



FBC Marriage Policies and Procedures

A Message from the Pastor:

***“And the Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make a help
meat for him.” Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto
his wife and they shall be one flesh.***

Genesis 2:18, 24

We believe that the wedding ceremony is the occasion when two people take the giant step into the highest halls of human happiness. It is the desire of the Pastor and the staff of First Baptist Church as well as the church family, to make the wedding ceremony a beautiful and memorable event. The purpose of this Wedding Policies and Procedures Booklet is to extend each wedding party every possible consideration, courtesy and benefit.

In order to establish a uniform and regular practice with regard to weddings at First Baptist Church, and to make accepted wedding procedures available to all interested parties, we have prepared this material for your information.

Please read the following material carefully noting any questions you have which may be answered during your initial interview with our church staff.

To God Alone Be the Glory

***Bro. Shane O’Guin
Senior Pastor
Psalm 25:4-5***



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Introduction

The marriage ceremony in the church is a worship service. It is one of the most sacred rites which the Pastor performs under the ordination and the authority of the church.

2 Corinthians 5:17 states, ***“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”***

2 Corinthians 6:14-15 states, ***“Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever?”***

All weddings performed at First Baptist Church are Christian weddings with both the bride and the groom being professed Christians.

A marriage is not merely the union of two individuals, but also the union of their families. It is expected/encouraged that the couple have the full blessing of both sets of parents before preparation of marriage.

Statement of Religious Belief Regarding Marriage

We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning, and that is marriage sanctioned by God, which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive, covenantal union, as delineated in Scripture.

We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that God has commanded that no sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexual conduct, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, any use of pornography or any attempt to change one’s sex, or disagreement with one’s biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God.

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of the church, (Genesis 1:27-28; Genesis 2:18-25; Exodus 20:14; Matthew 19:3-12; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-20; Ephesians 5:22-33; Hebrews 13:4).



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Our Pastors adhere to the ***Baptist Faith and Message of the Southern Baptist Convention adopted in 2000***, which explains the scriptural purpose of the family, marriage and children in **Article XVIII. The Family:** God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption. 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. The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation. Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents. *Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4;*

Divorce / Cohabitation

The question of divorce is perhaps the most difficult and complex question regarding a new marriage. Our pastors are under no obligation to officiate the marriage ceremony of anyone, but we are open to counsel those who choose to marry. Each situation will be treated individually, compassionately, and redemptively.

The following principals apply to remarriage after divorce and cohabitation:

- No remarriages after divorce will be performed if there is a possibility of reconciliation with either person.
- No remarriages after divorce will be performed until at least one year from the date the divorce is final.
- Any couple "living together" would be asked to move out of the living arrangement and practice sexual abstinence until the marriage ceremony. In cases where there is a willingness to correct the situation, and a desire to live in obedience to the authority of God's Words, our Pastors will be more than happy to work with the couple and talk with them about scheduling the marriage ceremony.



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Arrangements

The Pastor and Staff of First Baptist Church wish to extend every possible assistance to you so that your wedding will be a memorable experience.

A **wedding coordinator** is not mandatory, but FBC strongly encourages a wedding coordinator to facilitate the arrangements, rehearsal, and reception. FBC will be pleased to provide a contact if you so desire.

Your wedding arrangements should be made through the church office as soon as possible for the following:

- Securing one of our pastors at FBC or a Christian pastor who has been authorized by the senior pastor's office of First Baptist to perform the ceremony.
- Securing soloists through the minister of music.
- Use of the church facilities for the wedding and/or reception.
- Scheduling your premarital counseling session.

**Please note that *only* FBC sound technicians may be used to run sound for the wedding ceremony.



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Making Wedding Reservation

- Please make your wedding reservation through the FBC office. Please use the form provided for this purpose. Show dates preferred giving more than one, in case of calendar conflicts. The date will be confirmed when the Pastor or the appointed Minister has agreed to perform the ceremony.
- The time for both the rehearsal and the wedding will be established when the auditorium and other rooms are reserved. Your reservation will be confirmed through the church office and placed on the FBC calendar at that time. It is necessary to provide the church office with the completed Wedding Information Form.
- All weddings must begin no later than 7:00 pm on any day.
- Weddings, rehearsals, receptions are not to be scheduled on the following days: *Sundays, New Year's Day, Easter Weekend, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving weekend, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day.*
- No weddings may be scheduled that will conflict with church services or special events.

