

WEDDINGS



Fellowship
Fayetteville

DEAR BRIDE & GROOM

One of the great joys of Fellowship Bible Church is the opportunity to be a part of the uniting of two believers in the Biblical covenant of marriage. For the benefit of all parties involved, we have developed this policy and planning guide to help make the wedding ceremony a beautiful celebration of unity and worship.

Many years of experience, hundreds of weddings, and Biblical directives are the basis for these policies and procedures. Our goal is to serve you and answer any questions you might have concerning this important day in your life.

The Elders, Ministers, and Staff of Fellowship Bible Church

NOT A CONTRACT:

This document is not a contract nor is it intended as an offer to contract. This document includes some of Fellowship's requirements and guidelines for weddings and related events. It is not intended to address all aspects of your wedding and related events. This document may be modified at any time at the sole discretion of Fellowship. Fellowship reserves the right to refuse service to anyone for any reason. Fellowship reserves the right to impose additional requirements and restrictions in connection with any wedding or related event.

OUR MARRIAGE PHILOSOPHY

From the beginning, God created man and woman with the intent that they be joined in marriage forming an inseparable union— “. . . the two shall be one . . .” —so that they might complement each other, fulfill life for each other, and give to each other what each lacked. God Himself created men and women and designed the beautiful marriage relationship. Therefore, He knows what best builds a happy and successful marriage. Fellowship believes that marriage is between a man and a woman, as defined in the Scriptures. We require that those desiring to be married at Fellowship be in good standing and not living in a state of willful disobedience in contradiction to Fellowship Bible Church core beliefs and practices. We cannot marry or allow the use of our facilities for couples who are living together, are of the same gender, or are not qualified to be married because of previous circumstances. Your sponsoring Fellowship Minister must determine if you and your fiancé meet Fellowship’s criteria. In the Scriptures, we find basic principles which must be understood and put into practice if we hope to experience fulfillment and joy in our marriages. Ignoring these spiritual principles will result in disappointment, hurt, frustrations, and ultimate failure in the marriage relationship. As a church, we are committed to building strong, healthy marriages. Because of that purpose, desire, and commitment, we cannot marry couples that are in violation of these basic principles, which will work against their prospects of having a successful marriage.

It should be clearly understood that there is a difference between the legal aspects and the spiritual aspects of marriage. A civil officer may perform the legal requirement of a marriage license. However, a wedding conducted in the church is a public act of worship. The blessing of God is asked upon the marriage union. Therefore, a wedding conducted in the church is more than meeting legal requirements. We have a responsibility to the Scriptures when we consider the basic principles of marriage.

The following statements reflect our commitment to scriptural fidelity, and any of these situations would hinder us from performing a marriage ceremony. These statements are made for clarity and are stated to avoid confusion and misunderstanding.

WE WILL NOT MARRY A COUPLE IF . . .

...one person is a Christian and the other is not. (II Corinthians 6:14-15)

...the couple is currently living together. However, if they are willing to make separate living arrangements, we are happy to continue the pre-marital process.

...the couple is involved in an ongoing sexual relationship. (See your officiating minister for wisdom and counsel.) In the case of a pre-marital pregnancy, Fellowship requests the pregnancy be disclosed to the sponsoring and/or officiating minister.

...there has been a previous marriage and divorce where there were no Biblical grounds for that divorce. (Matthew 5:32; 19:3-9)

...either person does not have the blessing of their parents. (The age of the person or some other circumstances may alter this consideration.)

...either person is under the influence of alcohol or drugs (other than prescribed by a doctor) during the wedding, reception, or rehearsal. (Note: Any member of the wedding party that is under the influence of alcohol or drugs will not be permitted to participate in the wedding ceremony or festivities.)

...the couple is of the same gender (homosexual). We do not perform same-sex marriages or same-sex unions.

...the couple is not willing to complete the prescribed pre-marital counseling sessions as required by the sponsoring or officiating minister.

...either person (in the couple) is living in a state of willful disobedience or is not in good standing with the church.

We do not perform marriages between more than one man and one woman, between a parent and child, or between siblings. We do not perform marriages in which one or both is under the legal age in the State of Arkansas or if your sponsoring minister determines that one or both are too spiritually immature to enter into such a commitment.

