



Weddings

at Thornapple



THORNAPPLE
COVENANT CHURCH

6595 Cascade Road, SE
Grand Rapids, MI 49546
616.957.0580
thornapple.org
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Wedding Guide

Thornapple Covenant Church

A wedding is one of the holiest moments in life.

As a man and a woman join their lives to establish a Christian home, we rejoice with you and are eager to make this sacred and memorable occasion a joyous one!

In the happy excitement of planning a wedding, many questions concerning details arise. The following guide is offered by Thornapple as a loving gesture of care, interest, and information regarding our expectations.

The Wedding Coordinator Holly Smith
(hsmith@thornapple.org) will assist you with all
the church facility details.

Introduction

Thornapple Covenant Church supports the Greater Grand Rapids Community Marriage Policy in the following ways:

- We encourage a courtship of at least one year.
- We promote chastity outside of marriage and faithful marital relationships.
- We expect a thorough premarital preparation process of at least three premarital counseling sessions (or equivalent) utilizing religious instruction, a premarital inventory and intensive education.
- We encourage enrichment opportunities designed to strengthen marriages, and intervention services for stressed marriages.
- We train mature married couples to serve as mentors to those who are engaged, newlyweds, or experiencing marital difficulties.
- We cooperate with other congregations and organizations to share resources and to create a positive climate in which all marriages are helped to succeed.

The Wedding Coordinator will take care of facility accommodations for your rehearsal, wedding and reception (if applicable) and will handle any Thornapple-supplied equipment/decor for the ceremony. The Wedding Coordinator will also communicate to the bride/groom the rooms that will be used for the bridal party to prepare for the wedding and will be in attendance at the rehearsal, rehearsal dinner (if scheduled at Thornapple), wedding and the beginning of your reception (if held at Thornapple). They will assist with the rehearsal, ensuring the timing of the wedding processional at both rehearsal and on the day of the wedding.

Step One - Select a date and pastor.

DATE | Contact our Wedding Coordinator Holly Smith (hsmith@thornapple.org) to schedule a time and date; office hours are Monday-Friday, 9:00am to 3:00pm. We have an application form you will need to complete. Request for the use of church facilities should be made at least three (3) months prior to the wedding date. The time and date that you reserve for your wedding will be kept exact and will not change without your request and approval from the church office. The rehearsal date will be reserved though the time you request for rehearsal can be subject to change if another wedding or important church event comes up. The pastor, staff and the Council of Elders will determine such use in accordance with these guidelines.

- When your non-refundable \$150 deposit is received and your paperwork has been approved, your date(s) will be confirmed. Any questions can be directed to the Wedding Coordinator.
- Members and regular attenders may schedule weddings anytime.
- Non-member/non-regular attenders may schedule weddings up to 12 months in advance but only one (1) per calendar month. Non-member/non-regular attender is one who has neither attended nor participated in the life of the church, nor contributed financially to the church for a period of four (4) months.

PASTOR | It is the couple's responsibility to make arrangements with the pastor who will marry them. All the pastors at Thornapple Covenant Church are qualified to conduct wedding ceremonies. Contact the Wedding Coordinator to discuss their availability and possible involvement at least four (4) months before your wedding date. If you desire someone other than one of the pastors of Thornapple Covenant Church to officiate, you must first obtain approval from the Thornapple pastoral staff. Secondly, the guest pastor should notify our pastoral staff at least 3 months prior to the ceremony. You are encouraged to think about the kind of wedding service you want and to share your ideas when you meet with the pastor.

Step Two - Arrange for pre-marital counseling.

Because we believe that Christian marriage is a sacred covenant relationship involving the Lordship of Jesus Christ over marriage, home and family, we take marriage very seriously in our church. Thus, the pastors are happy to officiate at the wedding, but only after appropriate counseling, and where there is a serious intent to establish the marriage on Christian principles. In preparation for such marriages, at least three (3) counseling sessions are required. You may use your own counselor or request one of ours. There is a fee of \$335 for counseling, which is provided by our non-pastoral staff counselor and due at first session to the Wedding Coordinator. Sometimes pastoral staff is available for counseling. The cost for this is also \$335 and due at first session to the Wedding Coordinator. Thornapple Marriage Resources also offers a workshop for engaged couples, learn more at thornapple.org/engage. The pastoral staff and the Council of Elders reserve the right to deny the marriage request when it is apparent that the couple's marriage preparation does not conform to Biblical standards.



