

TUPTON EVANGELICAL – WEDDING POLICY

Welcome and congratulations! Please read this information carefully so that you are certain you are comfortable with our policies and beliefs.

In order to reserve a wedding date, you will need to:

- Contact the church office and fill out the application forms
- Your requested wedding date will not be confirmed until after you have an initial meeting with and approval by one of our leaders.
- The office will verify that your date is open and reserve it if your application has been approved.

The Reasons Behind Our Marriage Policy:

Here at Tupton Evangelical Church we believe strongly in marriage and hold it in high regard. Hebrews 13:4 says, *"Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral."*

Marriage was God's idea and not only did he define what marriage is, He has given guidelines in his Word to keep the marriage relationship strong. Genesis 2:24 says, *"That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh."*

Jesus reaffirms this in Matthew 19:4-6, *"Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no one separate."*

Because of these teachings, we believe that God created marriage to be between one man and one woman for life.

We will faithfully follow this scriptural definition of marriage in the teaching and practices of this church. Therefore, we will not officiate, solemnize, perform or host a marriage or marriage-like ceremony involving anything other than the union of one man and one woman as instituted by God.

Our church views the wedding itself as a ministry and not merely a ceremony. Thus, we perform weddings primarily for those who are regular attenders and members of our church. Additionally, both persons must be confessing Christians. Tupton Evangelical pastoral staff cannot in good conscience perform a wedding for a couple if they believe one person is a Christian and the other is not. 2 Corinthians 6:14 says, "*Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?*"

If you are divorced, we will ask about the circumstances before we agree to perform your ceremony. We believe it is best to prepare couples as well as we can for their life together, and so, couples who want to be married at Tupton Evangelical must participate in premarital counseling. The purpose is to assist couples in assessing their readiness for marriage. This will include clarifying the beliefs, values, strengths, and behaviours each individual brings to the relationship. It also seeks to resolve any present conflicts or weaknesses, and to develop the insights and skills needed to meet potential tensions or conflicts in the future. It may also address other areas of concern that arise.

This process will normally require 4-5 meetings with one of the church leaders. Because of the time commitment necessary to complete these sessions, requests for a wedding in our church should be made a minimum of 6 months in advance.

It is our belief that sexual abstinence before marriage is God's design for each couple, and that living together or involvement in sexual impurity before marriage significantly increases the likelihood of divorce. We want your marriage to have the greatest degree of success, so we require the couple to agree to abstain sexually and to live separately until their wedding day. This will create the space necessary for you to maintain needed boundaries to do your premarital counseling well.

If you do not agree to this, our pastoral staff reserves the right to withdraw from the process and not perform your ceremony. Your reservation for the use of the church may be cancelled as well.

We will allow services conducted by pastors not from our church, but any ceremony in our sanctuary needs to be consistent with the values and beliefs of our congregation, and approved by our church leaders.

Please understand that this process is not intended to be a rigid system. There will always be situations that create exceptions. These guidelines have been carefully constructed to provide the best possible preparation not just for your wedding day, but for a lifetime of marriage. Please talk to one of our leaders concerning any exceptions.

General Policies:

- Please treat our facility with care.
- No weddings scheduled during December or two weeks prior to Easter.
- Saturday weddings are to be scheduled before 6 p.m. to allow for cleaning and setup of the facility for Sunday morning worship service.
- In sensitivity to the wishes of the congregation, no smoking or alcoholic beverages are allowed anywhere near the church grounds.
- No rice, bird seed, potpourri, aerosol shooting string etc. may be brought or thrown in the building or on church grounds.
- The couple is responsible for any and all damage to the building or its contents which may occur during the event.
- Permission must be received before moving any furniture or property before or after the event.
- No pets are allowed in the building, except for official service animals.
- You are responsible for communicating these guidelines to your guests.

Receptions:

We are sorry but Tupton Evangelical cannot accommodate wedding receptions.

Audio/Visual:

Tupton Evangelical can accommodate PowerPoint presentations. Please have the church leaders approve your show one month prior to the wedding. This allows time to submit the CD or flash drive to our technical person with enough time to review it and make sure that it is compatible with our computers and equipment. Tupton Evangelical does not offer audio or visual recordings of wedding ceremonies.

Programs:

Wedding programs cannot be designed or printed at Tupton Evangelical.

Décor:

- Before decorating, please discuss your plans with the church.
- Only temporary decorations that do not cause damage are allowed.
- You may decorate one day in advance of your wedding if there are no scheduling conflicts.
- Fresh flower petals may be used in the centre aisle of the sanctuary if you use an aisle runner. Otherwise, only fake flowers may be used.
- We recommend all flower deliveries arrive a minimum of 2 hours before your ceremony begins.

Music:

The music for your service is your responsibility.

- All musical selections need to be approved by the leader prior to making your final arrangement.
- Tupton Evangelical is able to provide some instruments for your wedding.
- If you are using a musician/vocalist, they will need to arrange a time to practice before the evening of the rehearsal.

Marriage license:

Tupton Evangelical is a registered religious building, but you will need to arrange for a registrar to attend your ceremony, to ensure all legal procedures are followed.

Photographs:

We encourage you to take photos or video of your wedding. To prevent distractions during the ceremony, the photographers should be unobtrusive and not become "part of the ceremony". In no case will they be allowed to be physically present on the platform. If there are any questions about this, please ask one of the church leaders.

Rehearsal planning:

Rehearsals should only take about one hour. Plan to run through the ceremony two times with the officiating pastor and wedding coordinator if you have one. Everyone in the bridal party should attend this rehearsal.

Policy review date: 01/10/2017

