

## **WEDDING APPLICATION**

Completion of this form does not guarantee the use of our facility on the date requested.

### **Important**

- ALL weddings need to be approved by our Pastor(s).
- Chapel by the Lake is a Christian Church; therefore, our ceremonies are services of worship. We conduct Christian worship services that celebrate God's gift of marriage.

### **Requirements:**

The requirements listed below apply to anyone considering marriage at Chapel by the Lake.

- **Christian marriage/wedding**  
Weddings at Chapel by the Lake are considered worship services and our ceremonies are Christian.
- **Six-month notice**  
This allows time for approval of your application, completion of wedding counseling, and the coordination of ministers; special consideration will be given to Chapel by the Lake members
- **Agreement to participate in pre-marital counseling**  
Counseling must be done with one of our ministers or someone approved by one of our ministers
- **A Chapel by the Lake pastor must officiate**
- **A Chapel by the Lake wedding coordinator will be involved with the wedding**

### **Application process**

1. Fill out your application (following two pages)
2. Turn in to the Chapel by the Lake office (via email; info at top of page)
3. Application goes to pastor for preliminary review. The pastor will discuss with the applicants the suitability for the couple's wedding at Chapel by the Lake, per the requirements in the wedding application.
4. If appropriate, the application goes to Session for approval.
  - a. If approved, you will be contacted and assigned a wedding coordinator
  - b. If denied, a letter will be sent notifying you of the Session's decision

## **A GREAT BEGINNING: THE JOURNEY OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE**

May God bless you as you begin this journey of Christian Marriage! This brochure will give you information you need to prepare for a Christian Marriage Service at Chapel by the Lake. Feel free to ask the pastor any questions concerning counseling or the marriage service.

### **What is Christian Marriage?**

In general, marriage is a civil union or contract between a man and a woman. For Christians, it means more. Christian marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live out together before God their lives of discipleship. At Chapel by the Lake, we do not perform "weddings." Instead, we design **worship services** that celebrate God's Gift of Christian Marriage. In a service of Christian Marriage, a woman and a man make a life-long commitment to each other before God, standing on the grace of Jesus, strengthened by the Holy Spirit, in obedience to Scripture. This covenant is publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith.

The pastors of Chapel by the Lake are joyfully prepared to perform Christian Marriage Services. Also, we may prepare and lead **worship services** that recognize an earlier civil marriage union. In addition, we may prepare and lead **worship services** that reaffirm marriage vows. Every ceremony we provide is, at heart, a worship service. Accordingly, there are occasions when a couple suggest elements, like a favorite song or reading they would like to include in the service. At times they are appropriate for Christian worship and may be included. Other times the minister may believe it is not appropriate for Christian worship and not include them and encourage the element to be part of the reception, rehearsal dinner or other gathering.

*What Christian Marriage is Not: A Christian Marriage Service is not a "churchification" of a relationship. Getting married in a church or by a pastor does not make a marriage Christian. Christian Marriage Services highlight and celebrate the Christian faith already expressed in the lives of the **bride and groom**.*

**Statement on The Gift of Marriage.** A statement similar to the one below shall be read by the minister(s) near the beginning of every Christian Marriage Service.

***"We gather in the presence of God to give thanks for the gift of marriage, to witness the joining together of (Groom) and (Bride), to surround them with our prayers, and to ask God's blessing upon them, so that they may be strengthened for their life together and nurtured in their love for God.***

***God created us male and female and gave us marriage so that husband and wife may help and comfort each other, living faithfully together in plenty and in want, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, throughout all their days.***

***God gave us marriage for the full expression of the love between a man and a woman. In marriage a woman and a man belong to each other, and with affection and tenderness freely give themselves to each other.***

***God gave us marriage for the well being of human society, for the ordering of family life, and for the birth and nurture of children.***

***God gave us marriage as a holy mystery in which a man and a woman are joined together, and become one, just as Christ is one with the church. In marriage, husband and wife are called to a new way of life, created, ordered, and blessed by God."***

### **Pre-marital Counseling.**

Pre-marital counseling is one of the best tool couples can have to prepare for a fulfilling and successful marriage. The goal of this time is to help couples understand themselves and one another as they begin a lifelong covenant relationship. The pastor(s) of Chapel by the Lake require pre-marital counseling before they officiate in any marriage service. In most cases, the minister(s) performing the service will provide this counseling. In some circumstances, the minister and couple may agree to another outside counseling arrangement. In all cases, the counseling must be completed 45 days before the scheduled marriage service. The minister performing the marriage service will need to be in contact with the person providing the counseling.

The following topics are important areas to be prayerfully discussed in the process of pre-marital counseling. They include family history, personal faith expression and experiences, personality traits, finances, intimacy, career goals, family traditions, and other areas that may arise in the counseling process.