Ceremony: Christian Worship



Christian marriage takes place in the church with all the solemnity and sacred joy that goes with recognizing the presence of God. We understand that as the happy couple is united in marriage and seeks God's blessing on their union, their guests will join them in worship and thanksgiving to God. **The wedding ceremony shall be Christian and sacred in character**, as opposed to having secular, romantic, or purely humanistic themes. The wedding ceremony is seen as a time of worshipping the God revealed in Jesus Christ.

MUSIC | All music in our church, including wedding music, is an expression of worship. All music (both instrumental and vocal) should be sacred and thus appropriate for use within our church sanctuary. The Wedding Coordinator will be happy to advise on the selection of appropriate music and suggest soloists who may be available.

ORGANIST/PIANIST | If requested, the organist of the church will meet with you to discuss possible music selections. There is an additional charge for this (please see Rental Fees). If additional music is desired (soloist, instrumentalist, etc.) arrangements for this are the responsibility of the couple. The organist may be of assistance in making recommendations. The organist of the church or a substitute authorized by the church organist must play for all weddings in which the church organ is used.

FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS | Our sanctuary lends itself to very simple decorations and we urge all couples to be good stewards in the arrangement of their wedding. The florist should visit the church to realize the size of arrangements needed. The florist is responsible for contacting the Wedding Coordinator for instructions and time of entry to bring in décor. Silk (not real) rose petals are allowed for décor in the church building, but must be picked up following the event.

Please do not use nails, screws, tacks and/or glue to fasten any decorations to the furniture, floor, ceiling or walls. Pins should not be used in the church chairs. Furniture and floors must be fully protected at all times from moisture and candle wax. The couple is responsible for any damage done to the building and/or furniture and for any wax removal.

The church owns some items (please see following pages). Check with the Wedding Coordinator for availability. Decorations brought in by the family or florist should be removed from the building within one hour of the conclusion of the ceremony. All other decorations, candles and aisle runners must be secured through the florist or rented, as our church does not have them available.

Any special decor in the sanctuary around Lent, Easter or Advent will need to stay in place unless arrangements are made ahead of time with the Wedding Coordinator and Minister of Worship Arts. Please ask about this when reserving your wedding date

PHOTOGRAPHS AND RECORDINGS | Please limit flash photography during the ceremony so as not to distract from the wedding ceremony. Please notify your photographer as well as any family members who may bring a camera. Flash photographs may be taken before and after the ceremony without limit. Videography of the wedding is permitted.

REHEARSAL DINNER (AT THORNAPPLE) | Please inquire with the Wedding Coordinator if you are interested in having a rehearsal dinner at Thornapple. You would need to provide you own setup, food, kitchen towels and washcloths, decor and restore the room to its original condition. You may use our dishes and service items but they must be washed and returned as found.

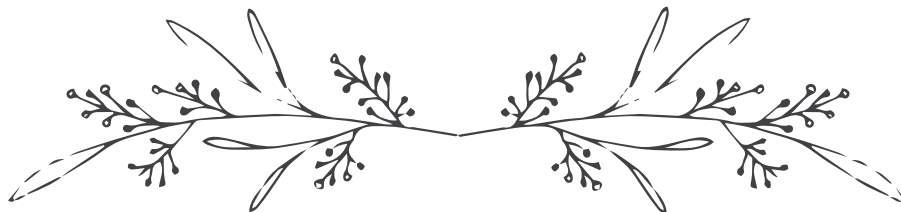
ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- **All decorations and personal items must be removed from the building/grounds within two hours of the ceremony's ending time.**
- **Due to our active Sunday programs, Saturday weddings and/or receptions must vacate the building by 9:00pm, unless otherwise approved by Wedding Coordinator.**
- Building fees are doubled for weddings/rehearsals/receptions held during holidays/seasons. If there is a question as to whether your wedding/rehearsal/reception falls during a holiday/season, please ask the Wedding Coordinator.
- Wedding costs remain the same regardless of the day of the week.
- Additional rooms may be used for changing of clothes for the wedding service. The Wedding Coordinator will help with these choices. The wedding party is responsible for restoring all rooms used for dressing to their original condition and removal of all personal belongings.
- Throwing of rice, confetti or flower petals (silk or real) inside the church building or outside on the church grounds is prohibited. It is acceptable to use bubbles and throw bird seed but only outside of the building and it is preferable to be in the parking lot (off the sidewalk).
- No real candles unless placemat is used. Discuss with Wedding Coordinator.
- The church does not permit the use of alcoholic beverages (except in regard to "toasting"...as allowed by Thornapple's Building Use Policy).
- Please, NO smoking at any time on the property, inside or outside of the building.
- No food or beverages in the Sanctuary (except for water).
- During the winter months, the church will make sure that the parking lot is plowed and salted, as well as the sidewalks cleared of snow and salted.
- Couples are responsible for getting a marriage license from the County Clerk.

