



first baptist church  
**ORANGEPARK**



# **The Wedding Booklet**

Revised January 2012



**W**e are happy to provide you with information for hosting your wedding ceremony at First Baptist Church of Orange Park. It is our responsibility to make every effort to prepare you for this lifelong commitment.

This book contains the information needed in order to have us host your wedding ceremony here at First Baptist. Information on having one of our pastors officiate your wedding, regardless of ceremony venue, is also included.

Our desire is to do all we can to help you in planning and preparing your wedding ceremony. However, our greater desire is that you enter into this very special relationship as prepared as possible. The wedding preparation is important, but the marriage preparation is more so.

If you have any questions regarding information presented in this book, feel free to contact us.

David Tarkington  
Pastor

# **PREREQUISITES FOR BEING MARRIED AT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OR BY A FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH PASTOR**

- 1. The wedding must be between a man and a woman.** According to the Bible, marriage is reserved for a man and a woman. This is emphasized in many passages such as Ephesians 5:25-33. Therefore, same-sex weddings will not be performed at First Baptist Church or by First Baptist Church pastors.
- 2. The wedding must be between two believers in Christ.** According to 2 Corinthians 6:14, a believer in Christ (Christian) is not to marry a non-believer.
- 3. The wedding must be a Christian ceremony in accordance with our beliefs as a church.** Every wedding performed at First Baptist Church or by a First Baptist Church pastor is done so at the discretion of the pastors. A wedding is a holy ceremony uniting two people in a covenant relationship before God.
- 4. The bride or groom (or parents or guardians of one) must be an active member and regular attender of First Baptist Church.**
- 5. The couple must not be cohabitating before marriage.** The Bible is clear about the holiness of the marriage bed and “living together” does not fit into the biblical boundaries. There are occasions when a couple has been together for years, maybe even have children together and have just recently come to know Christ as personal Savior. In these cases, a

meeting with one of the pastors is required before scheduling the wedding so options can be developed to create separate living arrangements before the wedding ceremony. We believe marriage is sacred and for believers to “pretend to be married” is nothing less than mocking the sacredness of marriage.

- 6. The couple must have completed an approved premarital counseling course.** We regularly offer premarital counseling through First Baptist Church. In most cases, this is offered in a class setting. If the couple is unable to attend the classes, an online version is available. There is a cost for premarital counseling. The cost varies depending upon the curriculum used and/or the online fees. Once premarital counseling is completed, the couple is expected to meet with one of our pastors and at this meeting will receive a certificate that will enable the couple to get a discount on their marriage license.

# STEPS TO SCHEDULING A WEDDING CEREMONY AT FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

1. **The couple must agree and meet the prerequisites found on pages 4 and 5.**
2. **The couple must complete, sign and return the “Wedding Application & Information Form” along with a refundable deposit check of \$100 to the church office.** The bride and groom must both sign the form. The \$100 check should be post-dated no earlier than six months prior to the scheduled wedding date and made out to “First Baptist Church.” The refund check is cashed only in the event that wedding policies are not followed, such as damage to church property; rooms opened earlier than usual; or reception longer than two hours.
3. **The couple must make an appointment with one of our pastors.** One of the First Baptist Church pastors must play a role in the ceremony for you to be married at First Baptist Church. This meeting will ensure that the pastor is available for your rehearsal and wedding ceremony. The wedding will not be scheduled until after you have met with the pastor.
4. **The couple must schedule premarital counseling.** While meeting with one of the pastors of the church, premarital counseling is to be scheduled. It may either be in a class setting, if available, or online. The cost for the online class is

approximately \$95 and is to be paid online, not to the church.

- 5. With the pastor's approval, pending no conflicts on the church calendar, your wedding may be placed on the church calendar.** You will be working directly with the secretary assigned to this task. Any requested changes regarding room usage, times, dates, etc. must be communicated to the assigned secretary in the church office. If the wedding is to be held at 4pm or later on a Saturday, special permission must be procured through the church office at the time of scheduling.

