

## **Weddings and Receptions:**

### **General Policy**

A decision to marry is one of the most important decisions a man and woman can make. We believe that the wedding ceremony is one of the most sacred events of the Church. It is not simply a gala social event, but is a spiritual occasion in which a man and a woman invoke the blessings of God upon their union.

### **The Wedding Ceremony (Members)**

All couples that desire the use of the Church buildings for weddings must contact the church office prior to contacting one of our licensed ministers or the Pastor/Interim Pastor to perform the marriage ceremony. If the ministers noted above are unable to perform the ceremony, you may request assistance from our church staff or ministerial staff in locating a minister to perform the ceremony, if desired.

A couple who are members of the Church and desiring to use the Church facilities for their wedding should secure a "Request for Use of Wedding Facilities" form from the Church office (page attached). After reading this policy and after premarital counseling session(s) with the Pastor/Interim Pastor or delegated Minister, this form should be completed and returned to the Church office.

Premarital counseling is encouraged prior to the wedding. Therefore, the bride and groom (members) are encouraged to attend premarital counseling prior to marriage with the Pastor/Interim Pastor or ministers of his/her choice at the time the wedding date, rehearsal, decorations, are placed on the calendar. Couples who are non-members of the church are exempt from premarital counseling sessions with the Pastor or Interim Pastor

Weddings may not be scheduled on the first Sundays or at other times which conflict with our regular worship services and previously planned Church activities. Weddings or wedding receptions may not be scheduled on the following days: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. Reservations for non-members will not be accepted more than 60 days before the wedding in order to give priority scheduling to Church members.

**Strict adherence to the scheduled timeline for the wedding/rehearsals is very important.** Evening weddings should not begin later than 3:00pm and should not exceed two (2) hours. All rehearsals will be scheduled to start during church business hours or no later than 5:30pm except on Wednesdays and the week of the wedding. The rehearsal/decorations should not exceed the scheduled timeline of two (2) hours listed on the Wedding Request Form.

#### **A. Onsite Contact Person**

A trustee designee will be assigned to your wedding and reception. This applies to ALL weddings. This person will provide any assistance needed and direct guests to designated areas.

#### **B. The Wedding Rehearsal**

The minister representing the Church is always in complete charge of the wedding ceremony.

Wedding service companies, wedding coordinator(s), photographers and other persons associated with the wedding must confer with the minister in charge of performing the wedding ceremony concerning all plans.

The rehearsal shall begin promptly at the time scheduled. Delay in beginning rehearsal consumes the

time of the minister, musicians, soloist, and the Church personnel and adds to the expense of lighting, heating, and/or air conditioning. The bride and groom must insist that all members of the wedding party arrive at least one (1) hour prior to the rehearsal time on the date of the wedding. **All members of the wedding party must be prompt for the rehearsal and for the wedding.**

The following suggestions will guide you as you prepare for the wedding rehearsal, but the Pastor may vary these suggestions:

1. The bride and groom in conjunction with the minister will schedule the time of the rehearsal at the time of reservation. The rehearsal time must not exceed one (1) full hour.
2. All members of the wedding party are requested to be present thirty (30) minutes prior to the rehearsal time.
3. The following list should be completed by rehearsal time. This will aid the minister and bridal consultant:
  - a. Names of attendants and the order in which they are to stand.
  - b. Names of candle lighters, if any.
  - c. Names of the ushers who will seat the mothers.
  - d. Number of family pews to be reserved.
  - e. Number of grandparents to be seated.
4. The marriage license should be delivered to the minister in charge on the date of the rehearsal.

#### **The Wedding Ceremony (Non-members)**

A decision to marry is one of the most important decisions a man and woman can make. We believe that the wedding ceremony is one of the most sacred events of the Church. It is not simply a gala social event, but is a spiritual occasion in which a man and a woman invoke the blessings of God upon their union.

Non-Church member wedding parties shall be assessed a fee for any damages or cleanup of any kind that is caused by them or their guest. A wedding is a Christian ceremony of worship and celebration. A Church wedding is a sacred occasion and the music should be in keeping with the reverence that is observed upon entering the House of the Lord.

#### **C. Wedding Costs**

\$250 for members

\$400 for non-members

#### **D. The Reception**

The Church's facilities are available to the wedding party for a reception. Receptions may be held only in the Fellowship Hall/Family Life Center (Old Sanctuary). The Church makes facilities available but a caterer must provide everything necessary for the reception and must leave the kitchen and building in the condition in which it was found.

The caterer may request a specific time for the reception area to be opened for preparation of the



reception. This specific time must be listed on the Wedding Request form and must be adhered to.

The caterer is responsible for cleaning and washing all utensils and accessories used in preparing for the reception. The Maintenance Supervisor is only responsible for cleaning the kitchen floor and the restrooms in the reserved areas. All decorations and special equipment provided by the florist or caterer must be removed immediately after the reception.