FINAL THOUGHTS

The rehearsal as well as the wedding is to be conducted in the Christian spirit and with dignity. We express appreciation for your cooperation and remind you that our Lord's public ministry began at a wedding in Cana of Galilee (John 2). May you rejoice as His presence is again made known by this celebration of your Christian marriage. Congratulations!

*May the Lord Jesus Christ guide your plans,
and may the beauty of your wedding be
prelude to a lifetime of marital joy.*



Internal use only

- ☐ Paperwork received
- ☐ \$150 Non-refundable deposit received
- ☐ Requested date approved
- ☐ Copy to bride/groom

Request for Use of Church Facilities – Wedding

Date of Wedding: _____ Time: _____

Date of Rehearsal: _____ Time: _____

Date of Reception (if applicable): _____ Time: _____

Pastor / Clergy Officiating: _____

Name of Bride: _____ Name of Groom: _____

Address: _____ Address: _____

Phone # _____

Phone #: _____

Email: _____

Email: _____

Set-up/preparation time required (Please be specific as to times and dates.)



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WEDDING EQUIPMENT REQUEST FORM

1. Piano: Yes / No

You provide your own accompanists or ask for referrals.

2. Organ: Yes / No

Must be church organist or someone authorized by church organist.

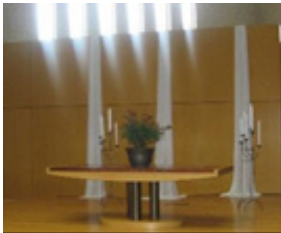
3. Guest Book Podium/Table (shown below) Yes / No (No Charge)

Couple provides guest book and décor, if wanted.



4. Reader's Podium (music stand or main pastoral stand) Yes / No (No charge)

5. White Fabric Drapes (3 vertical back wall drapes, shown below) Yes / No (No Charge)



6. Communion Table (shown above): Yes / No (No Charge)

7. Candelabras: Yes / No (No Charge)

50" tall or (64" tall with Thornapple-provided drippless mechanical candle; they burn real flame) x 12" wide



8. End of Aisle Candle Holders (10): Yes / No (No Charge)

Provide your own decorations, lighter and candles. 4" pillars fit well. 61" tall w/o candle



9. Unity Candle Holder: Yes / No (No Charge)

Provide own candles and lighter. We suggest 1 - 9" pillar and 2 - 6" pillar candles (must have a placemat under candles). 19 1/2" tall w/o candles x 17 3/4" wide, round candle plate on top is 4" diameter.



10. Kneeling Bench: Yes / No (No Charge)

48" wide x 32" tall



Thornapple Covenant Church - Member/Regular Attender

Rental Fees: Fees for church/rehearsal/reception rental are doubled for weddings held during holidays/seasons.

WEDDING

Included in the Rental Fee: Equipment, Sound Person, Custodian (reception additional).