Before a non-Fellowship Minister may officiate a wedding at Fellowship, Fellowship must review that request via your sponsoring minister. If you have further questions regarding these issues, please speak to your sponsoring minister (or if you don't have a sponsor yet, you may contact any Fellowship Minister for help).

MOST COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. *Do I have to be a member in order to use Fellowship facilities for my wedding?*

Answer: We allow the use of our facilities to:

- current members of Fellowship.
- those in the process of becoming members through enrollment in pre-membership classes.
- those who currently attend Fellowship regularly and qualify for membership.

2. *What is required of a couple to be married at Fellowship?*

Answer: We require that your wedding is sponsored and approved by a Fellowship Minister and that you participate in pre-marital counseling by either your sponsoring minister, Fellowship's Care Center, or another person approved by your sponsoring minister. We also require that you are living in good standing and not living in a state of willful disobedience in contradiction to Fellowship Bible Church core beliefs and practices. We cannot marry couples who are living together, are of the same gender, or are not qualified to be married because of previous circumstances. Your sponsoring minister must determine if you and your fiancé meet Fellowship's criteria.

3. *Do you require a deposit?*

Answer: A \$200 deposit is required to secure your reservation. Tentative reservations may be made without requiring a deposit, but must be confirmed with your Fellowship Wedding Coordinator to secure the date. Failure to pay the deposit and confirm the tentative date may forfeit the use of the facility. If the wedding is canceled, deposits are refundable if the bride has had no more than one meeting with her Wedding Coordinator.

4. *Who can marry us?*

Answer: Any Fellowship Minister is eligible to perform your ceremony. Please contact the minister of your choice before setting a wedding date to assure the minister's availability. You may use an outside minister pending approval of your sponsoring Fellowship Minister.

5. *Is a Fellowship Wedding Coordinator required?*

Answer: Yes, we require that you use one of our approved Fellowship Wedding Coordinators to prepare for and plan your wedding. You will need to meet individually with your assigned

Wedding Coordinator to fill out the required paperwork, pay your deposit, and determine facility and personnel requirements for your wedding. Once this is complete and all paperwork is turned in, you will receive official notification that your wedding has been approved. **Only after you are officially notified will your date be secure and you may begin planning your wedding with a set date and time.**

6. *What are the basic fees and costs to have my wedding at Fellowship?*

Answer: Fellowship Bible Church absorbs much of the wedding facility costs for your wedding. The amount you pay out of pocket is about half of the actual cost of labor, utilities, setup, and cleanup for your wedding event. That said, here is what you can expect to pay. For a basic wedding with no reception, the fee is \$475. Fees increase with the addition of other facilities and personnel and there may be additional costs for pre-marital counseling materials. A specific breakdown of fees is found later in this document.

7. *How extensively may I decorate for my reception or wedding?*

Answer: Only what can be taken down and removed the same day as your wedding. Any additional equipment or decorations must be rented and paid for by the wedding party. All food, gifts, personal items, and extra items must be removed immediately following your wedding or reception. Existing items cannot be removed for the purpose of decoration without prior approval.

PLANNING YOUR CEREMONY

To begin planning your ceremony, you must contact the **Connections Ministry at Fellowship at 479-659-3699** and the **minister** you wish to perform and/or sponsor your ceremony. Contact the minister of your choice to secure his availability (don't assume he is available to perform your ceremony until you have spoken with him and confirmed the date!).

The Connections office will check the current wedding schedule and the church calendar for the availability of the date you desire to be married. Weddings are scheduled on a first-come, first-serve basis. All possible wedding reservations are tentative until approved by our staff.

A copy of this policy will be forwarded to the requesting party for review. After reviewing the philosophy and procedures for conducting a wedding at Fellowship, you should contact the Wedding Coordinator assigned to you. Only after the paperwork is filled out with your Wedding Coordinator and a deposit is given will the dates be finalized for approval.

Follow these steps:

1. Contact the Connections office for available dates (479-659-3699).
2. Contact the Fellowship Minister of your choice to secure his availability or to gain his sponsorship for your wedding.
3. Review this Wedding Guide.
4. Contact your assigned Wedding Coordinator to set up your first appointment and to fill out reservation forms and submit them (see the Wedding Planning Checklist on the last page).

