

# GUIDELINES TO HELP YOU PLAN A CHRISTIAN WEDDING SERVICE

The following “GUIDELINES” are not intended to be all-inclusive, but they cover most arrangements for a church wedding at Zion.

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### A. Church Office Contact

Contact the church office regarding the date and time you would like for your service at least **SIX months in advance**. Do this **before** you finalize arrangements for the location of your reception. (This is necessary because more than one wedding may be scheduled on the same day and there must be 2½–3 hours between start times.) For Saturday weddings, 1:00 p.m. is the latest start time because of preparations needed for the 5:00 p.m. worship service.

### B. Pastor Contact

Contact the pastor at least **SIX months** before your wedding service. At that time, he will make appointments with you for your Pre-Marital Counseling.

### C. Pre-Marital Counseling

Pre-marital counseling, which can take six months or more, is required for all couples to be married at Zion. There are generally 6-10 pre-marital counseling sessions. If pre-marital counseling is not completed, the wedding will not take place at Zion.

#### **D. Music Administrator Contact**

Contact the Music Administrator at the church office (894-2611) **at least SIX weeks** before your wedding to schedule an organist and select appropriate music for the wedding service. More guidelines in Section G.

#### **E. Wedding Coordinator**

The office staff will put you in touch with the wedding coordinator who will be able to answer many of your questions. She will also make sure the building is ready for rehearsal and the wedding service.

#### **F. Order of Worship**

The Order of Worship at weddings may take different forms: long and elaborate with congregational participation or brief and reverently simple. The pastor will work with you on the details. The following order is the most commonly used at Zion and it will give you a starting point for your discussion with the pastor. (Optional ideas indicated in parentheses.)

Procession  
Invocation and Prayer  
Scripture Lessons  
Wedding Sermon  
(Declaration of Parents)  
Mutual Consent  
(Declaration to and from Children)  
Marriage Vows  
Exchange of Ring(s)  
(Unity Ceremony) (Solo or Congregation Hymn)  
Pronouncement of Husband and Wife  
Wedding Prayers and Lord's Prayer  
Benediction  
Recessional

Also, solos and/or congregational singing may take place throughout the course of the worship service.

#### **G. Music**

##### **1. General Guidelines**

The music for ALL worship services at Zion is the responsibility of the Music Administrator. The Music Administrator will make all decisions regarding the music played before, during, and after the wedding service. Contact him/her to plan your music **at least six weeks prior** to the wedding, and music should be finalized no later than **three weeks prior** to the wedding. If these deadlines are not met, musical selections will be chosen by the Music Administrator.

The Music Administrator normally plays the organ (or piano or Clavinova) for weddings. At times when the Music Administrator is unavailable, he/she may suggest another organist. In exceptional cases, a guest may play in place of a congregational organist, but only if that person is qualified, trained, and capable of playing Zion's pipe organ. If none is available, we have appropriate wedding music on CDs. In all cases, however, the music policies of Zion will be observed. Because your wedding service at Zion centers on Christ, your musical selections should also center on Christ's love. It is important, therefore, to keep in mind that the appropriateness of the wedding service music should be judged on the basis of Christ's love and applied to all of the following areas:

## 2. Before and After Service Music

The organist will play appropriate music for 10-15 minutes before the service begins. Music from movies, popular songs, sentimental favorites, etc., **does not** usually enhance the worship that centers on the love of Christ. Such music is more suitable at the reception as special music of the bride and groom. Music for the processional and recessional must reflect the fact that this is a worship service. Therefore, the "Bridal Chorus" by Wagner is not acceptable due to its secular nature.

## 3. Music During the Service

Hymns...It is an excellent practice to have the congregation sing hymns at a wedding service. If you wish to use a hymn, the pastor will help you with the placement of hymns in the service.

Soloists/Instrumentalists...Music sung/played by a soloist/instrumentalist must also be approved by the Music Administrator. Consult with the Music Administrator to arrange necessary rehearsal time.

Any additional music needed to be purchased for musical accompaniment will be your financial responsibility.

## H. Unity Ceremony

Many couples are choosing to use sand or other items in place of the unity candle.

If purchasing a unity candle, check with the pastor and/or wedding coordinator to make sure the candle will fit our stand (bottom of candle must be drilled to 1/4" diameter x 3/4" deep).

## I. Wedding Vows

We generally discourage couples from writing their own vows. Doing so is difficult and can detract from the message of Christ's love for us reflected in the love of the couple. If you desire vows other than those provided, they must be approved at least six weeks prior to the wedding.

## J. Printed Order of Worship

A printed Order of Worship may be prepared, but it is not required. If prepared by Zion's office staff, fill out the Wedding Service Bulletin Request form. There is a \$40 fee and you will need to supply the bulletin covers.