**Please note that FBC has the right to decline the access of their building.



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Wedding Facilities

There are 3 areas available, with the following seating capacities:

- Sanctuary 400
 - Family Life Center 200
 - Fellowship Hall 60
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- Furniture, including chairs, musical instruments, music stands, electronic equipment/speakers/monitors, may not be moved without permission from the church office.
 - Only sleeveless dripless candles are permitted. Plastic must be put under all candles.
 - Specified dressing rooms will be reserved for the wedding party. Dressing rooms must be left as they are found prior to the wedding. We encourage the wedding party to respect the buildings and grounds and only use the specified areas designated for the wedding.
 - Sound equipment: The church office will acquire someone from our media department to provide the necessary sound equipment. Microphones will be necessary for the minister and soloist, as well as an individual instrumentalist if used.
 - Each group using the church facilities must clean the areas. The buildings need to be left in the same condition and/or arrangement as it was found. Trash must be taken out, floors swept and vacuumed, tables and chairs wiped down and returned to their original positions. This includes cleaning of the bathrooms. Everyone has the opportunity of doing the custodial work themselves or paying an honorarium.

Wedding Dress and Other Personal Valuables

- The Church will not be responsible for personal items such as wedding dresses, wraps, purses, silver and glassware brought to the church for use in a wedding or reception; nor liable if such items are lost, stolen or damaged. However, every reasonable effort will be made to assist the wedding party in protecting such property.



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Office Weddings

A wedding is considered an office wedding when:

- No rehearsal is required.
- Floral decorations, if any, are kept at a minimum.
- The bride and groom with one attendant each stand before the Pastor in his office for the wedding ceremony.
- Wedding guests are limited to family and a few close friends.

Premarital Counseling

- Pre-marital counseling will be held with the bride and groom by the officiating pastor or his representative.
- The pastors of First Baptist Church require a **minimum of 3 sessions** of premarital counseling for each wedding party that they will be officiating.

Music

- Music used in the ceremony should be in keeping with the dignity and sacredness of a worship service.
- The purpose of music in the church wedding is to glorify God. Our Associate Pastor/Minister of Music must approve all music and musicians used in the wedding ceremony.
- The musicians will rehearse with the soloist before the wedding. A sound check will be done at the same time.
- If you need musicians and/or soloists, the Associate Pastor/Minister of Music can assist you with suggestions.



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The Rehearsal

The rehearsal shall begin promptly at the time scheduled and will require only 45 minutes to one hour. The bride and groom should insist that all members of the wedding party be as prompt for the rehearsal as for the wedding.

Strict observance of the following rules is required:

- No smoking within the church buildings or on the church campus.
- No member of the wedding party under the influence of alcohol will be permitted to participate in the rehearsal or wedding.

The following suggestions will help you prepare for your rehearsal:

- The Pastor or minister will not always be present but places the Wedding Coordinator in charge of the rehearsal. In the event that the pastor is unable to attend the rehearsal, a program will be provided prior to the wedding.
- Each rehearsal, unless otherwise agreed upon, will begin at the set time the day before the wedding. The rehearsal will require 45 minutes to one hour. Promptness in beginning the rehearsal is a MUST. The bride and groom should insist that all members of the wedding party be prompt.
- All members of the wedding party are to be present, including ushers.
- The pianist, soloist, and other musicians must be present at the rehearsal unless other arrangements are made.
- On the day of the wedding, the church and related rooms for the wedding will be open upon request of the wedding party prior to the wedding. No food is allowed in the sanctuary.

Please be prepared to answer the following questions such as:

- *Who will light the candles?*
- *Who will be your head usher?*
- *Who will seat members of the family?*
- *How many rows of seats should be reserved?*



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The Reception

Facilities are available for wedding receptions, and the FBC staff will assist in making the arrangements. If the Family Life Center or Fellowship Hall is needed for the reception, arrangements must be made through the church office according to the Family Life Center Policy.

Strict compliance with the following rules is required as a provision for holding the reception at the Church:

- No alcoholic beverages are permitted.
- No smoking in the buildings or on the Church Campus.
- No rice or confetti is allowed. Only birdseed may be used outside the church buildings.
- Artificial flowers may be used down the church aisle.

