

Wedding Handbook
First Baptist McKinney

Preparing for your Wedding

Congratulations to both of you on having made one of the most important decisions of your lives! Some would say THE most important decision of your life, but the biggest decision of life is to trust Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior. It's out of that relationship that all other relationships find their meaning. Nowhere is that more true than in the marriage relationship. The purpose of marriage is to unite a man and woman in a relationship signifying the two become one (Genesis 2:18-24). This oneness is not only a physical, emotional, and purposeful unity, but a spiritual one.

Here at FBC McKinney we are committed to helping couples prepare, not just for a wedding, but for a marriage. In fact, we believe this is our responsibility before God. The wedding is a prelude to the marriage that will follow. All of the ministers here at FBC McKinney are committed to working with you to see that your wedding is worshipful, memorable, and Christ-centered. We will make every effort to accommodate your individual requests that are in keeping with this goal.

Our prayer for you during this special time in your lives is that you would not miss the joy of growing deeper and deeper in your relationship with God and with each other. We hope you will not miss the joy and the peace that comes only from Him during this busy time of preparation. It is important that you read over this entire Pre-marriage Application and the Wedding Handbook carefully. May God continue to bless you as you look to Him to plan, not just for a wedding, but for a marriage!

Helping build strong marriages,

FBC McKinney Ministerial Staff

Wedding Application

Because First Baptist Church, McKinney is passionately committed to Christ and His teachings, we want you to fully understand what the church values about the design and sanctity of marriage. Marriage is one of the most important commitments any person will make in their lifetime. Your choice to get married at FBC McKinney is more than just a beautiful room or place to have your wedding ceremony. By choosing to get married at FBC McKinney you are choosing to make a personal commitment to abide by Gods intended design for relationships and marriage (see appendix 1). You are committing to start your marriage on a firm foundation that consists of the following values:

THE VALUE OF GOD’S DIVINE PATTERN FOR MARRIAGE.

- We believe that God designed the act of marriage and a part of His grace is to lead a man and a woman to fall in love and be married for life.
- We believe the wedding is an act of worship where the groom and bride stand before God and witnesses to exchange life-long vows of commitment to each other.

Genesis 1:27-28; 2:18, 21-22; Mark 10:6-9

THE VALUE OF A CHRIST-CENTERED MARRIAGE.

- We believe that a marriage should only take place between a man and a woman who have a personal commitment to Christ as Savior and Lord. (See Appendix 1)
- We believe both the Groom and Bride should be able to give evidence of their current and consistent commitment to grow in Christ-likeness.
- We believe marriages that have Christ as the center of their home, have a greater opportunity to experience longevity and true happiness in their marriage.
- We believe that each couple should be active members of an evangelical church in the community where they live.
- We believe that God’s purpose for marriage is oneness. True oneness only comes through a spiritual relationship with Christ.

John 3:16; Genesis 2:23-24; 2 Corinthians 6:14

THE VALUE OF THE TOTAL PREPARATION OF THE COUPLE BEFORE MARRIAGE.

- We believe that each couple needs to be as prepared as possible before they come to the altar to be married. **Thus, it is our policy to require all couples who are being married at First Baptist McKinney to complete the following:**
 1. Pre-Wedding Conference in which the couple meets with one of the First Baptist McKinney ministerial staff to affirm this pre-marriage covenant and to have the minister approve your wedding application.
 2. Complete 4 - 6 **in-person** pre-marital sessions with one of our pre-marriage mentor couples. (see Appendix 2)
 3. Take the PREPARE Inventory. The PREPARE inventory will be used by the pre-marriage mentors to help you understand the realistic expectations for marriage and to help you identify growth and strengths areas of your relationship.
 4. Each person will complete the book *Preparing for Marriage* by Dennis Rainey as this will also be used in discussion with your pre-marriage mentors.
 5. The cost of the pre-marriage mentoring process is \$65.00 per couple.
 6. Providing time with the FBC McKinney minister that will perform your wedding. The minister is responsible to discuss the spiritual aspects of marriage as well as plan the details of the wedding ceremony.
 7. If a NON-FBC MCKINNEY MINISTER is officiating your wedding service and you wish to do the pre-marital counseling with him or through your home church, we would just need to confirm with them that they are offering a similar type of pre-marital counseling process before approving your wedding application.

Ephesians 3:17-19; Romans 12:1; 2 Timothy 3:16

THE VALUE OF EXCLUSIVENESS AND PURITY OF LOVE THAT EACH PARTNER HAS FOR EACH OTHER.