Preparation time of at least two weeks before the ceremony is required. Proofing a draft copy is required. If using an outside source to print the bulletins, check with the pastor as to the content.

## K. Marriage License

The marriage license can be obtained 30 days prior the wedding and must be brought to the church office no later than one week before the wedding. Check with the County Clerk for license fees. After the wedding, the church office will mail the appropriate copy of the marriage license to the county clerk.

## L. Altar Flowers

If you wish to leave your altar flowers for the weekend worship services, notify the church office. **Flowers on the altar must be LIVE CUT flowers** as they are an offering to the glory of God. (Silk or potted flowers may be used in the chancel area.) If altar flowers have already been reserved for that weekend, your arrangement will be placed in the chancel after your ceremony.

## M. Aisle Runner/Aisle Candles

It is not necessary to use an aisle runner. If you do wish to use one (length 80 feet), you will need to supply it since the church does not have one.

Aisle candles are available for use on every other pew in the sanctuary. Refer to the Fee Schedule for the cost.

## N. Flower Girls & Ring Bearers

Flower girls and ring bearers that are quite young must be seated with a designated person after the procession.

## O. Rehearsal

It is important that everyone in the wedding party attend the wedding rehearsal. The organist is usually there, but soloists need not attend. Doors will be opened 30 minutes before time of rehearsal.

## P. Building Opening Time – Day of Wedding

Be sure to allow yourself enough time. It is a matter of courtesy to your guests that the wedding service begins on time. Doors will be opened 2 hours before time of service.

## Q. Pictures, Video and Audio Taping

It is permissible to take pictures of the wedding party during the processional and recessional. However, photographers and videographers are not to detract from the service and draw attention away from the words and music that give meaning and purpose to the wedding. Therefore, **NO flash pictures are to be taken during the wedding service**. The official photographer may take **non-flash** pictures from the rear of the church and/or balcony, **but no major movement should occur**.

Photos may be taken before or after the service. If pictures are taken in the sanctuary before the service, they must be completed 30 minutes prior to the beginning of the service. After the ceremony, photography must be completed by 3:30pm.

Videotaping may be done from the church balcony where a jack has been installed to directly plug into the sound system. The balcony position allows for panning in close or drawing back for a wider picture without heads obstructing the view.

Audio taping is possible through our sound system. If you want to have this done, notify the pastor well in advance.

## R. Throwing of Rice

Throwing of rice, birdseed, confetti, etc. is not allowed inside or outside the church. Bubbles are allowed **outside** of the church.

## S. Alcohol

No drinking is allowed on the church grounds, in vehicles, or within the church building on either rehearsal night or the day of the wedding.

## T. Prayer

If you want the pastor to have a prayer at the reception dinner, please discuss this with him.

## U. Other Congregational Facilities

If interested in the use of the school dining room for your reception, contact the school secretary (893-5793) for scheduling well in advance of your wedding; there is a fee.

## V. Fees

Fees for the aisle candles, wedding coordinator, organist, wedding bulletin, etc., are to be turned in to the church office three weeks prior to the wedding. If writing checks, a separate check should be made out for the organist, soloist, wedding coordinator, pastor, and church (2 checks are written for church; refer to the Fee Schedule).

## Building Usage

A wedding party is free to use a number of church areas for **preparation, dressing, and picture-taking**, but the office is not available for these preparations. Ministry Rooms A and B, the Ladies Lounge, and the nursery are normally available.

**Pre-wedding food and beverages** for the wedding party will be allowed but nothing more elaborate than fruits, veggies, and sandwiches. No alcoholic beverages are allowed in or on the church grounds or parking lot areas.

With the limited amount of time our wedding coordinator has to prepare the church for our Saturday worship service following a wedding, it is necessary that all bridal party belongings (clothing, make up, garment bags, etc.) be removed from the building 30 minutes before the wedding ceremony.

## Fee Schedule

Fees are to be paid THREE WEEKS before the wedding.

Separate checks should be written for: *Organist, Soloist, Wedding Coordinator, Church (2), and Pastor*

**NON-MEMBER CHURCH USAGE (\$250)** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**REFUNDABLE SECURITY DEPOSIT** (This deposit will be refunded within two weeks following the wedding if the building is left in acceptable condition, and the church's video patch cord has been returned if it was used.)

Member \$100 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Non-Member \$150 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### ORGANIST FEE

Standard \$100 or

If accompanying a soloist \$125 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**SOLOIST FEE** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### WEDDING COORDINATOR FEE

Standard \$150 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Aisle Candle Set Up \$90 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### CONGREGATIONAL FEES

Pre-Marital Counseling \$40 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Bulletin Printing \$40 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Aisle Candle Supply \$10 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**OPTIONAL PASTOR'S FEE OR GIFT** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Fees received by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_