# WHY PREMARITAL COUNSELING?

## **Proverbs 15:22(ESV)**

**Without counsel plans fail, but with many advisers they succeed.**

As stated in the proverb, there is wisdom in getting counsel from others. Premarital counseling can help prepare a couple in areas that are the most common for conflict in marriage. We believe that marriages that have begun with a time of counseling have a stronger opportunity for success.

Premarital counseling allows you to answer the hard questions before entering into a covenant marriage relationship.

Topics covered include such things as:

- Marital expectations
- Communication and emotional intimacy
- Personality differences
- Conflict resolution
- Spiritual intimacy
- Finances
- Sexual intimacy
- Biblical roles for the husband and wife

All topics are covered from a biblical perspective. Both the man and woman must complete the course.

# WHY A CHRIST-CENTERED WEDDING?

The Christian wedding ceremony is a holy, sacred event. It is, in fact, a time of worship of our God. The relationship we, as individuals, have with God is the most important one we'll ever have. Marriage was created by God and was in his plan from the beginning. To have a marriage built to last, it must be founded on a personal relationship with Christ. This is why it so important that both the bride and groom be believers. You see, the Christian marriage is composed of three: God, the husband and the wife. The closer the husband and wife grow toward God, the closer they grow to each other.

God gives us insight in how to have a Christ-centered marriage:

- **Genesis 2:18(ESV)**

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."

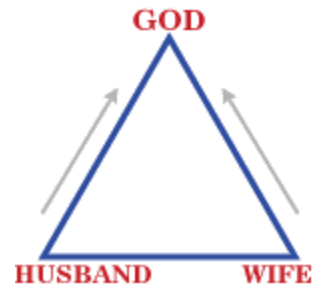
- **Genesis 2:24(ESV)**

Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

- **Ephesians 5:25(ESV)**

Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.

Our pastors are committed to helping you have a Christ-centered marriage and a God-honoring wedding ceremony.



# **THE WEDDING CEREMONY**

## **PASTOR**

A pastor of First Baptist Church will perform either all or a portion of the wedding ceremony held at First Baptist Church. If the couple wants to invite another pastor to perform the ceremony, it must be approved by Senior Pastor.

Do not presume that a pastor from the church will be available for your wedding.

The pastor performing your wedding will ensure that all policies stated in this booklet are adhered to (i.e. premarital counseling, fees, scheduling, etc.)

## **WEDDING PARTY**

In most cases, the wedding party includes the bride, groom, maid/matron of honor and best man. Some weddings have additional participants such as bridesmaids, groomsmen, junior bridesmaid, ring bearer, and flower girl. Following premarital counseling, the bride and groom will meet with the pastor to discuss the details regarding the room layout and wedding party placement at the service.

## PHOTOGRAPHER & VIDEOGRAPHER

We understand that your wedding is a very special event and you will want photographs and/or video to remember this day. However, we want to make sure that nothing distracts from the sacredness of the ceremony.

Please follow these guidelines:

- **No flash photography** will be taken once the bride has made it down the aisle and onto the stage. In most cases, due to the lighting in our worship center, better photographs can be taken without a flash.
- The only person taking pictures during the ceremony should be the professional or assigned photographer.
- We suggest that a majority of the photographs be made before or after the ceremony.
- On the day of the ceremony, or at the rehearsal, have your photographer meet with the pastor performing your wedding prior to the service to ensure there are no conflicts.

## FLOWERS, CANDLES & DECORATIONS

Since most weddings are on Saturday with scheduled church services the following day, decorations need to be simple and in good taste.

Please follow these guidelines:

- **Do not tape/staple/glue items to the pews.**
- **Only dripless (sometimes called *chaste*) candles may be used in the Worship Center.** They are metal with wax inserts and may be procured through your florist. If you wish, you may use the churches candelabras (There is a small fee for the wax refills).
- **If used, the Unity Candle may be wax.** We will place a piece of sheeting under the Unity Candle stand to keep wax drippings off of the carpet.
- **All decorating (professional and personal) must occur during normal working hours (8am – 5pm) on the day of the rehearsal.**
- **All decorations must be removed the day of the wedding, within one hour upon completion of the ceremony.** Decorations cannot be stored at the church. Any facility damage will be deducted from your \$100 deposit.

