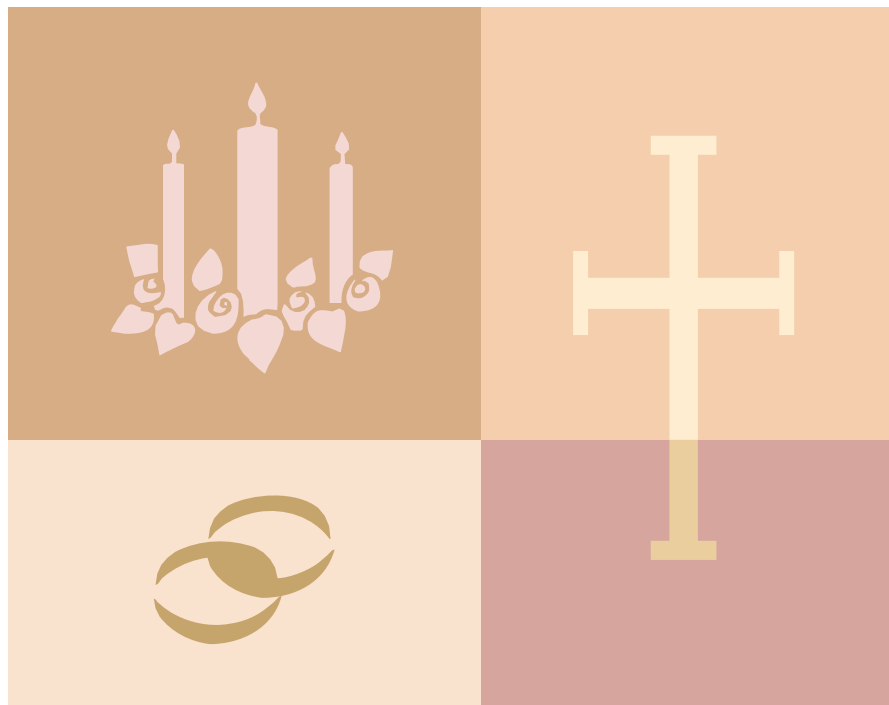




Good Shepherd Baptist Church

Building A Church ~ Developing A Community ~ Expanding Services ~ Impacting Lives



Procedures For The Celebration Of Holy Matrimony

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(804) 861-0216 Fax*

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to bring together in one place suggestions, practices and procedures relating to wedding ceremonies to be conducted at Good Shepherd Baptist Church.

A wedding is a happy and holy occasion. As two people join their lives to establish a Christian home, the church rejoices with them and is eager to help make the wedding reverent, beautiful and memorable.

Good Shepherd Baptist Church holds that marriage is instituted by God and is Divinely designed to be the rule and lasting foundation upon which the home and family are established. The church believes that the institution of marriage was sanctified by Jesus Christ with His presence at a marriage in Cana of Galilee and is commended by Saint Paul to be held in honor and respect by all persons.

Genesis 2:18 states, "And the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a companion who will help him."

Matthew 19:6 states, "Since they are no longer two but one, let no one separate them, for God has joined them together.

Ephesians 5:21 states, "For a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of his body, the church; he gave his life to be her Savior."

Weddings held at Good Shepherd Baptist Church shall be considered sacred, solemn and shall be conducted in a dignified manner in keeping with the precepts of the Bible and in the finest traditions of the Christian Church.

Therefore, every aspect of the marriage ceremony from premarital counseling through rehearsal and to the wedding ceremony itself shall be approached and conducted in that light.

With the exception of your relationship with Christ, this is the beginning of the most lasting relationship you will ever have. We share your excitement and look forward to serving you in excellence.

Message From The Pastor

Congratulations!

We are excited for you during this joyous time of planning your wedding! As you work out all of the arrangements for that special day in your life, your days will be both joyous and challenging. We want to help you in every way that we can to make sure your plans, dreams and preparations for your special day is all that you want it to be.

This policy manual is designed to help answer all of your questions and provide direction as you plan this special time. As we have grown in our Ministries, we realize that a written set of guidelines would be helpful and establish appropriate expectations between the couple and the church.

Your questions are welcome as you peruse the pages of this guide. Our Wedding Administrator welcomes any questions or concerns you may have. As with any guidelines, there may be some issues that are not covered or not clear. Our goal is to make your wedding at Good Shepherd a wonderful, meaningful and pleasurable experience.

May the Lord richly bless your life as you prepare for this next journey.

With warmest regards,

*Jeffrey L. Reaves Sr.
Senior Minister*

Message From The Wedding Services Administrator

Congratulations!

