

# Guidelines for the Service of Christian Marriage held at River Road Church, Baptist

## Introduction

***Congratulations on your engagement to be married!***

The ministers, organist and wedding director look forward to working with you as you prepare for the happy occasion of your wedding here.

In this booklet you will find a set of Wedding Guidelines, based on many years of experience with weddings at our church and a firm commitment to ensuring that each wedding at River Road Church, Baptist be a joyful and reverent worship service. These guidelines have been approved by the Board of Administration and the Facilities Use Committee.

***Please read and follow the guidelines carefully and refer to them during your months of planning.***

- ♦ The wedding service at River Road Church, Baptist is, first and foremost, a service of Christian worship.
- ♦ One of the ordained ministers of the staff of River Road Church, Baptist always officiates at weddings celebrated in the church building. Under extraordinary circumstances, determined by the pastor, other ministers may co-officiate. If another minister is approved to co-officiate, they must meet with the presiding minister prior to the wedding ceremony. The minister of River Road Church, Baptist must approve the order of service. Clergy will wear clerical vestments.
- ♦ **Members:** The couple may reserve the Sanctuary or the Chapel for the wedding and rehearsal dates only AFTER consultation with one of the wedding directors. A tentative clearance may be given by phone, but a final reservation can be confirmed only when the meeting with the wedding director has taken place and a deposit received. At that time the *Confirmation of Wedding Schedule* form will be returned to the church's wedding director, and the date will be entered on the church's master calendar
- ♦ **Non-Members:** The Chapel and Sanctuary are available for non-members. Reservations for non-members cannot be confirmed earlier than **six months** prior to the date chosen for the wedding. A confirmed date will be given to non-members only after:
  - there has been a consultation with the wedding director and organist;
  - the *Confirmation of Wedding Schedule* form and a deposit of \$25.00 have been returned to the wedding director.

The deposit is non-refundable after confirmation has been given for the wedding date. Non-member requests must be made no fewer than 30 days in advance of the date requested. ***A member of River Road Church, Baptist must sponsor non-members and the sponsor must attend the rehearsal and ceremony. The sponsor must know the bride or groom and not simply be a member of the family.***

- ♦ If the time or place of the wedding or rehearsal is changed after the *Confirmation of Wedding Schedule* form has been submitted, communicate these changes directly and in writing to the wedding director through the church office. This is critically important to avoid conflicting events on the church calendar and to insure that all relevant church staff arrive at the proper time.
- ♦ If the phone number(s) or address changes after you have submitted your application, notify the wedding director through the church office in writing.
- ♦ Certain dates on the liturgical calendar are considered by the clergy to be inappropriate for weddings. Weddings ***MAY NOT BE SCHEDULED*** on the following days:
  - Sunday
  - Advent through the New Year holiday
  - Holy Week (Palm Sunday weekend through Easter weekend)
  - Weekends of Chancel Choir Choral Concerts

- ♦ Reservations for weddings are scheduled on a “first-come, first-served” basis for members of River Road Church, Baptist, their children, stepchildren, and grandchildren.
- ♦ The Chapel seats approximately 125-150 persons and the Sanctuary will seat approximately 800 persons.

## **Advance Planning for the Wedding Service**

**License** – Marriages solemnized in Virginia require a license from a Circuit Court of a city or county of this Commonwealth. Couples are advised to make an inquiry of the court regarding requirements. By law, ministers cannot perform a marriage ceremony without a license, and it must be given to him/her at the rehearsal.

**Pre-Marital Conference** – A significant phase in preparation for the wedding is the conference of the minister with prospective bride and groom. A minimum of two pre-marital conferences is required. Please telephone the church office to make appointments for these conferences.