The following areas are available for receptions:

- Family Life Center 200 person capacity
- Fellowship Hall 60 person capacity

The above facilities are subject to prior reservations and scheduled meetings of the church.



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Instructions for Florists, Photographers, and Caterers

- Church instructions regarding floral decorations, photographers, and caterers for the wedding and reception must be given to each member by the bride. The bride will be given this information at the time the wedding date is confirmed by the church office.
- During special Christian celebration times with special emphasis on Christmas and Easter when the worship center is decorated for these celebrations, the special decorations will not be removed or disturbed until the passing of the celebration time; i.e., the last Sunday in December or the closing of Easter Sunday. Weddings during these seasons may make use of and/or supplement these decorations.
- All florists, photographers, and caterers who desire to offer their services must have a signed statement on file with the church office that they have read the special guidelines for florists and photographers at First Baptist and agree to abide by these stated policies. These forms and special guidelines can be found in the back of the pamphlet or they may contact the church office to receive a copy of the necessary forms.
- Prior to your wedding rehearsal, please check with the church office to see that your florist, photographer, and caterers have such a statement on file.

Marriage License

Kentucky marriage licenses are issued from the County Clerk during business hours. There is no waiting period. Call you County Clerk to get further details.



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Florist Form and Instructions

A beautiful worship center requires very simple decorations. We believe our worship facility is beautiful, and that elaborate decorations which hide this beauty and tend to destroy the appeal of the church setting.

The following is a list of church instructions for floral decoration:

- The florist will contact the church office one-week in advance of the wedding to set a time for decorating the Church. Decorations may be completed the day of the wedding rehearsal and at least 3 hours before the ceremony.
- If fresh greenery is used, all preparations are to be made prior to arriving at the church.
- The florist must remove all decorations and equipment promptly following the ceremony.
- No tacks, pins, nails or glue shall be used to fasten any decorations to the furniture, building, or carpet.
- Only wrapped wire or ribbon that will not mar the furniture shall be used to fasten bows.
- All candles must be sleeved dripleless.
- Real flower petals cannot be used down the center aisle or in the church buildings.
- Corsages/boutonnieres to be clearly marked with individual's name by florist.
- The church properties must be left in the condition in which they are found. Any waste, debris or other liter left by the florist must be cleaned up by the florist.
- Alcoholic beverages are not permitted.
- Smoking is not permitted in the church buildings or on the church campus.
- No exceptions will be made to the above regulations

I agree to abide by the above guidelines.

Signed _____

Date _____ **Firm Name** _____

Address and Phone Number _____



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Photographer Form and Instructions

Since the wedding ceremony is a religious service, all photographers (amateur and professional) are asked to reverence the ceremony and the Church. We do ask that the photographer be as unobtrusive as possible, and that he or she be dressed appropriately for a wedding.

The photographer may take pictures before or after the ceremony in any part of the building. Pictures are permitted freely in the foyer of the Worship Center and as the father and bride begin down the aisle. No flash pictures shall be made during the ceremony, whether it is in the worship center or elsewhere in the church. Time exposures may be made from the Balcony of the worship center.

Pictures are permissible during the recessional. The bridal party may re-group in the Worship Center before or after the ceremony and re-pose for any parts of the ceremony.

The wedding party is requested to spend no more than 20 minutes for any final pictures in order to avoid keeping the guests waiting at the reception.

The purpose of this policy is to prevent the guests from having to wait long periods of time while pictures are being made.

The photographer is cautioned about marring furniture by standing on the worship center seats or furniture in the church. He/she will be held responsible for any damage so caused.

I agree to abide by the above guidelines.

Signed _____

Date _____ **Firm Name** _____

Address and Phone Number _____



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Caterer Form and Instructions

- I have received a copy of the First Baptist Family Life Center Guidelines.
Initial _____
- I have read and fully agree to abide by the guidelines of the Family Life Center. Initial _____

Signed: _____

Date: _____ **Firm Name:** _____

Address and Phone Number: _____

- Catering instructions:
 - Please bring your own catering equipment, supplies, and utensils.
 - Never broil in the ovens with the door closed.
 - If you use anything in the kitchen drawers please put it back.
 - If you use dish towels or cloths please wash and return.
 - If you spill in the refrigerators, please clean it up.
 - If you splatter on the walls, please clean it up.
 - Please do not leave food particles in the sink.
 - All caterers should leave the kitchen in order.