You're getting married and looking forward to a beautiful wedding. Your wedding will be one of the happiest most important days of your life. The institution of marriage is more than just a social contract. It is an act of worship where your vows are made not only to each other, but also to God.

As Wedding Services Administrator, I do not take the responsibility of your Wedding Directress, but I am the liaison designated to provide the necessary guidance to create an atmosphere that not only reflect your wishes but also glorifies God.

I provide assistance to ensure that the Bride, Groom, Family, and Friends enjoy a celebration of love and commitment that will provide memories you'll cherish for a lifetime, while ensuring the ceremony flows smoothly and maintains its sacred nature.

The true beauty of a wedding ceremony lies in the spirit and attitude of those participating. I pray that your wedding will be the beginning of many blessings as you begin your new life together.

Sincerely yours,

*Karen Watkins
Wedding Services Administrator*

Counseling

Premarital counseling is a prerequisite for couples who plan to be married at Good Shepherd Baptist Church. The Pastor requires at least two, but no more than three, Premarital Counseling sessions to be arranged through the Administrative Assistant. (_____) **Initial**

Minister of Music

Our Minister of Music is professionally trained and capable of guiding your wedding with elegance and spiritual solemnity. Our musicians will provide the following: Prelude, Processional, Two Songs, and a Recessional. **If you desire this service, a separate payment of \$125.00 is required and due at the wedding rehearsal.** (_____) **Initial**

Respecting the House of God

When entering the House of God, please enter with reverence. The church is a sacred and holy place and should be treated as such. The property of the church is to be respected at all times. The spiritual significance of your wedding day should be enhanced through the participants you choose and the guest you invite. We ask that all involved be respectful in their conduct, language and attire while on the Church property. We ask that upon entering the House of God that you would silence all mobile devices. (_____) **Initial**

Services Provided by the Wedding Services Ministry

The Wedding Services Administrator is your contact for Good Shepherd Baptist Church in the preparation of your wedding plans as well as being responsible for scheduling, coordinating and approving wedding arrangements. You will personally meet and communicate with our Wedding Services Ministry. You will be given a tour of the areas available for weddings and receptions, and be given all information needed to ensure that all activities are done in accordance with the policies and guidelines set forth. Someone from the Wedding Services Ministry must be present for the rehearsals and weddings held at our facility. (_____) **Initial**

Church Policies and Guidelines

- All candidates for marriage must have completed the premarital counseling.
- The date and time of the wedding are to be scheduled with the Administrative Assistant, **at least three months prior** to the wedding.
- Weddings will not have a confirmed date until a **refundable security deposit of \$250.00** is received. This will be returned to you within thirty days after the event if damage to the facility or breach of this rental agreement has **not** occurred. (_____) ***Initial***
- A **rescheduling fee of \$100.00** may be assessed if your wedding date and time are changed after **60 days** of confirmation. This change can only be made with the approval of the Wedding Services Administrator.
- All wedding forms must be signed by the bride and groom, submitted and approved **within 10 days of receipt**.
- The marriage license should be given to the Pastor or Wedding Services Administrator **at least one week prior** to the wedding.
- If either bride or groom has been previously married, a copy of their Divorce Decree must be given to the Wedding Services Administrator **at least one week prior** to the wedding.
- A copy of the wedding program should be submitted to the Wedding Services Administrator **at least 2 weeks prior** to the ceremony.
- All fees for services provided by the church must be received **30 days prior** to the scheduled ceremony. Fees may be paid by check, money order or cashier's check.
- Weddings may be held in the following locations: Sanctuary, Fellowship Hall, Theatre, Narthex and Pastor's Conference Room.
- The number of guest may dictate the location for your wedding.
- All formal weddings must be rehearsed prior to the wedding ceremony.
- All weddings must begin at the scheduled time.
- The wedding location is limited to **4 hours** (2 hours prior and 1 hour after for decorating, picture taking, etc.).
- Dripless candles, candelabras, unity candle holder, candle lighters, kneeling bench, guest register stand and aisle runner will be provided by the church and are included in the facility fee.