YOUR WEDDING COORDINATOR

Our Wedding Coordinators are familiar with Fellowship's policies and procedures and can facilitate a smooth and enjoyable event. Coordinators are paid a fee for their services to the church and to the bride and groom (this fee is included in the facility fee). Their inclusion in the planning and conduct of the wedding is required by Fellowship.

When you contact your Wedding Coordinator, she will schedule a meeting to discuss and complete the necessary Wedding Facility Request form. This is an essential step. The form is then sent or delivered to:

**Fellowship Bible Church NWA—Attn: Connections/Weddings
3447 North Highway 112, Fayetteville, AR 72704**

Upon receipt of your request, it will be forwarded to appropriate ministers and staff for notification and approval. Upon approval, the wedding will then be officially scheduled on the Fellowship church calendar and the requesting party will be notified in writing that their request has been approved. After receipt of this official "Notification Letter" from Connections, the bride and groom can confidently plan and begin making preparations for their wedding at Fellowship.

Your Wedding Coordinator will then schedule approximately three (3) follow-up meetings (this can vary) with the bride to discuss, plan, and assist with certain aspects of the wedding preparations. Any final questions or concerns should be addressed with your Wedding Coordinator. **Please Note:** If you wish to tour one of our Fellowship facilities in order to plan your wedding, you will need to make an appointment with your Wedding Coordinator to assure that the facility is available, that doors are unlocked, etc. Drop-in tours are not available.

At the conclusion of the last meeting, your Wedding Coordinator will notify appropriate staff of their involvement in the upcoming ceremony. *Questions or assistance of any kind relating to the wedding ceremony should always be directed to the assigned Wedding Coordinator.*

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

The following are a few of the items that should be noted or considered during the planning process:

- * Wedding invitations should not be ordered until you have received the Notification Letter from the Connections office confirming your date. We require notification of your requested date a minimum of 90 days prior in order to secure your date and process your application. If it is any time less than 90 days prior, we cannot guarantee availability of all facilities.
- * **RICE IS NOT ALLOWED.** Please talk to your Wedding Coordinator about other options.
- * A facility deposit is due upon submission of the Wedding Facility Request papers.
- * All remaining fees are due at the last scheduled meeting with your Wedding Coordinator.
- * Your marriage license must be obtained from the county clerk and brought to the rehearsal for your officiating minister to complete.
- * No smoking, alcoholic beverages, or dances are allowed on the church campus. (A dance with the groom and/or father of the bride at the reception is allowed.)
- * Since you are planning a church wedding, all wedding attire for the wedding party should be chosen with the setting in mind (please avoid unsuitable or revealing attire for the wedding party). Discretion is advised.
- * Discuss with your officiating minister what he will wear. Fellowship Bible Church of Fayetteville provides a robe at no cost for the officiating minister. Should you choose the minister to wear a tuxedo/formal wear, it is the responsibility of the groom to pay for this cost.

PRE-MARITAL COUNSELING

Pre-marital counseling is a vital part of our marriage philosophy at Fellowship Bible Church. We place high priority on getting to know each of our couples and helping them develop a healthy and strong Biblical marriage foundation. Building a strong foundation is what will help couples prepare for a lifetime together. Pre-marital counseling is required for any couple being married at Fellowship or by Fellowship Ministers.

Objectives

1. To assist in the marriage decision and the timing of that marriage. (You do not have to be engaged to participate in pre-marital counseling.)
2. To help develop a Christ-centered marriage.
3. To explore various factors that influence marriage.
4. To help develop realistic and reasonable expectations.
5. To provide practical tools that enhance a healthy marital relationship.
6. To help in the development of healthy communication patterns and conflict resolution skills.

Format

Pre-marital counseling consists of an average of six one-hour sessions, optional financial counseling, and other suggested tools. There is the option of being assigned a marriage mentor couple for your first year of marriage (subject to availability).

Homework is an extremely important aspect of pre-marital counseling. Couples will be assigned homework after each session to help provoke thought and to prepare you for the next session.

Cost

The fee is \$50 per couple for the pre-marital counseling which includes materials.

Pre-marital Counseling Outside of Fellowship:

If a couple is being married by a Fellowship Minister but is receiving their counseling outside of Fellowship, this counseling needs to be approved by their sponsoring/officiating minister. If an outside minister is performing your ceremony, he must be approved by Fellowship staff.

