

WEDDING POLICY

First Baptist Lake Park
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Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race. Baptist Faith and Message Article XIII

For this reason marriage in the church is to be Christ-like and all the elements of the service have spiritual significance. The pastor and staff will help you plan your service so that it will be meaningful, beautiful and Christ honoring.

The purpose of this booklet is to assist you in the planning of your wedding and the use of the facilities here at First Baptist Church of Lake Park.

USE OF CHURCH FACILITIES:

These facilities have been built for the sole purpose of providing a place for God to be honored and glorified through the worship, work and fellowship of His people. The use of these facilities, whether it is the main worship center, educational classrooms, youth building or fellowship hall are for the sole purpose of church activities and/or church events.

First Baptist Church of Lake Park offers the use of these facilities to active members and their immediate families for funerals, weddings, receptions, showers, *family interest and community interest meetings provided they are subject to the doctrinal and ethical position of the church.* All events must be approved by church staff and/or deacon body. The church reserves the right to decline or cancel any reservation that is not deemed in the best interest of the church and the testimony of our Lord Jesus Christ which we are zealous to uphold.

Reservations for the use of FBCLP facilities must be processed through the church office. You are required to fill out a facilities request form and submit it to the office for approval by the staff and/or deacons. Reservations should be made at least 3 months before the actual wedding or event.

Use of the facilities is as follows:

- ✦ The main auditorium is handsomely appointed and needs little added decoration for a beautiful wedding. However, ferns and flowers are permissible.
- ✦ The chairs in the choir loft **behind** the chancel rail will **not** be removed. Decorations may be placed in the loft in front or behind any of the rows of chairs.
- ✦ No decorations (candles, flowers or ribbons for example) may be installed which are fastened to permanent furniture or walls by means such as nails, staples, tacks, screws, gummed tape or clamps, etc. In other words, only those decorations which can be tied with ribbon or attached with floral tape to existing furniture are permitted.
- ✦ No candles other than dripleless candles can be used in the main auditorium. The candle holder must be placed upon some suitable material (such as clear paper, cloth, foil, etc.) for protection of carpet and wood flooring.
- ✦ All flower pots, holders, containers, etc. must have suitable materials placed under them for protections of carpet and woodwork.
- ✦ The florist or rental service store, hired by the bride, will furnish such items as candelabras, candles, kneeling bench and other items so desired by the bride. The disposal of the same will be the responsibility of the florist and or family of the bride and/or groom immediately following the ceremony.

- ✦ The florist should contact the office to arrange for delivery or set -up during normal church hours. Access to the church facilities beyond the normal office operating hours should be arranged prior to set-up and delivery. The church will accept deliveries of rental equipment if satisfactory financial arrangements have been agreed upon. The church will not accept C.O.D. deliveries.
- ✦ The florist and/or bride's family are responsible for setting up and taking down their respective decorations, flowers, etc.
- ✦ Prior to the wedding please inform the church office if you wish the flowers to be used in the worship service or sent to shut-ins or the hospital.
- ✦ Pulpit furniture which involves musical instruments and sound equipment, can only be moved by church staff or person approved by church staff. Please keep in mind some instruments and sound equipment will not be moved for any occasion.
- ✦ There will be no food, drinks (except bottled water if needed), gum, birdseed or rice allowed inside the building. There will be no smoking in the buildings. There will be no alcoholic beverages of any kind allowed on the church property.
- ✦ **The wedding party assumes responsibility for any damage, loss, or breakage to Church owned property and facilities.**

There is no rental fee for the use of the facilities but cleaning fees will be applied. The fee is:

- ✦ \$350 – This takes into consideration that your wedding will be held in the First Baptist Sanctuary **and** the reception or you rehearsal dinner in the fellowship hall or youth worship center.
- ✦ \$200 – This takes into consideration that your wedding will be held in the First Baptist Sanctuary **and** the reception and/or rehearsal dinner will be held elsewhere.
- ✦ \$150 – This takes into consideration the use of the youth worship center or fellowship hall for your rehearsal or reception with the wedding being elsewhere.