There may be times when the minister is convinced, after discussion with the couple, that commitment, responsibility, maturity, or Christian understanding are so lacking that the marriage is unwise. The minister may decide not to officiate the marriage service. The minister may continue to provide counsel to a couple in an effort to further prepare them for Christian Marriage.

Most couples will meet with the minister for four to six sessions. Most sessions range from sixty to ninety minutes. In addition, the pastor may ask the couple to read a book and discuss it together. In addition to pre-marital counseling, the couple may meet with the pastor to discuss and design the Christian Marriage Service.

## **Agreement for Counseling**

I agree to faithfully participate in the process of pre-marital counseling. I promise, to the best of my ability, to honestly express my thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and experiences. I promise to read and reflect upon materials recommended during the counseling process. I expect honest and caring feedback from the minister(s) guiding this counseling process. I also understand that the minister(s) performing the counseling may determine that marriage at this time is unwise and will not participate in the marriage service.

**Bride** \_\_\_\_\_

**Groom** \_\_\_\_\_

## **The Christian Marriage Service**

The minister must approve all parts and components of the marriage service and any bulletin or program to be used during the marriage service. The following is an outline of a Christian Marriage Service:

Entrance/Processional

Sentences of Scripture

Statement on the Gift of Marriage

Prayer

Declarations of Intent

Affirmations of the Families

Affirmations of the Congregation

[Psalm, Hymn, or Spiritual]

Readings from Scripture

Sermon

[Psalm, Hymn, or Spiritual]

Vows

Exchange of Rings (or other Symbols like Candles, etc.)

Prayer

Lord's Prayer

Announcement of Marriage

Charge and Blessing

[Psalm, Hymn, Spiritual, or Anthem]

**CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE SERVICE DATA FORM**

Date of Service \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Service \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Rehearsal \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Rehearsal \_\_\_\_\_

Bride's **FULL** name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Grandparents \_\_\_\_\_

Church Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Groom's **FULL** name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Grandparents \_\_\_\_\_

Church Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Bride's Attendants (Maid/Matron of honor first, rest in order of procession)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

Groom's Attendants (Best Man first, rest in order of procession)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

Flower Girl \_\_\_\_\_ Ring Bearer \_\_\_\_\_

(The pastor must approve any children less than 5 years of age participating in the Marriage Service)

Candle Lighter(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Organist / Musician \_\_\_\_\_

Singer(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Other Worship Leaders \_\_\_\_\_

Ushers \_\_\_\_\_

Any special agreements for this wedding \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Any accessibility needs \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **Additional Details**

#### **Choice of location:**

- Sanctuary, seats 200-250 (100 capacity during Covid mitigation)
- Log Chapel, seats 75 (40 capacity during Covid mitigation)

#### **Choice of reception location:**

- Smith Hall
- Chapel by the Lake facility not needed

## **Summary of Charges**

Charges below listed for the most used services.

### **Personnel Fees**

- Honorarium for Pastor, counseling (\$300) – mandatory
- Wedding Coordinator, service (\$200) – mandatory
- Wedding Coordinator, reception (\$100)
- Organist / Pianist, service (\$100)
- Soloist, service (\$100)
- Sound System Operator, service (\$50)
- Videographer / Live Stream, service (\$50)
- Projection, service (\$50)

### **Building Fees**

- See Facility Use Agreement

## **CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE SERVICE POLICIES**

### **Schedule**

Schedule with the pastor, a date and time for both the SERVICE and the rehearsal. The couple and pastor will schedule the pre-marital counseling.

### **Wedding Coordinator**

Once the marriage ceremony is approved, the wedding coordinator will schedule a meeting with the couple.

### **Guest Ministers**

We joyfully welcome other ministers to participate in the service. In some cases, a guest minister may lead the majority of the service. Every order of service must be approved by a minister from Chapel by the Lake and be consistent with our beliefs, By-laws, and traditions.

### **Worship Leaders / Readers**

We encourage lay readers and leaders in worship. The officiating minister must approve all readers and leaders. All readers will be asked to participate in the rehearsal. The officiating pastor must approve all materials read in the service. Readers and leaders are strongly encouraged to be well prepared!

### **Ushers**

We recommend that there be one usher for every 50 guests at the wedding. It is important that one usher know the bride's family well; and one know the groom's family well. Ushers should be age 15 or older.

### **Photography**

Photographs are **normally not to be taken** during the ceremony. Stationary video cameras may be used with pastor's approval. Photographers **may** take pictures during the service as long as they are not highly visible and a distraction.

### **License**

The couple is responsible for completing all state requirements for a legal marriage. The license should be brought to the rehearsal.

### **Other**

No one under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be permitted to participate in the rehearsal or service.