



Weddings

Quick Steps – Weddings

- **Rates**
 - Establish your rates for officiating weddings and post them on your website or brochure
 - It is awkward to ask for payment from a friend or family member after the ceremony
 - It is also awkward for the friend or family member if they don't know what to pay you
 - You might want to consider making the ceremony your wedding gift, in lieu of payment
 - It appears that the typical rate for a minister is \$200 to \$500 for the ceremony, not including pre-marital counseling services
 - Keep in mind that you will also need to attend the rehearsal and rehearsal dinner (usually held the night before the wedding)
 - If you would like to bring a guest to the rehearsal dinner, be sure to make your request known in advance

- **Pre-marital Counseling**
 - It is helpful to have at least one spiritual counseling session with the bride and one with the groom, and a third joint session with both, if possible (extra charges should apply)

- **Wedding Ceremony**
 - **Format**
 - Many times, the bride has a very specific format in mind. In this case, it is best to find out what it is and go with the flow
 - Other times, the bride has no idea and needs to be guided all the way through

 - **Basic format:**
 - After the audience is fully seated, the music begins
 - Minister walks up the aisle and stands in front
 - Bridesmaids and Groomsmen enter, one pair at a time, with the Best Man and Maid of Honor entering last
 - As they reach the front, they fan out with the Bridesmaids going off to the left and the Groomsmen going off to the right
 - Flower girl and the ring bearer go down the aisle and are watched over by designated people in the wedding party (once they make it to the front)

- **Suggestion:** I prefer that the Bride and Groom face the audience, along with the whole wedding party. The minister can move over to stand in front of the Bride and Groom (with his/her back to the audience, on a lower platform if possible) once the entire wedding party is in position. (This type of presentation has received rave reviews from the audience)
- **Minister begins the ceremony**
 - It's ok to read from your notes
 - You might want to place your notes into a leather or hard-bound folder so they do not blow away
 - It is helpful if you have a microphone on a stand, so you do not have to hold it in your hand during the ceremony
 - Take your time and read loudly enough so that everyone can hear
- **Concluding the ceremony**
 - After the Bride and Groom kiss and you announce them to the audience, the music begins and they are to proceed back down the aisle
 - The Maid of Honor and the Best Man follow
 - The Flower Girl and Ring Bearer follow
 - The Bridesmaids and Groomsmen follow, one pair at a time
 - The Minister follows
 - The Minister invites the audience to file out from the first row to the last after the wedding party has exited
- **Minister to sign the wedding license**
 - Be sure to sign your title as "Minister"
 - Bride and Groom are in charge of getting the marriage license together (Be sure to ask them about it as a reminder)
 - The wedding license will be mailed into the county after the ceremony. I usually offer to do that for them, or you can delegate that function to one of the parents, so the Bride and Groom are free to think about their honeymoon
 - It is helpful for the Bride and Groom to purchase a second "pretty copy" of a Marriage License from Hallmark, etc., to keep for their wedding album, and then sign both
 - See "Wedding Schedule of Events" for a suggested reception format
- **Key Points**
 - Music should be at the right volume, not too loud, not too soft
 - Ministers voice should be loud enough so that everyone can hear the ceremony
 - Bride and Groom's voice should be loud enough so everyone can hear their vows
 - Enjoy the process - As the Minister, you will have the "best seat" in the house!