**Salem Covenant Church**

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**2655 Fifth Street NW**

**New Brighton, MN 55112**

**651-633-9615**

**SALEM COVENANT CHURCH WEDDING POLICY**

Any party wishing to book a wedding at Salem Covenant Church (SCC) must complete a Wedding Application and agree to this Wedding Policy. As a congregation and pastoral staff, it is our desire to share with you both our physical and spiritual resources to make your wedding a joyful, sacramental event.

**APPLICATION:**

Contact the Church Office/Calendar Coordinator to check available dates and obtain the application. The wedding date and time will be tentatively reserved on the church calendar for up to 60 days. The date and time will not be permanently confirmed until a Salem pastor has authorized the ceremony and the application and non-refundable deposit has been received.

**CONFIRMATION:**

**Weddings are confirmed only after:**

* Written approval from Salem staff.
* All needed forms are completed, signed and submitted to the Wedding Coordinator.
* A deposit of $250 is received.

**SCHEDULING:**

**Saturday wedding ceremonies** are generally scheduled between 10am and 3pm. This allows for cleaning and preparation for Sunday morning worship services. All guests must be cleared from the entire facility and clean up must be completed no later than 7pm. This includes any decorations, personal belongings, and any food brought in for the wedding party or family.

**Sunday wedding ceremonies** can only be scheduled after 3pm with set-up times beginning at 1:30pm.

**Please note:** Subject to church programming there may be limited dates around Easter and during the month of December. Please contact Salem’s Calendar Coordinator to confirm availability of dates.

**EXPECTATIONS:**

**Officiating Pastor:** **SCC pastors** normally officiate weddings at Salem Covenant Church for SCC members. It is the bride/groom’s responsibility to contact the officiating pastor and confirm availability for the rehearsal and wedding ceremony. Guest (Non-Salem) Pastors are allowed to perform weddings at SCC, but must first be approved by Salem Covenant Church and SCC’s Senior Pastor.

**Premarital Counseling:** Because promise-making is so foundational to a lasting relationship, we as a pastoral staff are committed to the practice of premarital counseling. Typically this requires several sessions with a member of the pastoral staff who will be officiating at the ceremony. Premarital counseling consists of two parts. The first part is a process of discerning readiness to enter the marital covenant. We consider questions about the practical issues of the marriage relationship, such as communication, problem-solving, values, power/freedom issues, money, sexual intimacy, parenting, etc. The second part of premarital counseling is a process of planning the wedding service itself.

**A Wedding Coordinator** will be assigned to each wedding held at SCC. The coordinator will contact the bride approximately one month before the wedding to coordinate all details necessary for the wedding rehearsal and ceremony. The coordinator will oversee the rehearsal and coordinate the wedding VIP seating, procession and recession. The coordinator will arrive 1 hour before the rehearsal and 1½ hours before the ceremony. The coordinator understands the rules, regulations, and procedures of the church, but the officiating pastor will have the final authority on the wedding ceremony itself.

**A Technician** will be assigned to each wedding by the Wedding Coordinator. The Wedding Coordinator will communicate all of your sound needs to the technician. The technician will be present 1 hour prior to the rehearsal, and will also arrive 1 hour prior to the ceremony to accommodate any sound check needs.

**Wedding rehearsals** will usually be scheduled the night before the ceremony. The Sanctuary will generally be available for decorating prior to the rehearsal start time. Please schedule decorating time with the Wedding Coordinator. The space will remain in the same condition until after the ceremony. The officiating pastor will be in charge of the rehearsal. The wedding license should be given to the pastor at this time.

**Bridal party changing rooms** will be provided on-site and will be available 3 hours prior to the start of the wedding ceremony.

**Video screen** use in the Sanctuary (for projecting video, pictures or words) can be arranged through the Wedding Coordinator no later than 1 month before the wedding. The cost of this service is additional and will be included in the final invoice if requested.

**Photography and Videotaping** must be approved by the officiating pastor or Wedding Coordinator prior to the rehearsal and ceremony. In the interest of maintaining a meaningful and worshipful service, these details should be discussed. The Church requests no flash photography be used during the ceremony.

**WEDDING POLICY RESTRICTIONS, PROCEDURES & REMINDERS:**

**A wedding ceremony** is a Christian act of worship as a woman and man commit their relationship to God and ask his blessing on their life together.  As such, it is expected that the core content of the ceremony be God-oriented in nature, including prayer, singing of hymns, reading of Scripture, meditation given by the pastor, the Lord’s Prayer and other prayers. All elements of the wedding will be consistent with the Evangelical Covenant Church's position on biblical marriage.