FACILITIES

The church has two facilities that may be utilized in one way or another. We will attempt to work with you, but be aware that we are limited in what we can offer.

The Worship Center



The Worship Center Foyer



The Worship Center

Fellowship Fayetteville's Worship Center is primarily used for Worship on Sunday Mornings. Therefore, this facility is available on a very limited basis. We are only able to accommodate weddings in this facility that are larger than 200 in attendance. The complex is laid out with three main aisles and seating in four sections to accommodate a maximum of 1200 attendees. The stage encompasses an orchestra area with a 40-foot center stage area in front. This facility is equipped with a vast array of lighting and audio/video capabilities. Cost is \$650, with an additional charge of \$400 to clear the stage. Additionally, the Worship Center requires two techs to navigate the abundance of equipment regardless of the complexity of the ceremony. Therefore, an additional \$275 will be charged. In short, there will be a \$1325 minimum charge for the Worship Center.

The Worship Center and the Worship Center Foyer are also available for receptions when the ceremony is held in the Worship Center. The Foyer can accommodate approximately 300 people at round tables. Fellowship Fayetteville will allow the use of tables seating 120 people. Any additional seating will need to be rented and delivered by the wedding party and removed prior to the party leaving the facilities. The back section of the Worship Center can accommodate up to 14 round tables seating 140 people.

The Student Center

The Student Center Auditorium is the primary facility we use for Weddings on Fridays or Saturdays. We can seat around 250 people in this facility. Fellowship Fayetteville currently has chairs for 120. If the wedding is to seat more than 120 people, chairs will need to be rented by the wedding party. These chairs will need to be removed from the facility with all other decorations prior to the party leaving the facility. Cost for a wedding ceremony at this facility is \$475.

The Student Center



The Student Center can accommodate approximately 120 people at round tables. Cost for a reception in the Student Center Auditorium is \$325 or \$175 if the ceremony is held in a Fellowship Fayetteville facility.

AVAILABILITY

Priority usage of the buildings is first and foremost for ministry activities and the preparation for them. Weddings and their associated activities (facility preview, planning, rehearsals, decorating, dinners, receptions, ceremonies, and clean up) must be scheduled around those priority ministry activities. Weddings are conducted on a first-come, first-serve basis and are considered scheduled when approved and when you have received an official Notification Letter from the Connections office. A Notification Letter will be generated by Connections to advise the contact person for the bride and groom that their “date” and facility request is approved. It should be noted, approved requests are for the specified date, time, and location requested.

Changes, even seemingly minor, must be confirmed with your Wedding Coordinator and the Connections office (479-659-3699) so as not to interfere with other planned activities. Changes in facilities or dates will result in loss of deposit fees.

SCHEDULING

All scheduling requests must be indicated on the “Wedding Facility Request” form. Your Wedding Coordinator will fill out this document and forward it to Connections. A deposit is required and must accompany the facility request.

- * SCHEDULING RESTRICTIONS—check with your Coordinator for availability pending staff approval.

DECORATING

You are responsible for communicating these details to your florist/decorator. Decorating times must be annotated on the Facility Request form so that the facility can be reserved for you during those specified times on the church calendar. You can only decorate during the reserved times given to you. You or your florist/decorator may decorate the facility to suit your tastes and desires with the following limitations and restrictions:

- * Flowers cannot be arranged on-site.
- * All decorations must be removed from rooms immediately after the ceremony. (This is to allow custodial staff to prepare for other events that often follow weddings.)
- * Real candles are not permitted.
- * When feasible, only custodial staff should move church furnishings. Ensure you plan ahead and make arrangements for all furniture movement or relocation through your wedding coordinator. A detailed plan should be in place to ensure all items are returned to their original position. Fellowship can choose to leave all furnishings in place if it is deemed the time and expense to Fellowship staff is unreasonable.
- * No drapery item or covering may be attached to either the wood or the wall coverings inside any facility.