### **Music**

Organ music at all services in the Sanctuary or Chapel shall be rendered by the Organist of River Road Church, Baptist. In the event the Organist cannot play for the service, he must approve any substitute organist. He can be reached at the music office, 288-1131, and will arrange a conference to discuss with you a program of music to be used at your wedding. Engage his services as soon as your wedding date is cleared. The music, like the ceremony, should be a meaningful act of worship to God and should contribute to its Christian atmosphere. Adequate resources appropriate for the wedding service are available through the Organist of River Road Church, Baptist. He will suggest selections which can reinforce the dignity and reverence of your wedding. Music to be used shall come from sacred and classical sources.

### **The Wedding Director**

The church has available several very capable individuals from its membership, familiar with the facilities and procedures, who can assist you with planning details concerning the rehearsal and wedding. It is required that one of the wedding directors of River Road Church, Baptist direct your wedding for both member and non-member weddings.

### **Invitations**

When ordering invitations for your wedding, the suggested form is:

River Road Church, Baptist  
River Road and Ridge Road  
Richmond, Virginia

### **Photography**

Photographs should begin no earlier than 2 hours before the service is scheduled. If the bride and groom choose to have all pictures taken before the ceremony, additional time may be used before the service, rather than after the service.

Only time exposure photographs during the service by a professional photographer will be permitted from the balcony. Guests will not be permitted to photograph in the Sanctuary. A picture of the bride and groom as they leave the worship service may be made (with a flash, if desired) if the photographer does not enter the Sanctuary or the Chapel. This picture may be made from the narthex through the double center doors.

If the wedding party desires pictures to be made in the Chancel area, these may be staged up to 35 minutes prior to the service or immediately following the service.

Photographers may stay no longer than ***thirty (30) minutes after the conclusion of the service.***

Video cameras may be used to record the service if the following guidelines are observed:

- The equipment must be placed in the balcony.
- The equipment must not obstruct the view of the worshippers sitting in the balcony.
- No lights may be used.

- The videographer must not tap into the church sound system.

## **The Rehearsal**

The minister and the church's wedding director will be responsible for directing the wedding rehearsal.

The bride and groom will have filled out a *Wedding Director Information* form when they meet with the wedding director, prior to the time of the rehearsal. The minister and wedding director will use this information in directing an orderly and expedient rehearsal.

If all members of the wedding party are punctual, a rehearsal should take no longer than one hour. If all key participants have not arrived within 30 minutes after the appointed time for the beginning of the rehearsal, the minister will depart, and the rehearsal will be cancelled. (However, we can always accommodate for an occasional missing attendant!)

## **Role of the Wedding Director**

At the rehearsal, the wedding director will be present to tell members of the wedding party where to stand, to instruct the ushers, to assure that all participants (wedding party and family members) get in and out of the church at the appropriate time, and in other ways assist the minister and the wedding party.

On the day of the wedding, the wedding director will be present 1 to 2 hours prior to the service to help with any other unforeseen difficulties, and to get the members of the wedding party into the church in proper order and on time.

Since the wedding director has done many weddings at River Road Church, Baptist and is familiar with all aspects of church policy and procedure, it is unnecessary for the family to hire a wedding director. If you are working with a wedding director and feel you must have her at your wedding, she will work under the direction of the River Road Church, Baptist wedding director assigned to your wedding. Our wedding director, ministers and organist are accustomed to working together, and things go more smoothly when the church's wedding director is in charge.

## **Guest Book**

We discourage the use of guest books before the wedding service since they may cause delays in seating and congestion in the narthex.

## **Wedding Bulletins**

It is suggested that wedding bulletins be used, and the following statements ***must*** be printed in a prominent place in the bulletins:

- Photography is not permitted in the Sanctuary.
- Videography is permitted only from the balcony. No additional lighting may be used.
- Please turn off all cell phones and pagers.

## **Children Attendants**

- ◆ Children must be ***FIVE*** (5) years of age to participate in a wedding service at River Road Church, Baptist.
- ◆ The nursery facilities may be used for small children if special arrangements are made through the church office or our wedding director. Arrangements for adult supervision of the children must be made by the bride, and not the church.
- ◆ Because flower petals can stain flooring or carpet when crushed underfoot, only silk petals may be dropped in the aisles by flower girls.

