

# Trinity Presbyterian Church

Policy that weddings at Trinity Presbyterian Church are a Christian worship service approved 9/21/2015 by the Session of Trinity Presbyterian Church

Whereas the U.S. Supreme Court decided that “same-sex marriage” is a right according to the U.S. Constitution in their ruling on *Obergefell v. Hodges*, June 2015; and

Whereas the Holy Scriptures declare that God the Creator instituted marriage as a covenant relationship between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:21-25; Matthew 19:4-6); and

Whereas the Holy Scriptures prohibit God's people from engaging in same-sex relationships (Leviticus 18:22-30; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11);

Therefore, the Session of Trinity Presbyterian Church (PCA), Waukesha, WI, sets forth the following policy that weddings ceremonies held in or on the property of Trinity Presbyterian Church, or presided over by the minister of Trinity Presbyterian Church are in fact Christian worship services and to be governed and regulated accordingly, as per the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America, of which Trinity Presbyterian is a member church.

1) Westminster Directory for the Public Worship of God, *The Solemnization of Marriage*, gives the following instruction: “Although marriage be no sacrament, nor peculiar to the church of God, but common to mankind, and of public interest in every commonwealth; yet, because such as marry are to marry in the Lord, and have special need of instruction, direction, and exhortation, from the word of God, at their entering into such a new condition, and of the blessing of God upon them therein, we judge it expedient that marriage be solemnized by a lawful minister of the Word, that he may accordingly counsel them, and pray for a blessing upon them.

“Marriage is to be between one man and one woman only...the minister, having had convenient warning, and nothing being objected to hinder it, is publicly to solemnize it in the place appointed by authority for public worship, before a competent number of credible witnesses...”

“And because all relations are sanctified by the word and prayer, the minister is to pray for a blessing upon them...The prayer being ended, it is convenient that the minister do briefly declare unto them, out of the Scripture, the institution, use, and ends of marriage...”

2) PCA Book of Church Order, Chapter 59, *The Solemnization of Marriage*, echoes the above: “Marriage is a divine institution though not a sacrament, nor peculiar to the Church of Christ...Christians should marry in the Lord; therefore it is fit that their marriage be solemnized by a lawful minister, that special instruction be given them, and suitable prayers offered, when they enter into this relation. Marriage is to be between one man and one woman, in accordance with the Word of God...”

3) PCA BCO, Appendix A *Marriage Service* & Appendix B *A Second Marriage Service*. Both of these suggested service orders for a Christian wedding include the reading of Scripture, prayer, the covenant & vows taken and a benediction—all which the Bible teaches are proper elements of a Christian worship service (BCO 47-9).

It is therefore the understanding and policy of Trinity Presbyterian Church that any wedding conducted in or on the property of said Church is a Christian worship service: with the reading and proclamation of the Holy Scriptures, with prayer to the Almighty God, with the covenant, and vows taken before credible witnesses, and seeking the Creator's blessing on the couple and those in attendance, and often accompanied with the singing of psalms and hymns, all presided over by a lawful minister of the Word, as defined by our statement of faith. Hence all weddings are to be regulated according to the doctrine and practices for public Christian worship.

**Amendment** 12/2/2015 added: "Pre-marriage counseling of the man and woman with a minister of Trinity Presbyterian Church is required in order to have a minister of Trinity Presbyterian Church preside over their wedding ceremony."