- We believe that sex is a God-given drive in each partner to be satisfied in a God-given way – through marriage.
- We believe it is not God’s intention for anyone to either participate in a sexual relationship or to cohabit with someone outside the confines of marriage.
- We also believe it is not God’s design for a marriage partner to participate in sexual relations with anyone other than their marriage partner.

Matthew 5:27-28; Hebrews 13:4

THE VALUE OF A GROWING MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP.

- We believe that the wedding is only the beginning of marriage, not the culmination of marriage.
- We believe it is the responsibility of each partner to encourage and support each other in becoming a fully devoted follower of Christ.
- We believe it is the responsibility of the church to provide a wide variety of opportunities for marriage partners to enrich their marriage through workshops, retreats, and individual classes targeted toward marriage. (see Appendix 3)

Ephesians 5:22-33; 1 Thessalonians 5:11

THE VALUE OF GOD'S GRACE AS EXPRESSED THROUGH HIS SON CHRIST.

- We believe that marriage is for life, but understand that not all marriages continue for life.
- We believe in God's grace to bring healing and restoration to individuals that experience a divorce.
- We believe that through God's forgiveness and His leadership, one can experience marriage again.

NOTE: Couples who have been formerly married should be advised that following a divorce there is a minimum waiting period which will be determined by our Pastor/staff before remarriage. Counsel and support are available in order to provide a strong foundation for future relationships.

1 John 1:9; Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 4:16

WHO MAY PERFORM WEDDINGS AT FBC MCKINNEY

Members of FBC, and all others who may desire the use of the church for weddings, are invited to request our Pastor or the licensed/ordained minister's on the staff to perform the marriage ceremony.

Those who prefer to use a minister who is not on staff of FBC McKinney should submit a request at the time of the pre-wedding conference. This request is subject to the approval of the pastor/ministerial staff of First Baptist Church. Should a minister of another church officiate at your wedding, it will be your responsibility to advise him of the wedding coordinator's responsibilities and acquaint him with all of the procedures and instructions in the wedding covenant and the wedding handbook.

Please remember that no matter who performs your ceremony, no fee is charged for services of the minister and the minister is not compensated by the church. Therefore, an appropriate honorarium for the minister is appreciated.

SETTING THE DATE OF YOUR WEDDING

It is necessary for the bride and groom to read and complete the Wedding Application and to read the Wedding Handbook.

- Wedding date approval will come only after you complete step 1, 3 & 5 under *the value of the total preparation of the couple before marriage* section.
- Approval of wedding dates will not be made more than nine (9) months for church members, or six (6) months for non-members, prior to the wedding date.
- After approval, the necessary deposit will be made to the wedding office to secure that date.
- Within a few days you will receive the name of your wedding coordinator.
- The deposit is not refundable if the wedding is canceled less than thirty (30) days prior to the wedding date.
- Remember that putting this date on the church calendar does not automatically reserve this date on the minister's calendar. Be sure that you also confirm your wedding date with your officiating minister.
- No weddings may be scheduled that will conflict with church services or church events.
- No weekday weddings may be held in the Worship Center prior to 7:00pm.
- Saturday weddings will begin no later than 5:00pm since all of the church facilities are used on Sunday morning and must be set-up after the building is cleared. We do allow weddings at 6:00pm ONLY IF ALL pictures are taken BEFORE the wedding (this includes pictures of the bride & groom together)
- Wedding rehearsals, weddings or wedding receptions are **not** scheduled **on the following days/holiday weekends: Sundays, New Year's Day, Good Friday, Easter, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day:**

FOR CHURCH MEMBERS ONLY:

Pending availability of required personnel, wedding rehearsals, weddings or wedding receptions will be considered for the following holiday weekends: New Year's, Memorial Day, Independence Day & Labor Day. Holiday fees will be time and a half.

APPENDIX 1

First McKinney's Core Beliefs

We welcome all who desire to worship Christ with us. As you join us in worshipping Christ, here are the Core Beliefs that form the essence of our faith, teaching and practice.