## **STAGE SET UP**

The custodial staff will clear the center stage to allow a large open area for the ceremony. Large musical instruments, pulpit and orchestra chairs will be moved to the side of the stage. Choir chairs will not be removed from the stage.

## **THE AISLE**

Our worship center does not have a center aisle. In weddings held in this facility, the bride and her party will enter and come down the aisle on the “bride’s side” of the building. All in the wedding party will exit by going up the aisle on the “groom’s side.” This will be explained at the rehearsal.

# REHEARSAL DINNER and RECEPTION

Some couples wish to have their wedding rehearsal dinner and/or reception here at First Baptist Church. All facilities must be scheduled when your wedding is scheduled.

Depending upon the time of year and the date, facilities may not be available.

Please note that for rehearsal dinners and receptions held here at the church, there are some guidelines.

- No alcoholic beverages of any kind may be served.
- No smoking allowed in the buildings or on the property.
- There will be no dancing permitted at the reception other than a “first dance” between the bride and groom.
- Use of the audio and/or video systems must be scheduled and fees paid for A/V technician.
- All dinners and receptions are limited to two hours. The two hour limit for the reception begins immediately following the completion of the wedding ceremony.

# WEDDING FEES

The following fee schedule is designed to reimburse individuals fairly and adequately for services rendered and to ensure that the cost of operating the facilities is covered. **All fees (except for pastor) are to be made payable to “First Baptist Church of Orange Park,” and due in the church office no later than two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled wedding rehearsal.** *(Fees are subject to change. Rates will be charged according to the date of the event, not at the time of reservation.)*

**Deposit** **\$100**

The \$100 wedding deposit is refundable if the wedding is canceled at least 24 hours before the scheduled ceremony. Forfeiture of the deposit may occur in the if church property is damaged, photographer, florist or caterer do not follow wedding policy guidelines or if the rehearsal/ reception exceeds scheduled time period.

**Counseling (class)** **COST OF CURRICULUM**

The curriculum cost varies. In most cases, the cost is \$15-\$20 per workbook. For online classes, the cost is approximately \$95 per couple.

**Custodian for wedding** **\$150**

This fee covers custodial services for wedding rehearsal and ceremony. On the wedding day, the facility will be open two hours prior to ceremony and remain open one hour following. If additional time is requested, the charge will be an additional \$30 per

hour. Special permission must be given by church office if the ceremony is scheduled on a Saturday after 4pm.

**Candelabras** **\$.50 per wax refill**

Includes 2 candelabras (14 candles) at \$7 and a unity candelabra (2 candles) at \$1. The use of the church's candelabras are optional. If the unity candle is used, understand that the church only provides the candelabra. The unity candle must be purchased elsewhere.

**Custodian for 2-hour rehearsal dinner** **\$300**

If you choose to host your rehearsal dinner at First Baptist Church, custodial services are required. The custodian will be available for four (4) hours: 1 hour before; on campus during the dinner 2 hours) & 1 hour after. The custodian will set up tables and up to 100 chairs (\$220) as well as clean the facility following the dinner (\$80). If additional time is requested, the charge will be an additional \$30 per hour. If additional chairs are needed, there will be a fee of an additional \$.50 per chair.

**Custodian for 2-hour reception** **\$300**

If you choose to host your reception at First Baptist Church, custodial services are required. The custodian will be available for four (4) hours: 1 hour before; on campus during the dinner 2 hours) & 1 hour after. The custodian will set up tables and up to 100 chairs (\$220) as well as clean the facility following the dinner (\$80). If additional time is requested, the charge will be an additional \$30 per hour. If additional chairs are

needed, there will be a fee of an additional \$.50 per chair.

