set up an appointment with our minister. In addition, she will mail you a Wedding Contract and a Wedding Coordinator Form, which should be returned to the Church Office, along with the appropriate wedding fees, before your wedding date is officially placed on the Church calendar.

Members of Newnan Presbyterian Church may reserve facilities 1 (one) year in advance of the wedding date. Non-members may reserve the facilities 5 (five) months in advance of the wedding date.

No weddings may be scheduled on:

New Year's Eve	New Year's Day
Memorial Day	Independence Day
Labor Day	Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Eve	Christmas Day

Or

During the Lenten Season (Ash Wednesday through Easter Sunday)

Our ministers observe this 40-day period as a time of fasting and penitence in commemoration of our Lord's fasting in the wilderness. For this reason, they will perform no "celebration" ceremonies during this period (weddings and baptisms)

## Music

The Church Secretary will advise you how to contact the organist for Newnan Presbyterian Church. The bride should contact the organist immediately to ensure her availability for the wedding date. In addition, the bride should schedule well in advance all dates for which the organist will be expected to play.

The NPC organist is charged with the proper care of the organ and piano. The NPC organist is approved by The Session for playing these instruments. Our organist serves as The Session's agent in (a) choice and approval of ceremonial music in keeping with the Reformed tradition as outlined in the Presbyterian Directory for Worship and (b) choice and approval of any guest musician/organist for a wedding.

The bride must consult with our organist on all matters pertaining to music and music selection for the ceremony. The organist will approve the appropriateness of your musical selections.

TAPED MUSIC IS NOT ALLOWED in the sanctuary at Newnan Presbyterian Church. The sanctuary piano and organ WILL NOT be moved.

Both members and non-members should discuss the organist's fees directly with the organist; these fees should be paid directly to the organist at least two weeks prior to the wedding date.

## The Sanctuary

The sanctuary of Newnan Presbyterian Church seats approximately 350 persons comfortably in its pews. Of the 350, approximately 300 can be seated on the main level; a small balcony over the narthex seats approximately 50.

The members of Newnan Presbyterian Church are proud of our heritage, which dates back to 1828, when a faithful group of Christians organized a Presbyterian Church at Bullsboro, an Indian trading post just northwest of Newnan. After two previous sites in Newnan, and the original building in the current location, our present sanctuary was completed in 1924. Additions to our church buildings were made in 1983 and 1998. We welcome visitors and ask that you reverently respect the beauty of our historic sanctuary; eating, drinking and smoking ARE NOT PERMITTED in our sanctuary.

## Pastors

The Session, through its Worship Committee, has assigned responsibility for worship at weddings to the pastors of the church. One of the ministers of Newnan Presbyterian Church must participate in all (member as well as non-member) weddings.

Pre-marital Counseling: In accordance with the Presbyterian Book of Order, our pastor(s) will counsel with the bride and groom to help them think through the commitment they are making and the responsibilities involved in the Christian marriage relationship. The pastor cannot make the decision whether to marry the couple until this meeting has occurred. According to our tradition, if the pastor believes that Christian commitment and responsibility are lacking, the pastor shall not perform the ceremony.

The pastor will advise The Session about the couple's commitment and intention to use church property, in conjunction with the Book of Order. The number of future counseling sessions needed are at the discretion of the pastor(s).

A wedding date will be placed officially on the church calendar, ONLY after a personal meeting with the pastor in addition to the return of the properly signed forms accompanied by the appropriate fees.

Out of courtesy to our pastors, the wedding couple should advise them as early as possible of any wedding events/social functions they might be expected to attend.

Guest Ministers: Although one of the ministers at Newnan Presbyterian Church must officiate at all weddings in our sanctuary, other ordained members of the clergy are certainly allowed and welcomed. The NPC pastor will counsel with The Session in advance of extending an invitation to a guest minister. Guest ministers will be expected to familiarize themselves with and to follow the Newnan Presbyterian Church's guidelines.

Gifts: As Shepherds to the Flock, the pastors of Newnan Presbyterian Church witness and bless the Christian marriage of its members. Gifts from MEMBERS are at the discretion of the bride and groom. NON-MEMBERS should refer to the Wedding Fees section.

## Photographers

**Before Ceremony:** No photographs will be taken for 30 minutes before the wedding worship service. This gives the wedding party the privacy needed to reflect upon the ceremony's significance.

**During Worship Service:** The Worship service begins when the Mothers of the Bride and Groom are seated. After the service begins, the photographer may stand in two places: the balcony or the narthex door. Photographer may use EXISTING LIGHT only. NO FLASHES and NO NOISE in making time exposures.

**Processional/Recessional:** Photographs of the bride and her father may be taken inside the Narthex (during processional) but **NOT INSIDE THE SANCTUARY**. During the recessional, photographs may be taken from the Narthex door, or from the balcony but **NOT INSIDE THE SANCTUARY**.

### **After Ceremony: Photographs may be taken following the wedding worship service, when the wedding party returns to the sanctuary.**

**Bride's Responsibility:** It is the bride's responsibility to inform the wedding party, family, friends, and the professional photographer that NO FLASH CAMERAS are allowed in the sanctuary during the ceremony. The Session wants there to be no misunderstanding or deviation from these guidelines. It would be advisable to place this warning in the Wedding Program/Bulletin if one is used.

**Video-Taping:** Camera may be located in the balcony; it must be set on a tripod. No supplemental lighting may be used. No noise – no moving from one side to another.

The foregoing Photographer Guidelines cover professional photographers, non-professional photographers and guests. Photographers should expect to visit with the Wedding Coordinator prior to the service so there will be no misunderstanding of these guidelines.

