

# Wedding Policies and Procedures

*First Baptist Church*  
NEW BERN

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## CONCERNING YOUR WEDDING



Congratulations on your decision to marry! It is God's intention and our desire that your relationship be mutually fulfilling and loving. We are pleased that you are considering our church facilities and staff to assist you in publicly proclaiming your nuptial vows. We want to assist you in having a beautiful Christian ceremony and a meaningful marriage in Jesus Christ.

In order for this to happen we have prepared this wedding manual. It attempts to facilitate your understanding of our beliefs and established practices regarding weddings conducted by First Baptist Church of New Bern. While we desire to remain flexible, realizing that every couple and ceremony is unique, there are certain policies of the church that will affect your consideration of our church and staff for this significant occasion in your life.

A Christian wedding is an act of worship. God created us male and female, and gave us marriage so that husband and wife may help and comfort each other, living faithfully together in plenty and in want, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, throughout all their days. God gave us marriage for the full expression of the love between a man and a woman. In marriage a woman and a man belong to each other, and with affection and tenderness freely give themselves to each other. Finally, God gave us marriage as a holy mystery in which a man and a woman are joined together, and become one, just as Christ is one with the church. In this spirit, the following wedding practices are traditionally observed at our church.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF PREPARING FOR A MARRIAGE

Too often a couple spends more time preparing for a wedding than getting ready for a marriage. Countless hours can be spent selecting wedding rings, deciding on invitations, attending parties and showers, determining the dress for the day, and scheduling the caterer and the honeymoon. While the day of your wedding is important and needs attention, it will soon be a memory. The Church is interested in your long-term relationship as well. We want to provide opportunities for you to evaluate your marital commitments, how you will communicate and resolve conflicts, learn to respect each other's differences, and accept each other as persons of worth. In short, we believe that it is the responsibility of the Church to assist you in moving towards wholeness and intimacy.



For these reasons, we normally require several premarital counseling sessions between the couple and the clergy performing the ceremony. Additional sessions may be required if one or both of you have been through a divorce. Schedule at least three one-hour sessions for this purpose prior to your wedding day. Our clergy reserve the right to decline the opportunity to perform a wedding ceremony if they believe they cannot conduct it with personal and professional integrity. Rarely does this happen, but if it does, they will do what they can in helping you explore alternative options.

You will be asked to agree during these sessions that if at any point during your marriage you experience difficulties that you cannot resolve alone, you will consult a competent marriage counselor for advice. Many marriages in trouble could be saved if the couple would turn to the Church before seeking a court settlement. Our clergy encourage you to have a "post

marital checkup" and preventive evaluation at certain points in your relationship.

Our church and staff libraries have a number of excellent volumes available on weddings and Christian marriage. You are invited to inquire and check out some of these books to read and mutually discuss during these days before your wedding. Then determine that you are going to work at your marriage and continue to grow together as long as the Lord desires.

## **MAKING YOUR RESERVATIONS**


Too often a couple has announcements made and wedding invitations printed prematurely. Definite confirmations and reservations for facilities, clergy, director, musicians, hostess, and janitor can save last minute changes in arrangements. There is a form attached to this manual that will assist you in doing this. You must meet with one of our pastoral ministers prior to reserving our sanctuary for your wedding. After this meeting, if all parties agree to proceed, the enclosed form must be completed and returned to the church office along with required deposits. The church secretary handles all facility reservations and the financial secretary receives all deposits. We suggest that you call in advance and schedule a time when you can see BOTH of these secretaries at the same time. The church cannot commit its staff or facilities until this is done.



A list of established fees/charges for staff services is found on pages 9 - 11. A damage deposit is required by the church for ALL weddings conducted at our facilities. This may be refundable, in part or in whole, depending on any damage assessment.