Base Fee	\$ 400.00	
Additional Equipment Charges (if applicable)	\$ _____	
Rehearsal Dinner Charge (\$75, if requested)	\$ _____	
Total:	\$ _____	
Paid deposit (due and non-refundable at reservation)	\$ 150.00	Pd _____ (due now)
Total Amount (due one week before wedding):	\$ _____	Due _____ Pd _____

RECEPTION

Base Fee	\$ 400	
Plus Reception Deposit*	\$ 250 (due at reservation)	
Total:	\$ 650	
Deposit (due at reservation):	\$250	Pd _____ (due now)
Total Amount (due one week before wedding):	\$400	Due _____ Pd _____

**The amount of the reception deposit returned will be determined after the reception by Wedding Coordinator and Custodian. Also, any additional time put in by staff to return room to the original condition will be taken out of this. \$50/hour fee for sound person comes out of this deposit (if requested for the reception). The remainder of this deposit will be refunded to you in check form from our church to whoever you designate below.*

Refund check made out and mailed to: (name & address): _____

Make check payable to: Thornapple Covenant Church. These fees do not include counseling or honorariums (see below).

HONORARIUMS

Not included in the Rental Fee : Honorariums for pastor, soloist, organist/pianist.

Pastor Honorarium (paid directly to the Pastor)	\$150-200
Soloist(s) (paid directly to individual(s))	\$150+
Organist/Pianist (paid directly to individual(s))	\$125-200+

A note about honorariums: The pastor does not set a fee for his/her services. Normally an honorarium is given by the groom. Such an honorarium is understood to be an expression of appreciation for conducting the ceremony. Preparation for the ceremony, the rehearsal and wedding itself, as well as special attention to other aspects of the celebration, require a significant investment of the pastor's personal time.

Your soloist and organist/accompanist should also be the recipients of an honorarium. If they are friends, do not overlook them, as they have spent time and money preparing the music for you. Questions regarding these honorariums should be directed to the Wedding Coordinator.

COUNSELING**

At Thornapple Covenant Church? Yes / No

If not Thornapple, who is doing your counseling? _____

Counseling Charges :

Counseling (includes \$35 marriage inventory)	\$ 335	
Total (due at first session to Wedding Coordinator)	\$ 335	Due _____ Pd _____

****Make check payable to: " Thornapple Covenant Church " and in memo write " Pre-Marital Counseling " and give to the Wedding Coordinator.**

Thornapple Covenant Church - Non-Member/Non-Regular Attender

Rental Fees: Fees for church/rehearsal/reception rental are doubled for weddings held during holidays/seasons.

WEDDING

Included in the Rental Fee: Equipment, Sound Person, Custodian (reception additional).

Base Fee	\$ 800.00	
Additional Equipment Charges (if applicable)	\$ _____	
Rehearsal Dinner Charge (\$75, if requested)	\$ _____	
Total:	\$ _____	
Paid deposit (due and non-refundable at reservation)	\$ 150.00	Pd _____ (due now)
Total Amount (due one week before wedding):	\$ _____	Due _____ Pd _____

RECEPTION

Base Fee	\$ 800	
Plus Reception Deposit*	\$ 400 due at reservation	
Total:	\$1,200	
Deposit (due at reservation):	\$400	Pd _____ (due now)
Total Amount (due one week before wedding):	\$800	Due _____ Pd _____

**The amount of the reception deposit returned will be determined after the reception by Wedding Coordinator and Custodian. Also, any additional time put in by staff to return room to the original condition will be taken out of this. \$50/hour fee for sound person comes out of this deposit (if requested for the reception). The remainder of this deposit will be refunded to you in check form from our church to whoever you designate below.*

Refund check made out and mailed to: (name & address): _____

Make check payable to: Thornapple Covenant Church. These fees do not include counseling or honorariums (see below).

HONORARIUMS

Not included in the Facility Usage Fee : Honorariums for pastor, soloist, organist/pianist.

Pastor Honorarium (<i>paid directly to the Pastor</i>)	\$150-200
Soloist(s) (<i>paid directly to individual(s)</i>)	\$150+
Organist/Pianist (<i>paid directly to individual(s)</i>)	\$125-200+

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Total (due at first session to Wedding Coordinator)	\$ 335	Due _____ Pd _____

****Make check payable to: " Thornapple Covenant Church " and in memo write " Pre-Marital Counseling " and give to the Wedding Hostess.**