- * Fellowship Displays artwork from individual members of the Spectra ministry, As these art pieces are property of the individuals and do not belong to Fellowship, we are obligated to leave them in place until retrieved by the owner. If you do not wish to include the art work in your decorations, you are free to place pipe and drape over the entire display to hide it as long as it does not interfere with the integrity of the art itself.
- * While it is permissible to make use of the permanent booths in the foyer, there are items that are installed in some of these booths in a manner that makes it unfavorable to move them for a single event. Therefore, these items will not be moved or adjusted to accommodate decorations, food service, nor entertainment.

WEDDING REHEARSAL

The rehearsal date, as well as, start and stop time must be annotated on the Facility Request form so that the facility can be reserved for you during those specified times on the church calendar. This is the only way to ensure your rehearsal time. Due to the ongoing worship schedule at Fellowship, rehearsals are not guaranteed for the night before weddings. Your coordinator will need to schedule appropriate times with the church staff.

Your officiating minister will be notified of your rehearsal and will advise you on ceremony protocol. If you have other events either preceding or immediately following the rehearsal, it may be appropriate to coordinate this with your minister through your Wedding Coordinator. Please allow at least an hour from the beginning of the rehearsal to the end (and note the time for a rehearsal dinner to start). For large weddings and weddings with children, please allow an hour and a half.

Ensure all music to be used during the wedding ceremony is available to your Wedding Coordinator one week prior to the wedding rehearsal for approval by ministry staff. Music should be given to the audio/video technician and/or your Wedding Coordinator prior to commencement of the rehearsal.

PHOTOGRAPHY

We highly recommend that you take all wedding party and family pictures PRIOR to the ceremony. Doing so will expedite your reception so that your guests will not be kept waiting. Flash pictures are NOT permitted during the ceremony. Non-flash pictures taken during the ceremony should be done from the back of the room. Please inform your photographer as well as your guests.

Video recordings are encouraged, but we do suggest the camera be placed discretely, and camera operators must be dressed appropriately as not to distract from the worshipful atmosphere. (Your Wedding Coordinator will offer suggestions as to camera placement.)

Audio recordings of your ceremony are made as a courtesy of the church.

MUSIC

Your wedding ceremony should be viewed as a celebration of worship, honoring God for bringing two lives together as one. Your music should reflect Christ and your love for one another. All music and presentation video are subject to Fellowship staff approval. Fellowship staff must specifically approve all secular songs. Your Wedding Coordinator is available to assist you in choosing music, instrumentalists, and soloists.

Classical instrumental music is permitted and may be played by CDs, tapes, and/or live. A "Technical Requirement Form" must be filled out by your Wedding Coordinator to initiate this option.

Elaborate or detailed Audio/Video requests or requirements may dictate the usage of an additional A/V technician. When this occurs, an additional fee of \$100 is charged.

WEDDING POLICY REGARDING MUSIC & DANCES FOR RECEPTIONS

Music for receptions should follow the same guidelines as weddings held at Fellowship. In essence, the music should reflect Christ and the couple's love for each other. In this same spirit, we only allow formal or Father/Daughter dances. "DJ" type dances are not allowed. For further clarification, please check with your Wedding Coordinator for specifics regarding acceptable styles of music/dances for receptions at Fellowship.

SETUP AND CLEANUP

Preparation of Fellowship facilities for all wedding events are conducted by the custodial staff. This staff is responsible for setting up items (such as tables, chairs), moving furniture items, cleanliness, and resetting all items and conditions to normal church layout at the conclusion of the event.

Fellowship requires the users of the facilities to utilize our staff for set up, clean up, and for technical support. Due to the value of equipment and the frequent use of the buildings, we cannot make exceptions.

The custodial staff is not responsible for decorative items or assisting with floral arrangements. Some items may not be moved. Please consult with your Wedding Coordinator before moving anything.

Because of the frequent use of the facilities, certain time restrictions on setting up and cleaning will apply to all events. This is especially true on Saturday events because of Sunday morning services.

The users of the facility will be expected to remove ALL food, decorations, containers, etc., from the facility immediately after use.

DELIVERIES AND ACCESS

Access to facilities should be pre-arranged in order to avoid delay. Coordinate access to the building for your wedding through your Wedding Coordinator.

DOS & DON'TS

Do . . .

- * Use designated changing rooms/staging areas for men and women.
- * Have secular music approved by your Wedding Coordinator.
- * Ask permission for unusual/extraordinary events, features, segments, or accommodations.
- * Remove everything you bring into the church by the appropriate time.
- * Use your Wedding Coordinator as your liaison with the church for the specifics of your wedding arrangements.

