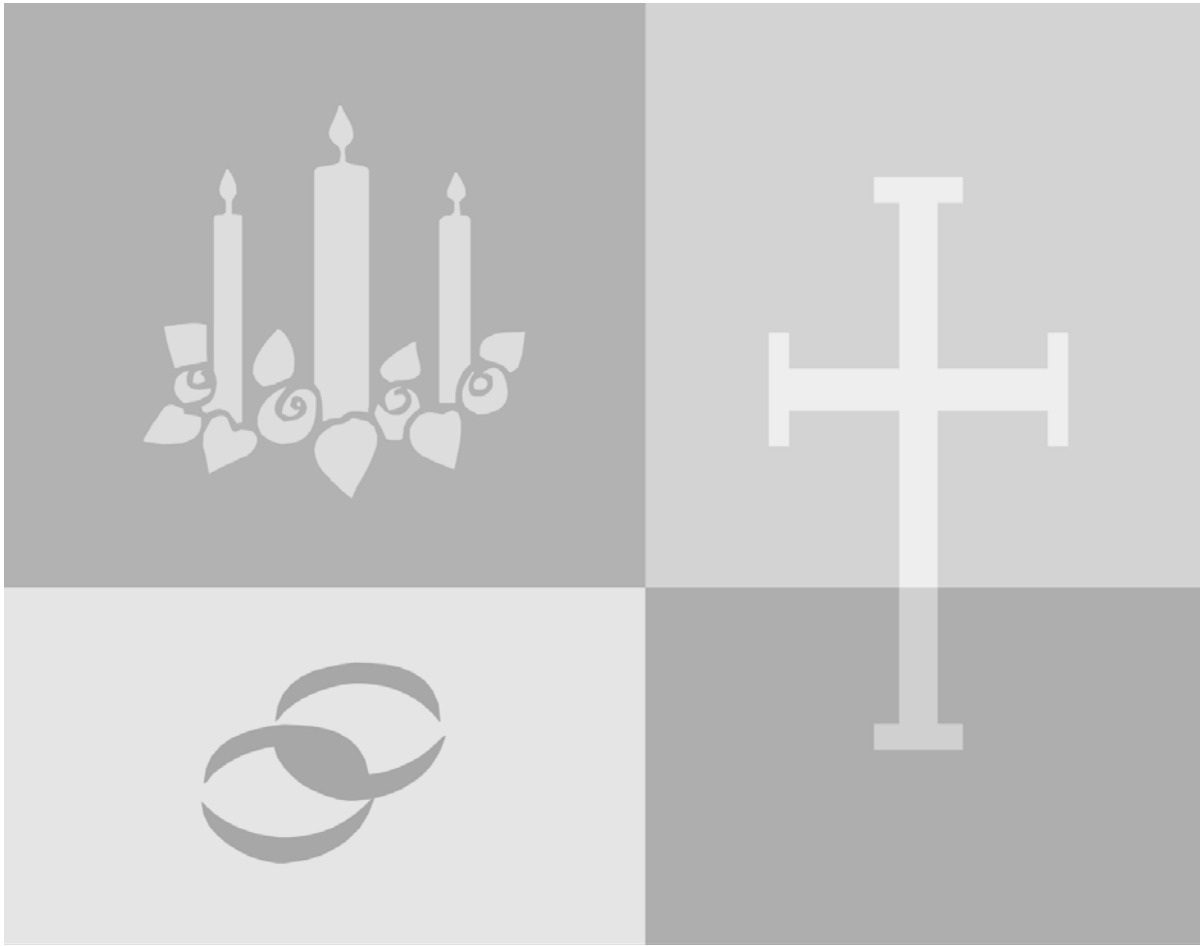


Your Wedding Ceremony



**The First Baptist Church
Henderson, North Carolina**

Introduction

Christian marriage is a beautiful event that is ordained of God whereby two persons in love commit to share a meaningful life together. The wedding service is not an ordinary ceremony, but a celebration wherein family, friends, and the Father of all life join the bride and groom in a most sacred event. It is a service of worship before God. Decorum and behavior in keeping with such an event is expected from all participants.

The church staff and congregation of The First Baptist Church want to make all wedding services meaningful and worshipful occasions. In order to institute a useful practice with regard to such services, the following guidelines and procedures have been instituted for the benefit of all involved. Thank you for your careful attention to these matters. May the blessings of our Heavenly Father abide with you as you share love and life together.

Wedding Coordinator

The first step in planning your ceremony is to contact the church office to schedule a conference with The First Baptist Church's Wedding Coordinator. He/she will review the wedding policy, assist in scheduling the officiating minister, the organist, custodial service, facilities reservation, and any other necessary arrangements for the couple. The Wedding Coordinator will be available to answer any questions for the couple, to make suggestions, and to be an invaluable resource in making your wedding at The First Baptist Church well planned and memorable. *It is absolutely essential that the desired wedding date be cleared with the Wedding Coordinator prior to any public announcement of the ceremony or printing of invitations.* Wedding ceremonies for non-church members may not be scheduled more than six months in advance of the ceremony date.

