

Myers Park Baptist Church

WEDDING GUIDELINES

Weddings at the Myers Park Baptist Church are religious ceremonies and should be planned by the same guidelines that are applicable to all services of worship in this church. The choice to be married at the Myers Park Baptist Church implies the choice of our traditions.

As an expression of the importance of Christian worship and as a way to enhance the dignity and beauty of your wedding, the Myers Park Baptist Church follows these guidelines under the direction of both the Senior Minister and the Wedding Director.

- I.** All persons who are to be married in the Myers Park Baptist Church may participate in the marriage preparation that is provided by the church.
- II.**
 - A.** The ministers and organist of the Myers Park Baptist Church officiate at all wedding ceremonies in the church unless the Senior Minister grants exception. The wedding ceremony will be interpreted in a meeting with the Senior Minister before the ceremony occurs.
 - B.** When a guest minister shall officiate, these guidelines should be observed: The minister shall be robed unless it conflicts with his/her tradition. The church has robes available if needed. Otherwise, dress shall be appropriate to the occasion. Wedding processions at our church traditionally form in the narthex and proceed down the center aisle. This provides for the most effective coordination of the wedding party during the procession. Weddings at Myers Park Baptist Church are religious ceremonies; as such, popular secular practices such as unity candles, announcements such as "I now present Mr. and Mrs.____," or others are discouraged as distractions from the worshipful nature of the service.
- III. The Wedding Director**
 - A.** will be available for interpreting and answering questions regarding guidelines as needed.
 - B.** is in charge of the rehearsal along with the Senior Minister. All wedding participants should be on time for the rehearsal.
 - C.** should be consulted on all decorations prior to the wedding and, with the Chair of the Altar Group, will advise concerning placement of flowers.
 - D.** must be advised if children are to participate in the wedding ceremony. It is preferred that children be no younger than six years of age.
- IV. Music**

The selection of wedding music should be made in keeping with the worshipful nature of the wedding celebration. Musicians and music selections are to be approved by the Music Group of the church through the Minister of Music or the Organist and should be requested at least 60 days prior to the wedding date.
- V. Use of Facilities**
 - A.** Myers Park Baptist Church does not rent its sanctuary for weddings. Only members* of the church, or children or grandchildren of members, may be married in the church unless granted special permission by the Senior Minister.

**Member of MPBC means an active member for a period of at least three months before application for a wedding date will be accepted. Application may be made after this three-month period.*

- B.** The following regulations for weddings are designed to guide the applicant in the use of the sanctuary and to protect the physical property from abuse. We encourage dignified simplicity in church decoration because the purpose of this decoration is to enrich the worshipful atmosphere of the sanctuary, always being conscious of the harmonious balance between decorations and the spiritual significance of the wedding ceremony. The decorations should not distract the eye from the altar where the religious vows are affirmed and beauty and holiness are joined in a setting of reverent dignity for the spiritual blessing.
1. Still photography in the sanctuary, with or without flash, is not permitted during the wedding ceremony. Please inform your guests ahead of time. Ushers should discourage guests from using cameras during the ceremony. Photographers must be informed of this regulation. Photographers may take pictures during the ceremony from the balcony only, provided no flash is used. Photographing after the ceremony should be completed within fifteen to twenty minutes. Since our custodian is under contract to you, additional time for their services will have to be compensated.
 2. Video photography is allowed provided that it does not interfere with, nor distract from, the ceremony itself. An acceptable position for a video camera is in a fixed position in the balcony. The camera must be battery-operated.
 3. Additional photography guidelines are as follows:
 - a. All photography in the sanctuary or narthex must be terminated upon arrival of wedding guests.
 - b. All photography in the bride's dressing room area must be concluded fifteen minutes before the beginning of the service.
 - c. All photography during the ceremony must take place from the balcony. A small, remotely-operated video camera may be used in the chancel if it is not visible from the congregation. The wedding director will make this decision.
 4. Other than those carried by the bride and attendants, the only flowers that are acceptable in the sanctuary, narthex or exterior, are fresh flowers placed by you or your florist on the altar. The maximum height of a single arrangement for the altar in the sanctuary is 45", width 47". The single container is 15" L x 7½" W x 6" D. Or, your florist may use the rectangular ceramic container (8" x16") for a single arrangement. If two arrangements are used, the arrangements may not exceed 48" from the base to the top of the flowers. The two brass urns are footed and are 15" high – they are 3 ¾" in diameter and 8" deep (#4 mache liners will work). Maximum height of an arrangement for the altar in the chapel is 24", width 26". No part of the floral arrangement may touch the altar cloth or frontal. Presentation of flowers to parents during the ceremony is discouraged. During the season of Advent, the Advent wreath and paraments may not be removed from the altar. The Altar Group would appreciate the use of your flowers for the following Sunday's worship service with recognition of this gift in the printed order of worship, if scheduling permits.

5. Candles other than the altar candles shall be limited to seven- or thirteen-branch candelabra furnished by your florist and are to be placed in the chancel on either side of the steps leading to the altar. To prevent dripping, candles must be fitted with tips provided by your florist. Garlands of greenery may be entwined on the base of the candelabra. Candles on the altar will be lighted by the church custodian or by appropriately trained acolyte(s) prior to the arrival of the guests and will be extinguished by the custodian or acolyte(s) after the ceremony. Reserved pews may be marked only with reserved markers provided by the church.
6. Because guest registries inhibit the seating of guests, they should not be used at the church. Registries are more appropriate at the wedding reception.
7. Smoking, eating and drinking are not permitted in the sanctuary building.
8. Animals (except for guide animals) are not permitted in the sanctuary or as a part of the service. Flags or weapons are also not permitted in the sanctuary.
9. The minister shall dismiss guests after the parents and grandparents have been escorted out. Dismissing pew by pew is not permitted.

VI. Fees

All fees, other than those for special musicians and orders of worship, are billed through the Wedding Director and are payable two weeks in advance of the wedding.

VII. Scheduling

A. Weddings may not be scheduled on Sundays.

B. Weddings may not be scheduled on the following holidays:

New Year's Day
Holy Week (Palm Sunday through Easter)
Labor Day weekend
Thanksgiving Day
Christmas Eve
Christmas Day

The Senior Minister must approve all weddings in December.

C. Only one wedding per day is desired. Exceptions must be approved by the Senior Minister.

VIII. The date for your wedding is not reserved until you return the signed forms to the Senior Minister's Assistant. The hour for the wedding must be set before the form will be accepted, and can be changed only by permission of the officiating minister and the availability of the church.

The enclosed agreement must be signed by both of the betrothed, and returned with the reservation form in order for your wedding to be scheduled.