## **Elements of a Wedding Service**

### **Precautions and Limitations**

- ◆ Please arrange to have at least one usher or groomsman per 50 guests.

- ♦ The church facilities will be available for decorating by a florist no more than 4 hours prior to the time of the wedding service.
- ♦ No nails or screws may be driven into the walls, floors, or furnishings.
- ♦ Aisle cloths are not allowed.
- ♦ No theatrical lighting shall be used nor any other lighting than that which is already a part of the Sanctuary or Chapel lighting system.
- ♦ No material of any kind may be thrown by members of the wedding party or your guests, including, but not limited to, birdseed, rice, flower petals, confetti, or soap bubbles, either in the church buildings or on the church grounds.
- ♦ If the family wishes to leave the wedding flowers for use in worship on the Sunday morning following the wedding, arrangements should be made upon confirmation of the wedding. An acknowledgement will be placed in the Sunday bulletin.
- ♦ To avoid conflicts with other groups who might be simultaneously using the facilities, please be certain that all activities scheduled for the wedding day, e.g. arrival of the florist, decorating the Sanctuary or Chapel, photographs before and after the service, etc., are scheduled through the church office and Wedding Director.

## **On the Day of the Wedding**

The wedding party may arrive at the church **no more than two hours before** the start of the wedding.

The bride and her bridesmaids may dress for the wedding in the room off the Chapel Narthex, known as the “Bride’s Room.” This room is to be used whether the wedding is in the Sanctuary or the Chapel.

## **Decorations**

- ♦ Instructions are available at the church office for you to give the florist regarding decorations.
- ♦ The following must not be moved:
  - Religious symbols (i.e. cross, candles, etc.)
  - Communion Table
  - Flower Pedestals
- ♦ Candles and Candelabra: The church owns four standing brass candelabra and a unity candle stand that may be used for weddings. The candelabra hold seven candles each and the unity candle holds three candles. The one-inch base candles, 15" long, can be purchased from the church. The church at no cost supplies the large candles used on the reredos.
- ♦ Fresh greens are always on the tables in the narthex of the Sanctuary and silk arrangements are on the tables in the narthex of the Chapel. Should you desire something other than these, you may provide other appropriate arrangements.
- ♦ Brides may use the altar flowers at no charge or may pay a \$50.00 enhancement fee to have larger arrangements. These are left for the Sunday memorial flowers.
- ♦ Wedding altar flowers may be left for use by the church on Sunday and will be distributed to our shut-in members. However, unless you have made arrangements for the wedding flowers to be used as Sunday memorial flowers, you are encouraged to take them for use at the reception.
- ♦ Potted palms or plants placed on the floor shall be placed in containers to prevent damage from moisture. Plastic must be placed under plants. Palms and anything belonging to the bride must be removed immediately following the ceremony.
- ♦ River Road Church, Baptist provides a Wedding Committee whose members prepare the Sanctuary or Chapel for the wedding. It is the bride’s responsibility to notify the church office of the date and time the church is to be decorated, allowing time for the Wedding Committee to be notified.

- ♦ Someone designated by the Wedding Committee is to be present when the decorating occurs to serve as a resource person and to help interpret the rules of the church.
- ♦ Woodwork and walls must be protected from marring or soiling. No scotch tape, tacks, staples, wire or nails may be used.
- ♦ No outside decorations such as bows on the lampposts or railings, or wreaths on the doors may be used. Nothing is to be attached to or hung from the wall sconces. Nothing is to be attached to the altar rail.
- ♦ Nothing in the altar area is to be higher than the cross (flowers, candles, etc.)
- ♦ No candles are allowed in the bridesmaids' bouquets or in the narthex.
- ♦ Floral arrangements done by an outside florist must be delivered intact and not arranged on site.