As the bride and groom prepare to leave the Church, reasonable care should be exercised to guarantee the safety of persons on Church property. Throwing of birdseed or rice inside any parts of Church or any excessive debris left from decorations in the building is prohibited.

#### **Reception Costs:**

\$150 for members

\$300 for non-members

#### **E. Building Use**

The Church cannot be responsible for personal items brought to the Church for use in the wedding or in the wedding reception. The Church is not liable for lost, stolen, or damaged items. Every reasonable effort will be made to assist the wedding party in the protection of such property.

The wedding party, their guests, florists, caterers, and others assisting in the wedding are responsible for exercising reasonable care in the use of Church facilities and equipment. The following guidelines should be followed:

1. Nails, tacks, staples, pins, containers of any of kind of liquid, glass vases, glitter or anything which can damage the woodwork or walls cannot be used. Packing tape must not and cannot be used; however, thin masking tape may be used.
2. Before any furnishings are moved, please consult with the Church office or Trustee designee.
3. No candles or other decorations shall be used within the seating area.
4. Only wrapped wire or ribbon that will not mar the chairs shall be used to fasten bows.
5. If tapers are used, caution must be taken to prevent wax damage to Church furnishings and carpet.
6. The wedding party is expected to remove all decorations and equipment immediately and place all furnishings (example: chairs/furniture in the choir stand or the pulpit area.)
7. Dancing is not permitted in the Church facilities.
8. A protective covering must be placed on the floor under any candelabra used. Dripless candles must be used.
9. The Church properties must be left in the condition in which it was found. The bride and groom are responsible for any damages to Church property occurring in connection with their wedding.

Non-church members and church members must abide by all rules and policies of Mt. Zion Baptist Church by signing a Facilities Use Request form regarding payment of the fees to the Church. The required fees must be paid when the request is submitted and the request form is submitted to the trustee designee.

Honorarium for the Pastor or officiating minister is left to the discretion of the Bride and Groom. Gratuities for musicians or other accompanists should be arranged with the musician(s) prior to the rehearsal and wedding.

#### **F. Photographers (Bride and groom must inform your photographer about these rules)**

1. The photographer may take pictures before or after the ceremony in any part of the building, if time permits. The photographer may take a flash picture of the bride and her escort as they start down the aisle and the bride and groom as they leave. The wedding party may return to the Church sanctuary prior to the reception. If the couple desires a picture with the minister, this should be taken first in order to free the minister for other obligations. Members of the bridal party should discourage friends and relatives from taking pictures during the ceremony and ask the officiating minister to inform wedding guests with cameras of the request.

2. Time exposures may be made from the back of the sanctuary during the progress of the service. Pictures are permissible before and after the recessional. The photographer is cautioned to make sure that no noise is involved in the making of the time exposures, changing of film, etc., during the service.

3. The photographer may take pictures before or after the ceremony in the narthex of the Church. The bridal party may reassemble in the sanctuary after the ceremony to pose for any parts of the ceremony or to take any other wedding picture desirable.

4. As a courtesy, the photographer should check with the officiating minister in charge concerning additional instructions. The photographer is cautioned about marring the furniture by standing on or by placing camera equipment on the chairs or furniture of the Church. The photographer will be held responsible for any damages so caused.

5. Wedding ceremonies may be videotaped. The videographer shall locate the video camera on a stand in a place agreeable to the officiating minister. No excessive lighting can be used.

#### **G. Kitchen**

A request to use the kitchen facilities must be granted prior to the use of the kitchen if a reception is being held. A clean up committee must be appointed to make to work with the caterer or wedding coordinator to ensure that the kitchen is left in the condition it was found.

#### **H. Scheduling the Reception**

If the wedding reception is held at Mt. Zion Baptist Church, it must be scheduled and listed on the Wedding Reception form (APPENDIX B) when the wedding reservation is made. The trustee designee will confirm arrangements prior to the wedding. Receptions will be held in the Fellowship Hall/Family Life Center (Old Sanctuary).

#### **I. Alcoholic Beverages**

No alcoholic beverages can be brought or consumed on the Church property.

#### **J. Smoking**

No smoking is allowed on any parts of the Church property or its premises.

## Appendix D

### Wedding Application Form

Bride Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Present Address \_\_\_\_\_

Church Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Groom Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Present Address \_\_\_\_\_

Church Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Rehearsal Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time: From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_

Wedding Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time :From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_

Reception Date \_\_\_\_\_ Time:From \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_

Minister \_\_\_\_\_

Wedding Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Music: Pianist \_\_\_\_\_ Vocalist \_\_\_\_\_

Florist \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Caterer (if reception being held at Mt. Zion) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Photographer \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Church Facilities Desired:

Wedding: Sanctuary

Reception: Fellowship Hall Family Life Center (Old Sanctuary) Overflow Room

This wedding is: by invitation only \_\_\_\_\_ open to all (please check one) \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Request Approved by Trustee Designee: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Costs for Non-Church members is \$400 \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_