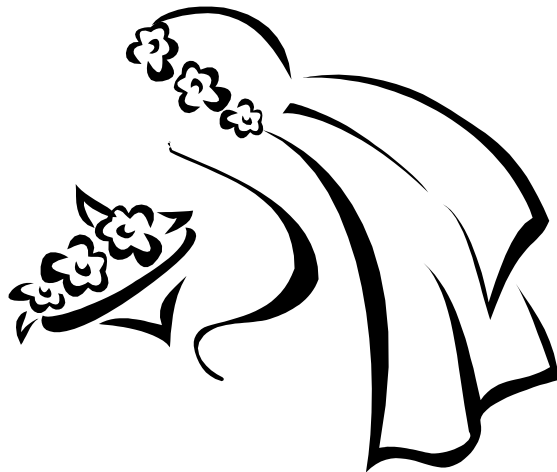


Wedding Handbook

Grace Baptist Church

Hudson, MA

Updated 2008



*“For this reason a man will leave his
father and mother and be united to his
wife, and the two will become one flesh.”*

Ephesians 5:31

Notes

Notes

Congratulations on your approaching wedding!

We believe that marriage is a holy sacrament, ordained by God. The ministerial staff is committed to helping you as a couple to prepare for this lifetime experience. We can best do this by serving those of the Grace Baptist congregation who have been regular attendees, as well as those who might come in from the community wishing to grow in their Christian life, and who have attended the church for at least six months prior to their marriage. Because relationships are important, relationship to Christ, relationship in marriage, and relationship with us, we feel the need to know a couple well before officiating at their wedding.

This booklet is meant to assist you as you approach a very special time in your life, your Christian marriage. A group of caring people stands ready to assist in making your wedding a wonderful time to share with family and friends the happiness you will experience on this special day.

Enclosed is a *Wedding Information Questionnaire* and an *Agreement for the Use of the Facility*. Please fill these out and return to the church. Once received, the Sanctuary will be scheduled for the approved wedding date.

What To Expect During Marriage Preparation

At Grace Baptist Church we are committed to helping you prepare for your lifelong marriage. We require each couple to participate in the following opportunities in preparation for this joyful event:

1. Pre-Marriage Class – A free, six-week class held quarterly on Sunday mornings. This class is led by Rock and Monya Griffin, who have been involved in Marriage and Family counseling for a number of years.
2. Pre-Marriage Pastoral Counseling – Each couple will meet with the officiating minister 4 – 6 times before their wedding. This time is personalized to the individual couple, Biblical, practical for marriage, instructional, as well as used to plan your ceremony.
3. Pre-Marriage Resources – These valuable tools will be used during your counseling sessions with the minister and are yours to keep for future reference. They include several books that are helpful for engaged couples, as well as ones that have timeless wisdom for marriage and family. The cost for these materials is \$50.
4. “Prepare and Enrich” Inventory - The Prepare Inventory is for couples about to embark on a life together as man and wife. Using an in-depth questionnaire and a personal workbook, the Inventory will help you identify the strengths each of you bring to the relationship and areas where you can work together to grow as individuals and as a couple. Cost for scoring is \$35.

Other Details About Your Wedding Day

Please remember to obtain your marriage license and bring it with you to the rehearsal, or give it to the officiating minister ahead of time.

The Hospitality Room is available for the men and women in the bridal party to use prior to the wedding to gather before the start of the ceremony. (included in Sanctuary Use fees)

Various silk flowers, small tables, and other items are available for your use here at the church. Your Wedding Hostess will show the bride the items that can be used for decorations, etc. You will need to purchase your own aisle runner if desired (100 foot runner works best) and Unity candles. Other candles for decorating should not be used.

If flowers are to be delivered, the schedule should be worked out with the Wedding Hostess, since someone will need to be at the church to unlock the building and accept the delivery.

It is the Bride and Groom’s responsibility to write up the order of service for the wedding ceremony, purchase and print up bulletin shells.

The removal of instruments or parts of the platform normally in place is at the discretion of the Sound Team and the Director of Facilities and Operation.

Pastor Honorarium: Fees are not charged for pastors, but an honorarium of \$200 is considered appropriate.

Smaller weddings seating up to approximately 100 people can be accommodated in the large rooms in the back of the building, Rooms 113/115/117 if a more intimate setting is desired. This room has been set up with a platform and sound system as well which are used in other Worship services. A \$75.00 fee applies for the use of this room.

An invoice will be mailed to you listing all payments due, which can be mailed or brought in to the office. All checks are made payable directly to each individual and should be brought to the Church Office and given to Louise Hale at least one week prior to your wedding.