## Decorations

The beauty of the wedding is not in the externals, rather it is in the sincerity and devotion of those who take part in the ceremony. Decorations should be simple in order to preserve the beauty and dignity of our historic sanctuary. They should not be used to hide or cover symbols that establish these rooms as places of Christian worship.

**Approval:** All decorations will be approved by the Wedding Coordinator.

**Attachments:** No tacks, pins, nails, staples, tape, or glue may be used to fasten any decorations to the furniture, building, or organ pipes. No carpentry or temporary construction can be erected in the sanctuary.

**Piano, Organ and Organ Pipes:** No decorations, floral or otherwise, will be placed on, tied or tacked to the musical instruments in the sanctuary.

**Candles:** No candles may be attached to pews, used in aisles or carried by attendants. If candles are used in the windows, they must be placed inside hurricane globes; the church does not provide these. UNITY CANDLES are allowed but are not provided for by the church.

**Wax:** The furniture, floor and carpet must be fully protected at all times from moisture and candle wax. Florists will be held responsible for cleaning wax from floor, carpets and furniture.

**Removal & Loss:** Decorations, equipment, clothing and all other wedding essentials must be removed from the church property immediately following the wedding ceremony and/or reception. Newnan Presbyterian Church assumes no responsibility or liability for damage or loss.

**Notice of Independent Contractors:** The bride and groom assume full responsibility for briefing all independent contractors about promptly removal of all wedding paraphernalia. NPC assumes no responsibility for damage or loss.

**Church Deliveries:** Independent contractors must coordinate WELL IN ADVANCE with the Church Office regarding delivery and pick-up of items for a wedding.

**Furniture in Sanctuary:** A prayer bench is available. The pulpit, the communion table and chairs may be moved with approval from the Wedding Coordinator.

**Bridal Send-off/Farewell:** Birdseed OUTSIDE only. No rice, confetti, flower petals, balloons, bubbles or other materials may be used either IN or OUTSIDE the church premises. (A flower girl may only toss SILK petals to protect the carpet.)

**Sanctuary Flowers for Sunday Worship:** If the bride wishes, she may leave her sanctuary floral arrangements to be enjoyed the next day by the NPC congregation. Please contact our Church Secretary the week prior to your wedding so that it can appear in the church bulletin.

## Rehearsals

The rehearsal is usually scheduled for the evening before the wedding. All persons in the wedding party, as well as honored guests, should be present for the rehearsal. While you can expect the rehearsal to last approximately one hour, it is a good idea to allow an hour and a half. Please do everything possible to assure prompt arrival at the rehearsal. If the marriage license has not been given already to the pastor, it should be placed in the pastor's hand at the rehearsal.

## Dressing Rooms

Unfortunately, Newnan Presbyterian Church does not have a room designated as a Bride's Room where the brides and her attendants can dress. We do offer two of our Sunday School rooms, including a nearby bathroom, for the bride and her attendants to use. The groom and his groomsmen usually dress in our Fellowship Hall.

## **Cleaning the Church**

The wedding party is responsible for leaving the church facilities clean and orderly. If a member of the wedding party finds that he/she has overlooked something, he/she should telephone the Church Secretary the following Monday to see if the item had been turned in.

## **Alcohol and Tobacco**

No alcoholic beverages will be consumed on the church premises; no smoking is allowed inside any of the buildings.

## **Reception and Fellowship Hall Area**

The Fellowship Hall, kitchen, tables, chairs and ice machines are available for use. Schedule use of the Fellowship Hall when the wedding date is placed officially on the church calendar.

Caterer: Private caterers are welcome. Caterers may not use the church kitchen for food preparation. The kitchen may be used as a room from which to serve and as a place for clean-up. The caterer is fully responsible for kitchen clean-up. Note that improper attention to clean-up may result in forfeiture of fees following inspection by the Elders in charge of the Property Ministry. Caterers must schedule their intended entrance and exit of the Fellowship area well in advance with the church secretary and/or Wedding Coordinator.

Set-up/Tables and Chairs: The church secretary will direct that this be done, with a minimum of 2 weeks notice from the bride. The number of guests expected and a room layout/drawing will be needed.

## **Miscellaneous**

Our facilities are wheelchair accessible. Please let us know in advance if these services will be needed.

## **Fee Schedule**

### **Members**

A member is defined as the bride, the groom, the parents or grandparents of the bride or groom who have been members of NPC for a minimum of one year prior to scheduling the ceremony.

The deadline for receiving these fees is **60 days prior to the wedding date.**

Custodial Service           \$125

Organist                       Please contact personally for her fee.

Pastor                          Gifts are at the Member's discretion.

**Cancellation:** all fees are forfeited (to cover administrative expenses) if NPC is notified of a cancellation 59 days or less prior to the scheduled wedding date.

### **Non-Members**

(Write one check to NPC for all appropriate fees, excluding organist. This check should accompany your signed contract forms when mailed to the Church Office.)

Sanctuary:                       Total Cost -- \$900

Included are: Sanctuary, Pastor, Wedding Coordinator, 2 dressing rooms, sound system, custodial fee.

\$100 will be refunded upon passing inspection of the premises by the Elders from the Property Ministry, following the wedding ceremony.

Reception: Fellowship Hall, Kitchen, Tables and Chairs

Total Cost -- \$400 (per night)

\$50 will be refunded upon passing inspection of the premises by the Elders from the Property Ministry, following the reception.

Organist: Contact organist directly for her fee.

**Cancellation:** Non-members canceling 60 days or more prior to the wedding date will be refunded HALF of all fees paid. All fees are forfeited if NPC receives notice of a cancellation 59 days or less prior to the wedding date