

## ***How To Conduct A Wedding***

Most new pastors are nervous and yet excited to conduct a wedding ceremony. Due to the high expectancy and memories of every wedding, most ministers desire to perform the best ceremony for their couple. We have listed several things to consider in making your first wedding ceremony memorable.

- Meet with the engaged couple to see what type of ceremony they desire. Most ceremonies are already outlined so that a minister can easily read and fill in their names.
- Talk with the couple about the type of service they are looking for, whether it is traditional, contemporary, or something that reflects their unique personalities. Ask the couple if they would like to modify or write any of their own vows to be added to the ceremony.
- Some couples choose wedding planners who have already done the planning on the types of ceremonies and decorations. Most planners will direct all aspects of the wedding rehearsal except for the actual ceremony. The couple will need "cues" from you to guide them through various parts of the vows.
- If you are a part of the rehearsal, talk the couple through the vows during the rehearsal to let them know what to expect but do not have them actually say the vows. That should be saved for the actual wedding day ceremony.
- During the actual wedding day ceremony, direct the couple as to when they need to kneel for prayer, light the Unity Candle, and when the bride should hand off her bouquet.
- Don't be afraid to talk to them. This is their ceremony and their special moment. Make it enjoyable for them.
- Most ministers will make a check mark of each step of the ceremony inside the wedding book so they will not repeat or omit any portion. This may help relieve the pressures or nerves for new ministers on their first wedding.
- Give the vows that need to be repeated in short sections. The longer the section you give the more likely a nervous bride or groom will forget and have to be told again. Gently guide the couple, making them comfortable.

- Some ministers prefer to hold out the wedding book towards the maid of honor and best man so they can place the appropriate rings on the book. Others prefer the more traditional way of allowing the maid of honor and best man to hand the rings off. The reason to use the book is to reduce the danger of dropping the ring and the embarrassment of having to find it and picking it up. If you use the book, you can pick up the ring from there. Be sure to cover this in the rehearsal.
- After the ceremony is finished and the newlyweds have kissed, tell the audience that it is your pleasure to introduce Mr. & Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ or I present you with Mr. & Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_. Be sure to smile, this is a joyous time for everyone.
- You may have to make an announcement thanking everyone for coming and inviting everyone for the reception that follows. If it is being held at another place, be sure to mention the location.

#### **TIPS:**

- Be sure to take your time while conducting a wedding ceremony. If you rush through the vows, you may end up having to repeat them.
- If you need to talk with the bride and groom during the actual ceremony to give small instructions, be sure the sound people can mute your microphone when necessary. Again you are here for the couple. The audience only needs to hear the ceremony.
- Performing a good wedding ceremony takes practice. Rehearsing will ensure your couple getting the best ceremony possible. Don't take this time for granted.
- Find out ahead of time how the bride and groom wish to be introduced. Don't take for granted that they want to be called the standard "Mr. and Mrs."