

Williamsburg Baptist Church

WEDDING PLANNING AND PROCEDURES

So you're getting married! Congratulations!

If you're interested in holding your wedding ceremony at Williamsburg Baptist Church (WBC), we hope this page will assist in your decision-making and planning process. At WBC, we believe that a marriage ceremony is an act of worship. With this in mind, we are eager to work with you to make certain that your wedding reflects praise and thanksgiving to God. After all, God is ultimately the One to whom everything in your service of holy matrimony is dedicated.

Our church offers you more than just a place to have your wedding. We also offer the services of our clergy who are professionally trained in pre-marital counseling, and in planning and officiating wedding ceremonies for both heterosexual couples, as well as couples with various affectional orientations and gender identities. We encourage you to take advantage of their expertise.

There is perhaps no better way to get a feel for our worship space than by coming in person. By worshipping at WBC, you'll see where your wedding would take place and you'll acquaint yourself with our clergy. Of course, you're also welcome to become a regular part of our WBC family. We believe that being part of a family of faith is one of the best ways to build a healthy marriage.

Again, congratulations on your engagement, and may God bless you as you plan your wedding.

TO SCHEDULE A WEDDING CEREMONY AT WBC:

1. Contact our Office Administrator at 757-229-1217 or churchoffice@williamsburgbaptist.com concerning the availability of the church for your tentative wedding date and learn about our church and official reservation procedures. Please note that we do not schedule any weddings during Holy Week and Palm Sunday/Easter Sunday weekends (late March-early April). In addition, only one wedding will be scheduled on any individual day.
2. Secure your reservation and date immediately (if it's available) by completing the "Wedding Reservation Request" form. Return it along with your **50% non-refundable deposit for Facility and Wedding Fees** no later than 90 days prior to your requested date. Less than 90 days, special circumstances may be considered for members of WBC. This may be mailed or dropped by the church office Monday – Friday.

Williamsburg Baptist Church
Attn: Office Administrator
227 Richmond Road
Williamsburg, VA 23185

3. If you choose to use our WBC clergy, please ask the Office Administrator to put you in contact with our Senior Pastor for an initial consultation. If you wish to have outside clergy officiate your wedding ceremony, your request should be made when scheduling your wedding. In addition, as a courtesy, your clergy person will need to contact our Pastor.

A marriage license issued by a court of record in the Commonwealth of Virginia is required for all weddings. Go to a local county or city courthouse in Virginia and obtain a VA marriage license within 30 days of your wedding day. Remember, it is your responsibility to obtain and provide your marriage license. However, if your desired celebrant is not licensed in Virginia, we would require participation by one of our Pastors to cover the legal requirement. **The license should be presented in the church office during weekday business hours at least one week prior to the wedding.**

4. Our WBC Wedding Coordinator will be your primary contact person once your reservation has been confirmed. Our Office Administrator will provide you with their email and phone number. Our Wedding Coordinator will work with you and/or your personal wedding planner in the weeks before your wedding and assist the minister and wedding participants during your rehearsal and ceremony, as needed. Our Wedding Coordinator will ensure that everything runs as smoothly as possible for this special time.

OTHER AVAILABLE SERVICES AND INFORMATION

CANDLES

WBC has wall sconces complete with oil burning candles that may be used during your ceremony. Upon request, the Wedding Coordinator will arrange to have the sconces lighted prior to the ceremony. Any other candles used during the ceremony (e.g. standing candelabras at the altar) must be dripless as woodwork and carpeting must be carefully protected from candle wax.

ORGANIST

Our Office Administrator has a list of local organists who are familiar with our instrument, and would be glad to assist you in selecting someone from that list. If you wish to have an organist not on our list please have him/her contact our organist through the church office.

Should you have a soloist offer selection(s) or other instrumentalist during your wedding, please have them coordinate with your selected organist before the rehearsal date.

SANCTUARY SOUND SYSTEM

The officiant must wear a lapel microphone if s/he is to be heard clearly. If the couple wishes for their voices to be heard, they should each wear a lapel mic. For a soloist or additional persons speaking or reading, a handheld mic is recommended and can be placed on a stand. A trained technician (one of our WBC members) must operate the sound system during your ceremony and will also be at the rehearsal to ensure proper setup. An audio recording can be made of your ceremony if requested beforehand.

RECEPTIONS

The WBC Social Hall or South Wing is available for your reception. The South Wing is also suitable for a small, informal ceremony. Alcoholic beverages are prohibited in the WBC building and on the grounds. Catering and cleanup are the responsibility of those who have requested the facilities.

DRESSING ROOMS

Dressing rooms for the couple are available and will be designated by our Wedding Coordinator upon

request. Valuables should not be left in these areas during the rehearsal or the wedding ceremony, as WBC cannot assume responsibility for them.

FACILITIES

You may have access to the church two hours before your wedding and two hours after. If you and your bridal party require more time for dressing before the wedding please make arrangements with our Wedding Coordinator.

All church facilities (Sanctuary, dressing areas, restrooms, etc.) used in the course of the rehearsal, wedding ceremony, and reception should be free of belongings and debris before vacating the premises. Any costs for repairs, stains, rips, or other damage shall be the responsibility of the wedding couple.

REHEARSAL

The WBC minister, or invited minister, will conduct the wedding rehearsal at a date and time agreed upon by the minister and the wedding couple. Unless prior arrangements have been made through the Wedding Coordinator, 1 hour and 30 minutes is allocated for the rehearsal. All participants need to be punctual and arrive at the designated time. It is your responsibility to inform the organist of the rehearsal/wedding date and time.

DECORATIONS

The WBC Sanctuary and Narthex are maintained for worship and should not be reconfigured by removing church literature, hymnals, the piano, etc. Any re-arrangement of furniture in the sanctuary must be discussed with and approved by the Wedding Coordinator prior to the rehearsal.

Flowers and greens may be placed in the altar area, on the ledge of the baptistry, in the windows, on the pews, and in the narthex. No adhesive and/or tacks of any kind should be used to attach pew decorations. *Nothing may be placed on the piano or the organ.* Woodwork and carpeting should be carefully protected from candle wax, scratching, and marking. Should you desire to use an aisle cloth, you should consult your florist to secure it. Please instruct your florist accordingly when decorating the Sanctuary for your wedding.

PHOTOGRAPHY

It is the responsibility of the wedding couple to discuss with family and friends that respect for others must be maintained when using personal recording devices, and that all electronic devices should be silenced.

By prior arrangement, official photographers may take pictures during the ceremony provided that it will not be a distraction to the service. Our Wedding Coordinator will suggest possible areas from which the photographer may work.

Video photography is permitted during the ceremony. Our Wedding Coordinator must approve the location(s) of the videographer(s). The videographer and equipment should be set up and in place prior to the beginning of the ceremony. Movement and noise should be minimized. Remote controls are suggested.