Don't . . .

- * Order invitations until your date and time are approved, your wedding is placed on the church calendar, and you have been notified in writing as such.
- * Move the musical instruments on stage.
- * Stack anything in front of the fire exits, alarm boxes, fire extinguishers, or exit doors.
- * Donate food to the church by just leaving it in the refrigerator.
- * Plan to decorate after a rehearsal dinner.
- * Invite decorators, coordinators, or other assistants to just show up at the church anticipating it will be open and accessible for their inspection (it won't be without a prior reservation).
- * Use real candles.

FEES & DEPOSITS

The charges associated with a wedding are primarily to cover the overhead associated with this type of event such as paying your Wedding Coordinator and technicians for their service. These fees do not cover all costs. As our gift to you, Fellowship is covering some of these costs. An event deposit is required at the time the Wedding Facility Request form is turned in. An event deposit of \$200 is required at the time the wedding facility request is turned in if the total cost has not been paid in full. Additional fees may be charged for excessive clean up or damaged or lost Fellowship property. Fees include the services of the required Fellowship Wedding Coordinator. The following are the amounts required.

EVENT TYPE & FEE

Wedding: Worship Center	\$650
Additional cost for clearing stage (if desired) and setup	\$400
Sound and Lighting Tech (Wedding only).....	\$275
Wedding: Student Center.....	\$475
Reception or Rehearsal Dinner	
Separate facility (Student Center or Foyer).....	\$175
Same facility	\$125
Stand alone	\$375
Sound and Lighting Tech (Non-Worship Center venues)	\$100

MINISTER FEE: Fellowship Ministers do not charge a fee for officiating a wedding. However, it is customary for the groom to give the minister an honorarium to express appreciation for the time and concern given above and beyond the minister's normal work load.

CHANGING OR CANCELLATION OF DATES

If at any time during the process a decision is made to modify a date or time of an event, notification via your Wedding Coordinator is essential. Every effort will be made by Fellowship staff to accommodate your desires and wishes for your wedding plans while maintaining the worship schedule. After you have received your Letter of Confirmation and all areas are signed per your request, changes are discouraged as it effects other ministries.

If a decision is made to cancel a confirmed wedding date, a letter to Connections from the bride or groom will need to be submitted. Deposits are refundable if the bride has had no more than one meeting with her Wedding Coordinator prior to canceling the reservation.

FACILITY WEDDING PLANNING CHECKLIST

- 1. Have downloaded and reviewed this Wedding Guide.
- 2. Have contacted the Connections office (479-659-3615) to check facility availability and tentatively have reserved desired date or dates.
- 3. Have contacted the Fellowship Minister of your choice and confirmed his availability to perform your ceremony or to sponsor your wedding.
- 4. Have secured a Fellowship Wedding Coordinator
Name: _____ Contact info: _____; and have scheduled to meet with her (first meeting).
- 5. Have enrolled in pre-marital counseling by calling 479-659-3657.
- 6. Have met with my Wedding Coordinator and filled out facility paperwork and paid a deposit to secure the facility of my choice.
- 7. Have received Notification Letter confirming approval of facilities requested (takes approximately three weeks).
- 8. Have waited until Notification Letter was received before ordering invitations.
- 9. Have had second meeting with my Wedding Coordinator after date is approved to set up future plans.
- 10. If outside pastor or minister is selected, have secured permission and approval from the sponsoring Fellowship Minister.
- 11. If I wish to tour a Fellowship facility, I have contacted my Wedding Coordinator to set up an available time **(no drop-ins allowed)**.
- 12. Have paid all remaining fees that are due to my Wedding Coordinator before rehearsal.
- 13. Have made sure all flowers are being arranged off site.
- 14. Have planned for and ensured that all decorations, flowers, and food will be removed off campus at the conclusion of the wedding (must be done immediately, same day, no exceptions).
- 15. Have secured with my Wedding Coordinator the exact times needed for decoration and preparation in my reserved facility or facilities (including rehearsal times).
- 16. Ensured that my Wedding Coordinator has all music or media for approval by staff at least one week prior to my ceremony.