These fees **do not** include an honorarium for those individuals who may participate in making your wedding a success such as the pastor, musicians and sound/media personnel. It is appropriate to show your appreciation to them in whatever manner seems best to you but it is not the church's responsibility.

The fee must be paid when the application is turned in to the church office. In the event that the wedding is refused by the church then all money will be refunded. In the event the wedding is canceled by the bride or groom, all but \$50.00 will be refunded.

RECEPTION

If the reception is held in the fellowship hall or youth worship center it is important to remember:

- ✦ No alcoholic beverages are permitted in the buildings or on the church premises.
- ✦ No smoking in the buildings or around the main entryways. No smoking on the premises in the preference of the church.
- ✦ The throwing of birdseed is to be restricted to outdoors. No rice or other confetti is to be used.
- ✦ No Red Punch is to be served due to the permanent stains it creates.
- ✦ The reception caterer and/or bride's family are responsible for setting up and taking down their respective equipment and decorations.

MUSIC

In the selection of music it should be remembered that the wedding ceremony is ultimately an act of worship offered to God as two lives are supernaturally bound into one. For this reason only appropriate music befitting a service designed for God's glory will be allowed. All music must be approved by a member of the church staff regardless of who will be performing the wedding ceremony.

If you need sound equipment for the event then you need to make this known on the wedding form. Only approved sound/media team members are able to run the sound equipment. It will be your responsibility, once given their contact information, to secure that date with them.

If you wish First Baptist's music minister or musicians to perform at the wedding you should check with them immediately to reserve the date on their calendar.

PHOTOGRAPHY

A wedding is a sacred time of worship and commitment and all elements of the ceremony contribute to this factor. No flash pictures of any kind may be taken during the ceremony. It is the bride and groom's responsibility to inform the photographer and their families of these limitations.

Some non-flash pictures **may be allowed by the officiating minister** provided the photographer does not obstruct the entryways or distract from the ceremony.

INVITATIONS

An invitation may be placed in the church's newsletter if desired. A copy of the invitation should be in the office at least 4 weeks prior to the wedding.

MINISTER

If a minister outside the church is to conduct or assist in the ceremony, please note such in the appropriate place on the application form.

Counseling – the minister performing the ceremony will meet and counsel with the couple. If the minister is outside of the church he will need to supply a letter stating he has counseled the couple and does not have reservations concerning their decision to marry one another.

PASTOR'S WEDDING POLICY

Because of the numerous and varied requests a pastor receives to perform weddings, it is necessary to have a written policy concerning for whom I will or will not officiate a wedding. I do not expect all who read this policy to agree with every stand I take, but at least to understand that with this statement I am attempting to avoid both the misunderstandings and the arbitrariness which could arise without such a statement.

Furthermore, it is hoped that all who read this will appreciate my attempt to base my personal convictions upon God's Word, as well as my belief that each person has the right and responsibility to study and obey the Scriptures for himself or herself.

As a pastor, I am more interested in establishing Christian homes than I am in simply officiating at weddings. In light of this, I hold these convictions and seek to follow these guidelines:

- Both bride and groom give clear testimony of being born-again believers, who personally trust in Christ for the forgiveness of their sins and for eternal life.
- Neither person is divorced with the possibility of reconciling with their previous spouse. I recognize there are biblical exceptions and that divorce and remarriage are permitted under some circumstances but firmly believe as long as the opportunity for reconciliation remains a person's energy and effort should be spent in repairing that relationship.
- Couple must agree to pre-marital counseling. The length of time set by the pastor – generally six sessions at least one week apart.
- Couple must attend or agree to attend church regularly.
- Between the time I begin working with the couple and the time of the wedding the couple must neither live together or have sexual intercourse of any kind.
- It also needs to be understood that no commitment to officiating a wedding will be made until I have met personally with the couple.

These guidelines are based on personal conviction, but it is understood that situations arise in which some flexibility and understanding must be applied.