

First Baptist Church

Wedding Handbook

Introduction

Regardless of what type of wedding you are planning, large or small, simple or elegant, the main purpose is the uniting of two lives into one through the exchanging of vows in worship. Since the vows are made before God, they deserve the dignity of a worship service. We have developed this booklet to assist you in planning a wedding that is pleasing both to you and the Lord.

First Baptist Church

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the Marriage Ministry is to prepare the man and woman for a life-long, God-glorifying marriage; to assist in the preparation of the wedding ceremony; and to provide resources after the wedding to help maintain and enrich their marital relationship.

Preview of Wedding Handbook
Marriage Ministry Procedure

*This procedure is to be followed by all couples to be married
at First Baptist Church.*

1. Contact church office: Pastor's Secretary at 265-4150.
2. Obtain wedding handbook.
3. Indicate whether or not the staff of First Baptist will be performing the wedding ceremony. If not, choose another ordained minister of like faith to be approved by the staff of First Baptist.

NOTE: If you desire to have a guest minister to assist the minister you have selected from First Baptist, you need to call your First Baptist minister to work out the details. Your First Baptist minister will need to approve your selection of a guest minister to insure that the doctrines of First Baptist will be upheld.

4. Upon choosing a First Baptist Minister to perform the ceremony, attain a FBC Staff Wedding Policy and fill out the bride and groom information sheets enclosed.
5. Return information sheets and the Pastor's office will contact the prospective couple to set up a meeting.
6. Upon approval, the wedding will be placed on the church calendar and the date tentatively reserved. At this time, the wedding fees will be paid. (See back of handbook for fee schedule.)

NOTE: The wedding date cannot be finalized until the couple returns completed information sheets and has been contacted by the church office regarding approval.

7. If any changes are made to the wedding plans, please contact your wedding hostess. (Your hostess will be assigned to your wedding after approval.)
8. If the couple is choosing one of the staff of First Baptist, then they are responsible for calling the Pastor's office to set up the counseling sessions. A total of four sessions are required. One session with the staff administrator will cover budgeting/financial issues. Three pre-marital counseling sessions will be with the attending pastor. After the counseling is complete, you will meet with the officiating minister and this meeting will be used to discuss your wedding ceremony. Your wedding hostess will also be available at this time.
9. Rehearsal
10. The Wedding Ceremony!

First Baptist Staff Wedding Policy

Basic Principles

It is our desire that your marriage be the happiest relationship possible, and that it be all God intended it to be.

God created man and woman and from the beginning intended that they be joined in marriage so that each might give what the other lacked alone. Since God designed the marriage relationship, it makes sense that He knows best how to build a happy marriage.

As we read His Word, we are able to discern basic principles, which must be understood and applied if we hope to experience joy and fulfillment in marriage. Ignoring these principles will result in frustration and possible failure in a marriage relationship.

Because I am committed to build strong marriages, I want to share the following guidelines. My purpose is not to condemn or reject anyone, but to comply with God's principles for marriage.

1. We require a minimum of three months of marital preparation. Couples who desire to be married at First Baptist Church are to participate in the premarital counseling program offered by the church.
2. Couples being married at First Baptist must have surrendered their lives to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and must be committed to establishing a Christian home.
3. The bride or groom must be a member, a previous member, or their immediate family members are members currently of First Baptist Church.
4. Divorced persons may be considered for marriage at First Baptist Church should they meet one of these Biblical criteria:
 - a. Former spouse is deceased (Romans 7:2, I Corinthians 7:39)
 - b. Divorce occurred prior to conversion (II Corinthians 5:17)

- c. Divorce occurred because of sexual unfaithfulness by spouse
(Matthew 19:3-9)
- d. Desertion by an unbelieving spouse (I Corinthians 7:15)

If a divorced person answers negatively in all cases, acknowledging that other extenuating circumstances often relate to divorce, a meeting may be arranged with one of the pastoral staff to consider their individual case.

