

First Baptist Church of Alachua
Wedding Policy

At First Baptist Church of Alachua, we recognize marriage as a holy commitment that has been established by God as a permanent union between a man and a woman sharing a common love. Our belief is that marriage is for a lifetime and that it is an earthly example of the relationship that God desires to have with His people; therefore, we have established the following policy to be followed by anyone desiring First Baptist Church of Alachua to be a part of their marriage ceremony.

Anyone wanting to be married by Pastor Doug Felton must submit to the following requirements:

1.) Each couple must personally contact the pastor and request him to conduct their wedding. A wedding scheduled to be held at the church does not automatically include the services of the pastor.

The pastor should be contacted no later than three months prior to the wedding to provide sufficient time for marriage counseling and other miscellaneous details. However, more time would be preferable.

2.) The pastor is not under obligation to conduct every wedding, but reserves the right to not marry a couple that requests his services.

There are a number of Biblical and personal issues which may prohibit the pastor from conducting the ceremony. Therefore, the pastor will meet with each couple individually and determine if he will conduct their wedding ceremony.

The pastor will not conduct the wedding of a believer and follower of Jesus Christ to someone who does not hold this faith in common.

3.) The pastor requires couples to participate in pre-marriage counseling. This will include several sessions together with the pastor (2 to 4 or more as the need arises) as well as work done by the couple in a workbook.

Each couple must:

1) Confess (individually) a personal commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. First Baptist Alachua will not unite a believer to an unbeliever in marriage (2 Corinthians 6:14-18). God's word is clear about spiritual compatibility between marriage partners. Please give a brief statement of your experience of accepting Jesus Christ as your Savior on the space provided below.

2) Abstain from physical intimacy or living together. Sex is a gift from the one who created it; therefore, God's directions alone must be followed regarding our sexuality. The Bible gives clear instructions for sex within the parameters of the marriage relationship (Ephesians 5:3; 1 Corinthians 6:18; and 2 Corinthians 6:3). God gives us clear warning and consequences when sex is used outside of marriage. If you are currently physically intimate, we ask that you covenant with God to abstain from any sexual relationship until your wedding day. If you are currently living together, we ask that you separate until after the wedding. We encourage engaged couples to make this commitment because sexual temptation is very strong while living together. It also demonstrates to God that you are pursuing His best for your years together as a married couple.

3) Be willing to meet with the pastor for pre-marriage counseling, read the book assigned and complete any assignments given. (The book *Preparing for Marriage* by Dennis Rainey will be bought and read as a part of the pre-marriage counseling.)

First Baptist Church of Alachua

Wedding Application

In order to assist the pastoral counsel in being relevant and specific to your situation, we ask that prior to your first meeting with him, you provide the following information.

Date _____

1. Name (groom) _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____ Date of Birth _____

Have you been married previously? _____ If so, when was your divorce final? _____

Are there children from your previous marriage? _____ Ages _____

Do you have physical custody? _____

Are you willing to discuss your previous marriage with the pastor? Yes _____ No _____

2. Name (bride) _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____ Date of Birth _____

Have you been married previously? _____ If so, when was your divorce final? _____

Are there children from your previous marriage? _____ Ages _____

Do you have physical custody? _____

Are you willing to discuss your previous marriage with the pastor? Yes _____ No _____

3. How long have you been dating? _____ Engaged? _____ Are you currently living together? _____

4. How long have you been attending the First Baptist Church of Alachua? _____

5. Proposed date of wedding _____

6. Are you willing to enter into a covenant pledging your sexual abstinence until your wedding? Yes _____ No _____

7. Are there any significant issues we should be aware of?

8. Are you willing to meet with the pastor for pre-marriage counseling? Yes _____ No _____