**Tableware (clothes/cups/plates/utensils)**

White plastic table cloths (round or rectangular) and plastic tableware may be purchased. White china & flatware are available also. Contact the church office for pricing.

**Kitchen**

**\$50**

Includes use of kitchen for cooking, warming, cooling food and equipment/products for cleanup and restoration.

**Wedding Coordinator**

**\$150**

Coordinates wedding party's presentation at the rehearsal and during the ceremony. This is an optional cost and in most cases, the pastor performing the ceremony can cover this at no additional fee.

**Audio/Visual Technician**

**\$150**

Includes technician's services for the rehearsal and ceremony (including set-up time.) In addition to regulating sound and light levels, the technician will also assume responsibility for playing any pre-recorded music used in the service. Only certified First Baptist Church A/V technicians may be used. Additional fee of \$75 for reception.

**Accompanist**

**\$150**

Includes services for the rehearsal and ceremony. The accompanist as well as all music used during the

ceremony must be approved by the Worship Pastor in advance.

**Vocalist**

**\$150**

Includes services for the rehearsal and ceremony. All music must be approved by the Worship Pastor in advance. This is an optional cost. In many cases, if the wedding party has a close friend or family member singing, the cost maybe waived. The fee listed here is only in the cases where the request is made to the Worship Pastor for securing a vocalist.

**Pastor**

**No Set Fee**

Although there is not set fee for the services of the pastor who performs the ceremony, an honorarium (generally from \$75 - \$150) is appropriate and standard.

# **IMPORTANT THINGS TO REMEMBER**

## **MARRIAGE LICENSE**

Remember, you get a discount on your license if you go through premarital counseling here at First Baptist Church and secure your license in Clay County. All of our pastors are on file in the Clerk of the Courts office. You must have the “Certificate of Completion of Premarriage Course” in hand when purchasing your license. This certificate will be given to you upon completion of the premarital counseling class (either live or online.)

It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to have their marriage license in hand and ready at the rehearsal. The license is to be given to the pastor performing the ceremony. Upon completion of the wedding ceremony, the pastor will have the best man and maid/matron of honor sign the license as witnesses. The pastor will then mail the license to the appropriate office on the next business day.

## **RINGS**

Don't forget them.

## **FEES**

All fees (custodial, wedding coordinator, A/V technician, musicians, etc.) must be paid two (2) weeks before the wedding ceremony.

## **ARRIVAL TIME ON WEDDING DAY**

Your wedding party, as well as the florist, and/or photographer will have access to the building on the day of your wedding no earlier than two (2) hours before your scheduled wedding ceremony. A custodian is required to be on the premises during wedding preparation time. If you must get into the building earlier, you must schedule this with the church office beforehand and an additional fee of \$30 per hour will apply. Scheduling this is contingent upon availability of the custodial personnel.

## **DRESSING FOR THE WEDDING**

If the wedding party is dressing for the ceremony at the church, please advise the appropriate secretary in the church office when finalizing your wedding date. Otherwise, you will have no space in which to dress.

## **“THROWING RICE”**

Please do not use rice when departing. You may throw bird seed or use bubbles. None of these items are to be used inside the facilities.

## **FOOD AND DRINK**

No food or drink is allowed in the Worship Center. However, you may have bottled water for the wedding party available during preparation for the ceremony.

# CHECKLIST FOR WEDDING

ITEM	PERSONS RESPONSIBLE	DUE DATE	COMPLETED
Pre-Requisites Met	Bride & Groom		
Read <i>The Wedding Booklet</i>	Bride & Groom		
Turn in completed "Wedding Application & Information Form"	Bride & Groom	As soon as possible	
Meet with Pastor for wedding date and counseling	Bride & Groom	As soon as possible	
Reserve <u>all</u> church facilities	Bride & Groom Church Secretary	As soon as possible	
Pay \$100 deposit refundable check	Bride or Groom	Post-dated six (6) months before wedding date	
Pay Premarital Counseling fees	Bride & Groom	Day of first session	
Complete Premarital counseling	Bride & Groom Pastor	1 month prior to the wedding	
Worship Pastor approves music	Bride & Groom	1 month prior to the wedding	
Purchase marriage license	Bride & Groom	Two-Three weeks prior to the wedding	
Agreements for photographer, florist & caterer turned in	Bride & Groom	Two-Three weeks prior to the wedding	
Church fees paid	Bride & Groom	Two weeks prior to the wedding	