Non-church members may not schedule weddings during the Advent Season (usually the Sunday after Thanksgiving through Christmas) or on the weekend after Christmas. Additionally, no weddings will be scheduled that conflict with any regular, special, or seasonal events of the church.

In order to allow time to prepare the facilities for regular Sunday Worship Services, no weddings may be scheduled past 6:00 pm on Saturdays.

Minister

Members of The First Baptist Church and others who may wish to have a wedding in the church building are expected to ask First Baptist's Senior Minister to officiate the wedding ceremony. Those being married will be required to schedule premarital conferences with the Senior Minister. If a

couple wishes to include another minister in the ceremony, they should consult the Senior Minister of The First Baptist Church.

The Wedding Director

Your careful choice of a capable Wedding Director is a crucial part of a smooth rehearsal and ceremony. First Baptist's Wedding Coordinator is available to assist you in choosing a director for your wedding ceremony. The Coordinator must approve and meet with all prospective wedding directors at least two months prior to the ceremony date.

Available Facilities

The church sanctuary (seating capacity of 550, using overflow) houses a Möller pipe organ, a Baldwin grand piano, and a harpsichord. Couples planning a small ceremony may instead choose to use the church Chapel (seating capacity of 125). Only a piano is available in the Chapel. A kneeling bench, complementary to the sanctuary furniture, is available for use without charge in either space. Two candelabras, regularly used in the worship services of the church, are also available without charge. *If used, the florist is responsible for the replacement of candles burned in these candelabras.*

The Church Fellowship Hall is available for rehearsal parties, dinners, and receptions. The Church Parlor is also available for receptions. If either of these areas is used (including the respective kitchens) the caterer is responsible for seeing that the facilities and items used are left clean and orderly. Such cleaning does not fall under the regular services of the custodian. A silver punch bowl is available upon request. A limited number of crystal plates and cups are also available.





Decorations

The Sanctuary and Chapel of this church building are settings for sacred services that are already both beautiful and functional. Dignified simplicity is urged when decorating these two worship spaces. Additionally, all decorating must follow these guidelines:

- The pulpit, with the open Bible symbolic of God's blessing upon the marriage, *shall remain in place on the platform.* However, the pulpit chairs and the communion table and chairs may be moved.
- Only decorations which do not mar the walls, floors, pews, and other properties will be permitted. If you have questions, please consult the Wedding Coordinator.
- *Neither rice nor birdseed may be thrown either inside the building or on the church grounds* due to the risk of injury and the problem of cleanup.

Audio/Visual Recording and Photography

Flash photography may only be used during the ceremony as the bride enters and as the couple leaves. Pictures not requiring the use of a flash may be taken at any time during the ceremony.

The church offers a professional recording service (either video or audio), schedulable at least sixty days in advance through the Wedding Coordinator. The quality of this service is comparable to many commercial-type recording services and is offered at a substantially lower fee. Thus, no outside professional recording will be allowed.

Music for the Ceremony

It is important to remember that a church wedding is a sacred service. Therefore, it is necessary to select music for your ceremony that reflects Christian themes in keeping with meaningful worship. The Organist and Minister of Music are bound by this standard as well as their own professional standards in the selection and performance of music for a church wedding. Additionally, any church presents its communal identity most readily through its form of worship. As your wedding ceremony is not only your worship service but also a worship service of The First Baptist Church, music chosen should be reflective of the styles and traditions of this

congregation. Final decisions concerning the style and content of musical selections will be based on their appropriateness for a typical Sunday worship service at the First Baptist Church. Such decisions will be made by the Organist and Minister of Music and will be final.

The Organist and Minister of Music are available for most all church weddings and are able to arrange for a wide variety of instrumental and vocal music for the service. They will consult with the bride and/or groom concerning choice of music.

Fees for the organist, vocalists, and all musicians should be paid directly to those individuals. A separate fee schedule for services provided by the organist will be provided at the music consultation. In keeping with the standards of the American Guild of Organists, those desiring to use the services of another organist will be required to pay a bench fee of the organist's normal fee to play a wedding ceremony. Such requests should be made well in advance of the wedding date so that orientation materials about the organ can be prepared and practice time can be arranged.

Printed Programs

Many couples choose to provide a printed program for their wedding ceremonies. The First Baptist Church offers professional-quality printing of your programs at a more affordable price than most professional print services. We offer two cover designs and require that the program stay in the house format. The Wedding Coordinator will make all necessary arrangements with the church secretary if you choose to use this service. This service should be scheduled at least sixty days prior to the ceremony date.

Couples may also choose to have their programs printed out-of-house.





The First Baptist Church

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