- **We believe in one triune God, eternally existent in three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.** *Matthew 28:18-19, 2 Corinthians 13:14, Hebrews 1:1-4*
- **We believe in the full deity and full humanity of Christ.** *Philippians 2:5-8, Luke 2:40, John 1:1-5, Hebrews 4:15*
- **We believe in the ministry of the Holy Spirit who indwells every Christian's life for the purpose of living a God-reflective life.** *John 16:7-11, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 4:30*
- **We believe the human race is sinful and separated from God and therefore must experience the work of Christ by faith in order to have a relationship with God.** *Romans 3:10-20, Ephesians 2:1-3, 1 Colossians 1:13-14*
- **We believe that marriage is the uniting of one man with one woman in a Biblical covenant relationship for a lifetime.** *Genesis 1:26-28; 2:18-25, Matthew 5:31-32, 19:3-9, 1 Corinthians 7:1-16, Ephesians 5:21-33, Colossians 3:18-21*
- **We believe in the substitutionary atonement of Christ.** *Romans 5:6-9, Galatians 3:13-14, Philippians 3:8-11*
- **We believe in the authority and inerrancy of Scripture.** *2 Timothy 3:16, Romans 15:4, 2 Peter 3:1-2*
- **We believe that the church is the body of Christ and is to be about His work of making disciples of Christ in the world.** *Ephesians 1:15-23, Matthew 28:16-20, 1 Corinthians 12:12-31*
- **We believe that water baptism by immersion and the Lord's Supper are the only ordinances of the church.** *Matthew 28:19, Luke 22:14-23, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26*

If you have any questions about what we believe as a church, please contact us at info@fbcmckinney.com or call the church office 972-542-0041.

APPENDIX 2

YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH A MARRIAGE MENTOR COUPLE

Throughout history, mentoring has been the primary means of passing knowledge and skills in every field and every culture. It is certainly a concept that you will find through the Bible and older, experienced generation mentored younger, inexperienced people so they might not only grow spiritually, but also help them avoid pitfalls that have been learned through experience.

Because of our values and beliefs about marriage, we assign a marriage mentor couple that will meet with you and counsel with you before the wedding date. The couple will be responsible to review your PREPARE Marriage Inventory and share insights about yourself that have been revealed through your taking of the inventory and the couples completion of the Preparing for Marriage book by Dennis Rainey. Not only will they share the results of the inventory, but here are some other expectations you can have from your mentor couple:

- ☞ They will be sharing timely information with you, especially insights and counsel as the result of reviewing your PREPARE Inventory.
- ☞ They will model various aspects of marriage for you. By the time your relationship with the mentor couple has come to its conclusion, you will have seen an example of what it is to have a relationship with both Christ and your spouse.
- ☞ Hopefully, as they share their own marriage experience, they can lessen your anxiety by normalizing experiences you will have in your marriage. More than likely, each crossroad you come to has been walked by someone else before.
- ☞ The mentor couple can help you set short and long term goals for your marriage. .

At the same time you can expect certain things from your marriage mentor couple. We also want to help you understand what a marriage mentor couple is NOT:

- ☞ They will not be your father or mother. They don't need any more children to raise, and you don't need another set of parents to raise you.
- ☞ They are not a mentor couple for you throughout your marriage. They will have a definite role in preparing you for marriage. This does not mean that you will not develop a relationship that may carry on for years, but we are only asking them to commit to a mentor relationship for the period of up to a year.
- ☞ They are not "on call" for every little crisis. Their time is limited to discussion about major situations, not minor ones.
- ☞ Our mentor couples are not "know-it-alls." They will be assisting you out of their own experience, not from professional training. If you are in need of professional counseling, the church will be glad to provide you with the name(s) of highly-trained, Christian counselors who can help you.

We know you will enjoy the relationship and wisdom that our marriage mentor couples will provide you at this critical time of your preparation for marriage.

APPENDIX 3

SUGGESTED READING MATERIALS

The following books are recommended resources to help you build and strengthen your marriage commitment:

Staying Close

By Dennis and Barbara Rainey

I promise

By Gary Smalley

The DNA of Relationships

By Gary Smalley

Two Friends in Love

By Ed and Carol Neuenschwander

Communication: Key to Your Marriage

By Norman Wright

Intended for Pleasure

By Ed Wheat

The Act of Marriage

By Tim LaHaye

For Better or For Best (for women)

By Gary Smalley

What Wives Wish Their Husbands Knew About Women

By James Dobson

Love for a Lifetime

By James Dobson

His Needs, Her Needs

By Willard F. Harley, Jr.

Love Busters

Willard F. Harley, Jr

Five Love Languages

By Dr. Gary Chapman

FIRST BAPTIST
CHURCH MCKINNEY

WEDDING
APPLICATION