- The position of the video cameras during the ceremony must first be cleared with the Wedding Services Administrator.
- Photographers are requested to be professional and work to avoid distracting from the solemnity of the ceremony.
- Flower arrangements must be cleared with the Wedding Services Administrator. Wedding and reception decorations must be removed immediately following the ceremony. Any decorations that are not removed at the conclusion of the ceremony will become the property of the church.
- All deliveries must be coordinated with the Wedding Services Administrator.
- No tape, tacks, or any other sticky materials should be used to secure decorations.
- All areas must be vacated at the designated times following the rehearsal, wedding and reception.
- No rice, confetti, potpourri, or birdseed is to be thrown in or outside the building. Bubbles can be used outside the building only.
- The Bridal Lounge may be used by the Bride for dressing at the church. This area must be left in a neat and orderly manner with personal belongings removed prior to the ceremony. Please have someone designated to remove items. The church has additional areas where bridesmaids may use for dressing; however all belongings must be removed immediately after use. Curling irons, Blow dryers and Irons are prohibited.
- No food or drink is allowed in Sanctuary or Theatre at any time. All food must be consumed in the respective reception area.
- Smoking and use of alcohol on the premises is prohibited. (_____) *Initial*
- No weapons are allowed on the premises. If any individual participating in or attending the wedding is found with a weapon we have the right to evacuate the building. Your organization will also forfeit the \$250 deposit. Depending on the severity of the incident other charges may follow. (_____) *Initial*

Liability

The party to whom the facility is made available:

- Shall be held responsible for proper conduct of the persons in attendance, and for any undue wear and tear, damage to, or destruction of property. (_____) **Initial**

The Wedding Rehearsal

- Wedding rehearsals are generally held the day before the ceremony. Time and date should be scheduled with the Administrative Assistant. Anyone who has a role in the wedding should attend the rehearsal. The rehearsal should open and end with prayer, be sure to have someone designated. All participants are asked to be prompt for the rehearsal. You should plan to spend 2 hours for rehearsal. If rehearsal exceeds the designated time, there will be an additional \$50.00 fee for every ½ hour over. All mobile devices must be silenced during the rehearsal. (_____) **Initial**

The Wedding Ceremony

If attendants will be dressing at the church, please have them arrive 2 hours before the wedding. Groomsmen and Ushers should arrive 1 hour before the ceremony and should be dressed upon arrival. Ensure that someone is designated to remove all personal belongings prior to the ceremony.

- The ceremony will be considered one of worship.
- Dignity and reverence will dictate both content and order of worship.
- The musician selected should be qualified by their ability, training and musical taste.
- All musical selections must be cleared with the Wedding Services Administrator.
- All weddings will start at the designated time.
- Please refrain from removing and/or rearranging pulpit furniture, audio-visual equipment or musical instruments. (_____) **Initial**

Virginia Marriage License Information

The minimum age for marriage in the State of Virginia is sixteen years for both bride and groom. If either party is under eighteen, consent to the marriage must be given by the father, mother or legal guardian.

A license for marriage in Virginia is issued by the clerk, or his deputy, of the circuit court of the county or independent city of which either the bride or groom is a resident; or if neither the bride nor groom is a resident of Virginia, the license may be obtained in any county or city in Virginia. In either case, the ceremony may be performed elsewhere in the Commonwealth. Applicants must, under oath, furnish information required to complete the marriage record. The marriage must be performed within sixty days after the license is issued. There is no waiting period required between application and issuance of license. The fee is \$30.00 (\$32.50 in Henrico County) and no blood test is required. A copy of the marriage license must be signed by the wedding officiator with copies B and C returned to the Clerk's office where purchased. Refer to the numbers below for requirement and additional information.

OFFICES OF THE COUNTY CLERKS (in Petersburg vicinity)

Charles City 10700 Courthouse Road	(804) 829-9212
Chesterfield County (Chester) 9500 Courthouse Road	(804) 748-1241
Colonial Heights 401 Temple Avenue	(804) 520-9364
Dinwiddie 14103 Boydton Plank Road	(804) 469-4540
Goochland County Route 6 Patterson Avenue	(804) 556-5353
Hanover County (Ashland) Highway 301	(804) 537-6151
Henrico County Parham & Hungary Springs Road	(804) 501-7390
Hopewell 300 Main Street	(804) 541-2239
New Kent, New Kent Courthouse Route 249	(804) 966-9601
Petersburg, North Sycamore Street	(804) 733-2367
Powhatan 3880 Old Buckingham Road	(804) 598-5660
Prince George, New Circuit Court Building	(804) 733-2640
Richmond, 800 E. Marshall Street	(804) 646-6505

Virginia Divorce Decree Information

If a prospective bride or groom has been previously married, a copy of their Divorce Decree must be given to the Wedding Services Administrator prior to the wedding. Copies of Divorce Decrees can be obtained from the circuit court in the jurisdiction in which the divorce was granted.

A copy of a recorded Divorce Decree in Virginia, can be obtained in person at the appropriate Circuit Court's Clerk's Office or in writing (include names of both parties and approximate date or year decree granted and filed) for a fee of \$4.00. Call one of the numbers below for more information.

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Chesterfield County (Chester) 9500 Courthouse Road	(804) 748-1241
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