- 5. No remarriage after the divorce of a spouse will be performed until at least one year has passed from the time the divorce was finalized.
- 6. In case of premarital pregnancy, the marriage may or may not be performed depending on the maturity of the persons involved and other considerations.
- 7. Couples must demonstrate a commitment to celibacy. The minister will not perform the ceremony if the couple is living at the same address.
- 8. If either the bride or groom is under the influence of alcohol or drugs (other than those prescribed by a doctor) before or during the rehearsal and/or wedding day, the ceremony will not be performed. NOTE: Any member of the wedding party who is under the influence of alcohol or drugs will not be permitted to participate in the wedding. There is no smoking, dancing, or alcoholic beverages allowed on the church property by anyone at any time.

The Wedding Covenant

God's Covenant

Marriage is established by God as a Covenant and not a contract.

- ♥ A Covenant is based on trust between parties; a contract is based on distrust.
- ♥ A Covenant is based on unlimited responsibility; a contract is based on limited liability.
- ♥ A Covenant cannot be broken if new circumstances occur; a contract can be voided by mutual consent.

Your wedding is very important to God and His church because it has a Biblical foundation.

♥ **What is the significance of a white aisle runner?**

It is a symbol of walking on holy ground. A covenant is not made merely between two people and their witnesses. It is made in the presence of God. He is actively involved in the agreement because it is God that joins them together.

♥ **Why are the parents of the couple given special seating?**

The parents of the bride and groom are part of the marriage covenant. The commitments they make during the ceremony are just as binding as the vows of the couple.

♥ **Why does the groom enter the auditorium first?**

By entering the auditorium first, the groom signifies that he is the covenant initiator. This is important because whoever initiates the covenant assumes responsibility for seeing it fulfilled. God initiated the covenant of salvation with us. God is still at work to fulfill His covenants, and Christ will soon appear with the sound of the trumpets to consummate the wedding with His bride, the church.

♥ **Why does the father walk with the bride down the aisle?**

This symbolizes the father's agreement with the bride's choice of a husband. "I am endorsing this man as God's best choice for you, and now I am bringing you to him." At the same time, the father states that he is presenting to the groom his daughter whom he has earnestly endeavored to train up as a pure bride.

♥ **Why does the minister ask the question, "Who gives this woman to be married to this man?"**

This response symbolizes not only the full blessings of the parents, but also the transfer of responsibility to the groom by the father. A daughter is under the authority and responsibility of her father until she is married.

♥ **Why do the bride and groom take each other's right hand during the wedding vows?**

The open right hand offered by each party symbolizes their strength, resources, and purpose. By clasping each other's right hand, they are pledging these to each other. Just as we depend on the "saving strength of God's right hand," so each partner can depend upon all the resources that the other brings into the covenant relationship.

♥ **Why does the groom make the vows first?**

He must be the leader and assumes the greater responsibility to fulfill the marriage covenant. As covenant initiator, he must commit himself to the purpose of marriage which God established in the beginning.

♥ **What is the significance of the wedding ring?**

It symbolizes transfer of authority, strength and protection. In scripture, the ring is a symbol of authority with the resources that accompany it. In a covenant relationship, the ring symbolizes identification.

♥ **Why is the couple pronounced husband and wife?**

The pronouncement of a husband and wife establishes a definite point in time for the beginning of the marriage. The words are to remove any future doubts in the minds of the couple or the witnesses about the validity of the marriage.

♥ **Why do you serve food at a reception?**

Food is part of the covenant celebration. One of the root meanings of the word covenant is "to Feed." Following the marriage, a feast was customary to further symbolize the unity of the couple. Entering into a meal is a form of covenant. It is significant that the first event of Christ's ministry was to attend a wedding feast and His first miracle took place during that occasion.