Grace is not set up for receptions, so receptions are discouraged. However, informal rehearsal gatherings or post-wedding gatherings that involve 50 people or less and minimal food preparation (such as dessert only or use of ovens for reheating only) can be accommodated in the Gathering Space and Hospitality Room. In these instances the standard room use fees for those spaces apply. If you desire to have a gathering at Grace, a "Room Reservation Request" form should be filled out and given to Erin Siler, who will advise you of the fees for the room/rooms used. All gatherings at the church must follow the Building Use Guidelines which are included in this information packet.

First Steps

1. Contact the church wedding coordinator, Louise Hale (978-562-8550 x112), who will set up an appointment with Pastor Don Whitesel, to meet with the couple to discuss their marriage.
2. Once the wedding is approved, the availability of an officiating minister and a date will be determined. The church office, according to the scheduling calendar, must approve the dates of the wedding and rehearsal. One wedding per month will be allowed, except during the months of June through September, when two weddings per month will be allowed, but no more than one per weekend. Saturday weddings should be planned to end before 2:00 PM to allow for pastoral and custodial preparation for Sunday morning services. However, if approved, weddings held after 2:00 PM on Saturday will be assessed a \$100 custodial surcharge. This charge applies to ALL weddings that take place after 2:00 PM Saturday, regardless of whether a sanctuary use fee applies. Weddings are not typically scheduled between Thanksgiving and New Years because of set up conflicts in the Sanctuary with choir presentations held during that time frame. Exceptions may be approved by the Program Staff.
3. Return the enclosed *Wedding Information Questionnaire* and the *Agreement for the Use of the Facility* to the church. Once they are returned, the date of the wedding and rehearsal will be secured on the church calendar.
4. Schedule pre-marriage counseling sessions with the minister performing your wedding.
5. Register for an upcoming Pre-Marriage class.

Wedding Guidelines and Fees

The wedding rehearsal and ceremony will be under the authority of the officiating minister. Grace Baptist is a Christ-centered church. All elements of your ceremony should reflect this.

Sanctuary Use Fees \$200

The sanctuary use fee of \$200 applies to all weddings, except those whose wedding party (bride, groom or parents) is comprised of one or more members in good standing. In these instances the sanctuary use fee will be waived, but additional fees for other individually contracted services (such as sound support, musicians, etc.) still apply.

Custodial Fees

Weddings held after 2:00 PM on Saturday will be assessed a \$100 custodial surcharge. This charge applies to ALL weddings that take place after 2:00 PM Saturday, regardless of whether a sanctuary use fee applies.

For Sanctuary Use and Custodial Fees, please make checks payable to Grace Baptist Church. For Sound Technician, Hostess, and others, please make checks payable to the individuals.

It is the responsibility of the Bride and/or Groom to make arrangements for any music desired for the wedding. All music to be played or sung must be cleared with the officiating minister.

Due to the acoustics within the sanctuary, we strongly suggest that a sound person be engaged for the ceremony. Without this, it will be difficult for anyone to hear the officiating minister, bride and groom, and other people participating in the ceremony. It is required that an authorized Grace Baptist sound technician be used.

Should you need a pianist or soloist, we offer the following suggestions below as a contact. You may certainly engage someone of your choice in these areas, i.e. friend or family member.

Sound Technician \$75

(required for maximum acoustics during ceremony)

Louise Hale, Wedding Coordinator, will work with the Sound Team Coordinator to schedule a Sound Technician for the date of your wedding. She will put you in contact with one of our trained sound technicians with whom you can discuss your specific needs. He/She will operate the sound system for both the rehearsal and your ceremony.

Pianist \$150 base

Sue Lia 978-562-6549

An additional fee may be appropriate, depending on specific music requirements for the ceremony. Any additional rehearsals that may be required and their appropriate fees are to be arranged directly with the pianist.

Soloist

There are many talented soloists at Grace, and we would be happy to make recommendations. Fees are individually based.

Wedding Hostess \$75

The church Wedding Coordinator will select a Wedding Hostess to work with you in the aspects of your wedding that involve the church and its policies. She will introduce you to the services we offer, the wedding items we have available for your use, as well as go over some of the details of your wedding and help you with decisions on the ceremony itself. If you have someone else helping you with your wedding, it is still necessary to use our hostess since she is a representative of the church in making all the arrangements.

If you have questions during the course of the planning, our Wedding Hostess can assist in giving you guidance. She will be with you at your rehearsal to give direction and on your wedding day to oversee the necessary details.