## SELECTING THE CHURCH STAFF FOR PLANNING AND CONDUCTING YOUR WEDDING

When you choose to use our church facilities and reservations have been confirmed, it will be necessary to have commitments from the following staff members of the church:

1. **CLERGY:** A member of the pastoral staff of First Baptist Church, New Bern, must officiate in all weddings and approve the contents of the wedding ceremony.
2. **DIRECTOR:** We have a number of trained wedding directors. A list of them is on page 16. One of these members **MUST** direct any wedding conducted in our sanctuary.
3. **MUSICIANS:** Organists, pianists, and vocalists are available through the church. You may choose one or more of these and/or other musicians of your choice, so long as the Associate Pastor of Music & Worship approves all musicians.A photograph showing a close-up of a violin and a piano keyboard. The violin is in the foreground, and the piano keys are visible in the background.
4. **HOSTESS:** If our Family Life Center is used for either a rehearsal dinner/party or a wedding reception, our designated church hostess is required to be consulted and present at the function.
5. **JANITOR:** It is necessary that a member of our janitorial staff be present at your rehearsal and wedding. This staff member is in charge of preparing facilities for your use and comfort and any necessary cleanup following the wedding.

**Neither the staff nor the general membership of first Baptist Church is responsible for valuables left behind or unattended.**

### **SELECTING YOUR WEDDING MUSIC**



Appropriate sacred music is important for a worshipful wedding in our sanctuary. Secular music is more acceptable at the rehearsal dinner and/or the reception. You are required to meet with our Pastor of Music & Worship regarding the final selection of any music to be used in your wedding.

### **PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO RECORDINGS**

Many couples choose to have a professional photographer and/or videographer at the wedding. Professional photographers require that prearrangements be made with them well in advance. Most are normally open to allowing amateur photographers an opportunity to snap their pictures following the professional photographer's time with the wedding

party. Please check with your selected photographer regarding his/her policies in this matter.

Please be advised that flash cameras and amateur photography are not permitted during the ceremony. Video cameras are acceptable when the filming is done in good taste



and does not distract from the atmosphere of worship. When amateur photographers and videographers are to be a part of your wedding, the director needs to be informed in advance in order to give selection of time and locations for filming.

## FLORISTS AND CATERERS



There are many competent area florists and caterers. It is acceptable with the church if you choose to do your own flowers and catering. It is the responsibility of your florist and caterer to make prearrangements with the church office for gaining access to our facilities. Please advise them that all flowers, decorations, and equipment belonging to them must be removed from the church premises prior to the next scheduled activity at the church.

It is your responsibility to secure the services of our church hostess if you plan a rehearsal dinner/party or reception at the church. Under NO circumstances are children allowed in the kitchen.

## CIVIL REQUIREMENTS FOR YOUR WEDDING

Marriage licenses are issued at the  
Craven County Register of Deeds office  
226 Pollock Street, New Bern, NC 28560  
Phone: 252-636-6617  
E-mail: [regdeeds@cravencounty.com](mailto:regdeeds@cravencounty.com)  
between the hours of 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM, Monday through  
Friday, with the exception of holidays. The couple must  
appear together, in person, between those hours.

If both parties are age 21 or over, they each must have a valid (not expired) government issued ID (driver's license), and their social security cards. If the original social security cards are not available, an official document such as a W-2 or other type of tax form or banking form may be presented. Military ID's will no longer be accepted due to the change over from social security numbers to the new Department of Defense issued numbers.

If either party is between the ages of 18 - 21, they must also present a certified copy of their birth certificate, unless they were born in Craven County.

If either party is under the age of 18, they should call the Register of Deeds office for more details.

If either party has ever been divorced, they must present a filed or certified copy of their final divorce judgment. If either party has been widowed within the last 6 months preceding the date of application, they must present a copy of the death certificate of deceased spouse.

Prior to completing the marriage license application, parties will need to know their parents' full names including mother's maiden name; state of birth, and current address (if possible).



Marriage licenses are good for 60 days and there is no waiting period after issuance.

License Fee is \$60 cash.

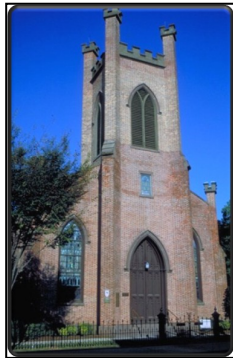


Once you have secured your license, take it to the person who is conducting your wedding. He or she will fill out additional information on the form, secure witnesses' signatures, and return it to the Register of Deeds office for you. You cannot be legally married without this license. While a member of the clergy does not have to conduct your wedding (magistrates can do this as well), civil regulations must be followed in order for your marriage to be valid. Be sure that you follow this procedure exactly.