♥ **Why does the couple feed cake to each other?**

This act symbolizes their becoming one flesh. By feeding cake to each other, they are saying, "this represents my body. As you eat it, I am becoming a part of you, and as I eat the cake that you give to me, you become a part of me."

Wedding Preparation

A Wedding Hostess will be assigned to your wedding. She is a representative of the church and will be able to assist you during the rehearsal, wedding, and reception (if held in Beach Hall). She will be able to answer your questions regarding decorations, flower delivery, and catering.

Children in the Wedding

- ♥ If children under age five are to be in the wedding party, we request they be seated during the ceremony.

Decorations

- ♥ Drip-less candles are a must and plastic is to be placed under all candles used in a wedding at First Baptist.
- ♥ Members of the wedding party are not allowed to change or move furniture, attach materials to walls, ceilings, pews, or any furnishings of the church. The church does not allow any tacks, wires, screws, pins, tape, hot wax, or staples to be used on any of the furnishings or walls of the building. Only bows, greenery or flowers with elastic can be placed on the pews. NO AISLE CANDLES are allowed. The Church requests that you do not throw rice, birdseed, confetti, or anything similar.

Refreshments (Excluding the Reception)

- ♥ Refreshments, food and drinks, are not permitted in the bride's room or any other area of the church. (Note: This does not include the reception area.)

Your Wedding Music

- ♥ A wedding is a sacred service of worship and we require that all music used during this time be conducive to the worship of God. As a preference, no secular selections will be allowed either as solos or instrumental music. However, some musical selections may cross over from secular to sacred, so the Minister of Music will assist you in your selections by approving all music for the wedding.

- ♥ The church's accompanists will be happy to play for your ceremony should you need them. **It is the responsibility of the bride to contact them to reserve the wedding date on their personal calendars and to discuss accompanist fees.** Contact information available from the Wedding coordinator or the church Music Office. The organ is a Three Manual Reuter Organ. The Music Office can provide a list of those approved to play this instrument. Should you choose to use someone other than one of our organists, they must be approved and trained in the use of this organ. It is suggested that live music be used for your wedding. The use of accompaniment tracks are permissible, but not encouraged.
- ♥ Soloists are chosen and contracted at the discretion of the bride. **It is the bride's responsibility to enlist the soloist, provide the needed music and arrange appropriate rehearsal time with the accompanist.** Again, it is the responsibility of the bride to contact the soloist to reserve the wedding date on their personal calendar. Fees for their services are based upon the number of selections and agreed upon between the two parties.
After your final selections have been made, the Music Submission Form (located at the end of this booklet) must be completed and turned in to the Music Office for final approval one month before your wedding date.

Worship Center Sound System

- ♥ Sound for your wedding will be provided by one of the church's trained and approved technicians.
- ♥ The technician will set up for the wedding one hour prior to the starting time with the information given on the media form.
- ♥ Soloists may use professionally produced accompanist tracks and CDs. These need to be given to the sound tech no less than two days prior to the wedding.
- ♥ Soloists should arrive at least one hour early for a sound check. **NOTE:** This is not a practice time, just a sound check.

Worship Center Platform Set-Up

- ♥ The custodial staff will prepare the platform for your wedding use (i.e., removal of pulpit and plants, etc.). The piano and electric keyboards are not to be moved. Orchestra equipment and choir chairs may be moved by the custodial staff per the attached wedding fees. The Wedding Hostess can help arrange your wedding party in an appropriate manner for the best use of the space and desired look.

Worship Center Lighting

- ♥ Worship Center lighting can be adjusted for the wedding. This should be noted on the media form.

Recording/Photography

- ♥ First Baptist Church Media Ministry will record the wedding ceremony (two cameras) for a fee. That fee includes director, recording audio engineer, camera operators, and copies of the wedding ceremony in the requested format. It does not include wedding rehearsals or receptions, but will include the entire ceremony.
- ♥ DVD/Photography: We ask that you do not use camera people on the platform during the wedding. After the beginning of the service, there will be no flash photography or moving around the worship center taking pictures. This is a worship service.