**Music** should be selected in consultation with the officiating pastor and musicians. If organ music is desired, it is your responsibility to contact Salem’s organist. If another organist is desired, the person must be approved by the church organist. Within the ceremony, we seek to uphold certain musical standards of excellence, distinguishing between music and texts that are secular in character and those that give expression to the Christian understanding of love, marriage and fidelity. If the bride or groom has a favorite song which is not appropriate to Christian worship, that song may be used at a family gathering, a rehearsal dinner party or at the reception.

**Decoration plans** should be made in consultation with the Wedding Coordinator. Church decorations are not to be removed or supplies used without prior approval. No staples, nails or tape that leaves a residue may be affixed to the walls, furniture or fixtures. Flowers and pew bows can be attached to furnishings, candelabras and pews only with pipe cleaners, floral tape, ribbon or clips that do not leave a residue or permanent mark. The church does NOT own an aisle runner, so you are responsible for providing this, if desired. The center aisle in the Sanctuary is 90 ft long and 4 ½ ft wide. **All decorations** must be removed immediately following the ceremony.

**Any damage to the building, property or equipment** is the responsibility of the wedding party using the facility. The wedding party will be expected to make monetary restitution for damage or neglect caused while they are using the building or because they used the building. This includes, but is not limited to, paying to have the carpet cleaned.

**Furniture in the chancel area of the Sanctuary,** including the prayer rail, baptismal font, communion table, and lectern may not be removed without permission of Salem’s pastoral staff.

**Flame candles** being used for ceremonies or receptions must be contained in glass and must come 1½ inches from the top of the glass. Please provide a sample of any candles to the Wedding Coordinator for approval. Unity candles are an exception, arrangements should be made with the Wedding Coordinator to ensure safety.

**Smoking** is NOT permitted anywhere in the church building.

**Alcoholic beverages** are NOT permitted in the church building or anywhere on church property. The bride and groom must convey this information to members of their wedding party.

**For the safety of all guests, the use of rice, confetti, or birdseed** is not permitted anywhere inside the building, or thrown outside the building. Bubble blowing is allowed outside the building only.

**Live animals** of any kind are NOT permitted to be involved with a wedding at SCC, except for those animals that are a CERTIFIED AND CREDENTIALED SERVICE ANIMAL. Official copies of their paperwork may be requested by the church.

**Our building is a public place**. Unfortunately, cash, wedding gifts, or other valuables are not safe if left unattended. SCC regrets that it cannot be responsible for lost, stolen or forgotten items. We recommend that persons be appointed to care for your gifts and valuables.

**General Building Use Procedures:**

* All facility use must be reserved and placed on the church calendar.
* SCC building and property will be used for non-profit events.
* SCC reserves the right to cancel a reservation.
* Individuals making a room request assume responsibility for following the procedures for the use of the building.
* All scheduled activities will be limited to reserved space.
* It is the responsibility of the person(s) granted permission to use the building to enforce the church’s guidelines.
* All activities at SCC will be conducted in a manner befitting a sacred place.
* Groups must provide adequate supervision for their activity.
* Requests for special equipment and room setups should be made the same time as the reservation.

**Salem Covenant Church Wedding Policy**

This policy must include the signature(s) of the person(s) who will assume responsibility for making sure all policies and procedures are followed.

**The final details** of the wedding ceremony and the marriage license should be completed and submitted to the Officiating Pastor or Wedding Coordinator no more than 3 days prior to the wedding rehearsal.

**The final invoice** will be issued and presented to the Bride on the day of the rehearsal or before by the Wedding Coordinator. All charges on the invoice are due upon receipt of the invoice. Checks should be made payable to Salem Covenant Church.

**Refer to separate Wedding Fee Structure for outline of Fees and Honorariums.**

**The wedding party agrees it will not use the premises for any unlawful purposes, and will obey all laws, rules, and regulations of all governmental authorities while using the SCC facilities.**

**COMMITMENT**

We have read and agree to this SCC Wedding Policy. Further, we have reviewed the proposed request and agree to the conditions set before us.

**Bride’s Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Date:  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ day of  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .**

***day                                            month                          year***

**Groom’s Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Date:  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ day of  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .**

***day                                            month                          year***