Decorate for ceremony / reception	Bride & Groom	Day before ceremony between 8-5pm	
Give marriage license to Pastor	Bride & Groom	At rehearsal	
Honorarium for Pastor	Bride & Groom	At rehearsal or day of ceremony	
<b><u>All</u></b> decorations removed	Bride & Groom	1 hour after ceremony	

# AGREEMENTS

In order to protect you from losing your deposit and to make sure communication with all parties is clear, you must have the following agreements signed and returned to the church office no later than **two weeks prior to your wedding date**.

- Photographer's Agreement
- Florist's Agreement
- Caterer's Agreement (if you are having the rehearsal dinner/reception here at the church.)

These agreements can be found on the following pages. You may either copy them or tear them from this booklet and return to the church office.

If you have any questions regarding anything in this policy booklet, please contact the church office at 264-2351 or [firstbaptist@opfist.org](mailto:firstbaptist@opfist.org).



## WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHER'S AGREEMENT

Wedding photographers are requested to observe the following church policies during the wedding ceremony.

1. The photographer may take flash photographs of each person in the wedding party until the bride and groom have made it onto the stage.
2. The photographer may move to the balcony and take photographs without a flash throughout the ceremony. Any questions regarding set up and photography can be answered by the pastor on the day of the ceremony.
3. The photographer is expected to clean up and dispose of any trash related to his/her job.
4. Videography is allowed. Set up and placement of cameras must be approved by the pastor at the ceremony.
5. No food or drink allowed in the Worship Center.
6. No smoking allowed on the church property.

This agreement must be signed and returned to the church office no later than two weeks prior to the wedding ceremony.

Bride or Groom \_\_\_\_\_

Photographer \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. of Photographer \_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed \_\_\_\_\_





## WEDDING FLORIST'S AGREEMENT

Florists are requested to observe the following church policies for the wedding ceremony.

1. The church is in no way responsible for items left by the florist at the church (i.e. clothing, jewelry, money, equipment, etc.)
2. The florist and/or bride and groom are responsible for any damage to church property or furnishings done by decorating or using unapproved items (i.e. damage due to tape, wax drippings, etc.)
3. No rice is to be used for receptions. Bird seed and bubbles are fine. No items may be used inside the facility.
4. Items used for decoration during the wedding must be removed within one hour upon completion of the ceremony.
5. No food or drink allowed in the Worship Center.
6. No smoking allowed on the church property.

This agreement must be signed and returned to the church office no later than two weeks prior to the wedding ceremony.

Bride or Groom \_\_\_\_\_

Florist \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. of Florist \_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed \_\_\_\_\_





## WEDDING CATERER'S AGREEMENT

In conjunction with the bride and/or groom, wedding caterers are requested to observe the following church policies during the wedding ceremony and reception.

1. The bride or groom must inform the secretary regarding table set up for the reception no later than two weeks prior to the wedding.
2. The caterer agrees and is held responsible for any and all damages to church property incurred by decorations, food spills or breakage of church items.
3. The caterer must see that kitchen and serving area is cleaned and cleared as soon as the reception is over to allow the church custodian to clean and lock up the facility.
4. No smoking or alcoholic beverages allowed on the church property.

This agreement must be signed and returned to the church office no later than two weeks prior to the wedding ceremony.

Bride or Groom \_\_\_\_\_

Caterer \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. of Caterer \_\_\_\_\_

Date Signed \_\_\_\_\_









904-264-2351

[firstbaptist@opfirst.org](mailto:firstbaptist@opfirst.org)