## Receptions

Receptions in the church may be arranged with the following specifications:

- ♦ The Chapel Hall or Fellowship Hall may be used for receptions.
- ♦ The bride's family will be financially responsible for breakage of any equipment.
- ♦ Nothing is to be placed on or in the grand piano on the stage in Fellowship Hall.
- ♦ The services of the sexton or housekeeper *do not include* dish washing or serving, unless special arrangements are made separately.
- ♦ Outside caterers must furnish all equipment, dishes, serving pieces, flatware, and paper products. There shall be no preparation of food in the church's kitchen by a professional caterer unless prior to the reception the church has on file a certificate of liability insurance which covers the person/organization that is preparing the food for a minimum of \$1,000,000 general liability insurance.
- ♦ The use of alcoholic beverages is not permitted on church premises.
- ♦ No use of tobacco products is allowed inside any of the church buildings.
- ♦ If desired, secular and popular music may be performed in Chapel Hall or Fellowship Hall. Dancing is permitted.

## Planning Your Wedding with the Florist

In order for your wedding to be happy and memorable for you, we at River Road Church, Baptist would like for you to go over these procedures and specifications with your florist. Please keep this for your information. We will send a copy to your florist.

Because the church facilities are made beautiful for the worship of God, simplicity in decorating is encouraged.

- ♦ Someone from the Wedding Committee will contact the florist at least two days prior to the wedding to establish a time to meet at the church.
- ♦ The following may not be moved:
  - Religious symbols
  - Communion Table
  - Flower pedestals
  - Candles
- ♦ Doorways may not be blocked, including the doorway to the organ console.
- ♦ Nothing is to be placed within the choir stalls.
- ♦ It is not permissible to use nails, tacks, tape that leaves sticky residue, uncovered wire, etc., as these things could damage the pews, walls or woodwork.
- ♦ Receptacles containing palms or other greenery must have plastic placed under them to protect floors.
- ♦ Damp floral arrangements must be placed so as not to damage the furnishings.

- ♦ When using the church candelabra, plastic will be placed underneath.
- ♦ Candles will be purchased through River Road Church, Baptist.
- ♦ Candles cannot be used in the narthex or in the bridesmaids' bouquets. No candle holders at the end of the pews may be used.
- ♦ The florist must remove his/her decorations immediately after the wedding so that the Sanctuary or Chapel can be readied for the next service.
- ♦ The florist will be expected to leave the Sanctuary or Chapel as neat as he/she found it.
- ♦ Florist arrangements done by an outside vendor must be delivered intact and not arranged on site

# Fee Schedule

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Member Fee</u>	<u>Non-Member Fee</u>	
Sanctuary	\$ 200	\$ 1500	
Fellowship Hall with Kitchen	\$ 125	\$ 400	
Fellowship Hall without Kitchen	\$ 75	\$ 300	
Chapel	\$ 100	\$ 750	
Chapel Hall with Kitchen	\$ 75	\$ 150	
Chapel Hall without Kitchen	\$ 50	\$ 100	
Assembly Room	\$ 50	\$ 100	
Classrooms	\$ 25	\$ 50	
Reception Room	\$ 30	\$ 75	
Fellowship Hall Kitchen	\$ 50	\$ 100	
Courtyard	\$ 75	\$ 200	
Commons Area(s)	\$ 25	\$ 50	
 <b><u>Wedding Fees</u></b>			
Minister	\$250	\$350	---
Minister of Music	\$250	\$350	---
Wedding Director	\$250	\$350	---
Sound Operator	\$125	\$125	---
Candles	\$ .40 each	\$ .40 each	51501
Unity Candle	\$6 each (3 needed)	\$6 each (3 needed)	51501
Flower enhancement	\$ 50	\$ 50	83001

*(Member fees apply to parents, children, grandparents or grandchildren of current church members who have been members at least one year at the time they reserve the wedding date on the calendar.)*