**ALL OTHER REQUESTS MUST BE REVIEWED WITH THE WEDDING
HOSTESS AND APPROVED BY THE PASTORAL STAFF.**

Pre-Marital Counseling

Session One:

1. *What Is Marriage?*
2. *Uniqueness & Acceptance In Marriage.*
3. *Love As A Basic For Marriage.*
4. *What Do You Expect From Marriage?*
5. *A Vision Statement.*

Session Two:

6. *Fulfilling Needs In Marriage.*
7. *Role, Responsibilities & Decision Making.*
8. *In-Laws Or Out-Laws ~ It's Your Choice.*
9. *Communication.*
10. *Conflict (Or "Sound The Battle Cry!")*

Session Three:

11. *Finances.*
12. *Sex In Marriage.*
13. *Your Spiritual Life Together*

Confidential Premarital Information Sheet- Bride

Please follow these steps once you receive this form:

1. *Fill out this form completely.*
2. *Return completed form, along with the groom's form, to First Baptist Church to the attention of the Pastor's Secretary.*
3. *The date for a wedding cannot be finalized until completed forms are returned to the church office and the date is approved on the church calendar.*

Name _____ *Address* _____

City _____ *State* _____ *Zip* _____

Home Phone _____ *Work Phone* _____

Age _____

Previously married? Yes _____ *No* _____ *If yes, how many times?* _____

If the previous marriage(s) ended in divorce, please answer the following:

Give reason for divorce(s): _____

What reconciliation efforts were made? _____

What is the date the divorce was finalized? _____

Any Children? Yes _____ *No* _____ *If yes, list ages?* _____

Have you and your fiancé lived together or are you presently living together? Yes ___ *No* ___

How long have you dated? _____

How long have you been engaged? _____

Are you pregnant? Yes _____ *No* _____

Do you believe you are saved? Yes _____ *No* _____ *Describe your salvation experience:*

Do you believe you will go to heaven when you die? Yes _____ *No* _____ *What is the reason you believe this way?* _____

Describe your relationship with Christ at this point in your life. _____

Desired Wedding Dates & Times: _____ @ _____ (1st Choice) _____ @ _____ (2nd Choice)

Desired Rehearsal Dates & Times: _____ @ _____ (1st Choice) _____ @ _____ (2nd Choice)

Requested Minister for Wedding: _____ (1st Choice) _____ (2nd Choice)

Church Facilities: _____ *Worship Center* _____ *Chapel* _____ *Reception Area*

Reception Location: _____

Date Submitted: _____

Confidential Premarital Information Sheet- Groom

Please follow these steps once you receive this form:

4. Fill out this form completely.
5. Return completed form, along with the bride's form, to First Baptist Church to the attention of the Pastor's Secretary.
6. The date for a wedding cannot be finalized until completed forms are returned to the church office and the date is approved on the church calendar.

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Age _____

Previously married? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, how many times? _____

If the previous marriage(s) ended in divorce, please answer the following:

Give reason for divorce(s): _____

What reconciliation efforts were made? _____

What is the date the divorce was finalized? _____

Any Children? Yes _____ No _____ If yes, list ages? _____

Have you and your fiancé lived together or are you presently living together? Yes ___ No ___

How long have you dated? _____

How long have you been engaged? _____

Is your fiancé pregnant? Yes _____ No _____

Do you believe you are saved? Yes _____ No _____ Describe your salvation experience:

Do you believe you will go to heaven when you die? Yes _____ No _____ What is the reason you believe this way? _____

Describe your relationship with Christ at this point in your life. _____

Desired Wedding Dates & Times: _____ @ _____ (1st Choice) _____ @ _____ (2nd Choice)

Desired Rehearsal Dates & Times: _____ @ _____ (1st Choice) _____ @ _____ (2nd Choice)

Requested Minister for Wedding: _____ (1st Choice) _____ (2nd Choice)

Church Facilities: _____ Worship Center _____ Chapel _____ Reception Area

Reception Location: _____

Date Submitted: _____

Wedding Details and Planning Sheet
(Bring this with you when you meet with the officiating minister)

Groom's Name _____

Bride's Name _____

Wedding Date: _____ Time: _____

Rehearsal Date: _____ Time: _____

List those attending:

Groom Grandparents _____

Parents _____

Bride Grandparents _____

Parents _____

Who will be giving bride away? _____

Are you using?