Bring your marriage license to the church office one week in advance of your wedding date, if possible. If this is not possible, bring it with you and give to the pastor the night of the rehearsal. This reduces the need to worry about additional items on your wedding day.

## **REGARDING YOUR CHURCH AFFILIATION**

As you have contemplated your marriage, we hope that you have discussed your relationship to Jesus Christ and His Church. We believe that the priority of love requires making decisions of faith. God wants to bless your union as husband and wife. He has established the Institution of Marriage and intends for it to be the ultimate in human friendship and relationship. Yet, God leaves you with a personal choice and a free will. While a Christian marriage is not without its problems and opportunities for growth, it is God's hope for the two of you.



Common goals and commitments are necessary if your marriage is to be all that it can be. If Jesus Christ is the center of your life together, He will see you through many difficult times in the years to come. We hope that both of you know Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord. If not, we would want to discuss this matter of eternal significance with you.

Once each of you has made a commitment to Christ, you need to discuss your local church affiliation and participation. Many couples are marrying today who come from a variety of faith experiences. It is important that you openly discuss this with each other and the pastoral counselor. Whenever possible, you will be encouraged to negotiate with each other regarding your church membership. We believe that it is better for the two of you to be together in this matter than separate.

First Baptist Church of New Bern, wishes you the very best God has to offer. We shall pray with you regarding your future relationship. We rejoice with you that the greatest gift in the world is shared love. May God's love, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the presence of the Holy Spirit be with you both!

## **WEDDING FEES**

Damage Deposit: A Damage Deposit of \$100 is required to be paid before a date can be secured for any wedding placed on the church calendar. This deposit will be refunded promptly after the wedding service, provided there was no damage as a result of the rehearsal, wedding, or attending functions.

First Baptist Church has a set fee of \$2,000 for **non-members** who desire to have their wedding service in our sanctuary. This check is to be made payable to First Baptist Church, is due at least two weeks prior to the wedding date, and covers the following expenses:

- Sanctuary: \$800
- Counseling by Pastor: \$250
- Pastor: \$250
- Organist / Pianist: \$250
- Director: \$250
- Custodian: \$200

Wedding fees for members of First Baptist Church total \$850 and cover the following expenses:

- Pastor: \$250
- Organist / Pianist: \$200
- Director: \$200
- Custodian: \$200

Wedding fees for weddings in the Memorial Garden are as follows: (Please note that if you desire to have the Sanctuary available as a backup, then the fees listed above will apply since the sanctuary will not be available for others to reserve.)

- Counseling by Pastor: \$250
- Pastor: \$250
- Damage Deposit: \$200



Soloists or additional musicians, as well as sound technicians, are to be paid separately. The church musician may charge additional fees for accompanying soloists for unknown pieces of music. Discuss this with the Associate Pastor of Music & Worship.

Consumption of alcoholic beverages or use of illegal drugs is not permitted on the premises of First Baptist Church. Members of the wedding party who arrive at the rehearsal or wedding service intoxicated or who become disorderly must leave church property before the worship service will proceed. Smoking is not allowed inside any of our facilities.

### **CHURCH STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION**

#### **PASTORS**

Dr. Richard D. Seagle  
252-638-5691  
[richard@fbchurch.com](mailto:richard@fbchurch.com)

Rev. Kerry Peeler  
252-638-5691  
[kerry@fbchurch.com](mailto:kerry@fbchurch.com)

#### **ASSOCIATE PASTOR OF MUSIC & WORSHIP**

Rev. Barry E. Templeton  
252-638-5691  
[barry@fbchurch.com](mailto:barry@fbchurch.com)

#### **ORGANIST**

Mrs. Bette Jo Oglesby  
252-714-4909

### **CERTIFIED WEDDING DIRECTORS**

Allyson Blalock  
252-671-0356

Lisa Chitty  
252-229-5284

Cathy Rock  
252-635-1928

Leigh Welborn  
252-474-4074