Aisle Runner _____

Unity candle _____

Kneeling Bench _____

Flower girl _____ If yes, list name(s) _____

Ring bearer _____ If yes, list name(s) _____

List in order and beside person they will be escorting:

<i>Groomsmen</i>	<i>Bridesmaids</i>

Time Of Photos On Wedding Day _____

Arrival of florist _____

Wedding Party will arrive the day of the wedding at _____

Reception Location _____

Bride & Groom's Checklist:

- ♥ Fees paid when wedding is approved.
- ♥ Contact Pastor's Office to schedule counseling at least 3 months before your wedding date.
- ♥ Music Submission Form – turn in two months before wedding.
- ♥ If using the reception area, please turn in your set-up request two months before the wedding date.

Music Submission Form

(Must be returned no later than 2 months before the wedding.)

Bride _____ Home # _____ Work # _____

Groom _____ Home # _____ Work # _____

Date of Wedding: _____ Time: _____

Rehearsal Date: _____ Time: _____

The Minister of music can recommend individuals who are competent on our instruments and those who are available for wedding music. Special care should be taken in enlisting those who will be part of your ceremony.

Accompanist _____

Soloist _____

Please list the titles of the musical selections to be performed for your ceremony. Remember – all music must aid in the worship of God and blessing of this union. (See . . . “Your Wedding Music”)

Pre-Service Selections _____

Processional Selection _____

Service Selections _____

Recessional Selection _____

Approved _____
Date

By _____
Minister of Music

Reception/Rehearsal/Wedding Fees

Fees	Member Cost	Non Member Cost	Mark the needed services and insert the cost.	
			<u>Member</u> \$250.00	<u>Non-Member</u> \$250.00
Wedding Coordinator (Required)	\$250.00	\$250.00		
Worship Center Area Fee	No Charge	\$700.00		
Worship Center Custodial Fee	\$150.00	\$150.00		
Chapel Area Fee	No Charge	\$300.00		
Chapel Custodial Fee	\$100.00	\$100.00		
Beach Hall Area Fee	No Charge	\$700.00		
Beach Hall Custodial Fee	\$100.00	\$100.00		
Beach Hall Kitchen Custodial Fee	\$50.00	\$50.00		
Audio Technician Fee	\$150.00	\$150.00		
Recording Fee (Using Church Cameras) DVD or CD	\$50/ per operator	\$50/ per operator		
DVD/CD (if desired)	\$10/per DVD/CD	\$10/per DVD/CD		
Candles	\$50.00	\$50.00		
3 Standing Candelabras	N/C	\$100.00		
Hurricane Lamps	\$100.00	\$100.00		
Kneeling Bench	N/C	N/C		
Choir Chairs (removal & set-up)	\$175.00	\$175.00		
FBC Minister	No charge	\$250.00		
Total Amount Due: (Fees are due when the wedding is approved on the church calendar.)				

- ♥ *Church custodial staff is required for each area that you will be using.*
- ♥ *Custodial Fees are only to cover the cost of the custodial staff to set-up and clean facilities used.*
- ♥ *Fees for the soloist(s), guest minister, & accompanists are the individual responsibility of the wedding party.*
- ♥ *You are required to provide the fees for the respective musicians & accompanists to the Wedding Coordinator on or before the wedding date.*

Attending Minister

Couple: Bride Or Groom To Be