

Lutheran Church of the Reformation

212 East Capitol St NE, Washington, DC 20003

Telephone: 202-543-4200

www.ReformationDC.org

Wedding Policies

Scheduling Your Wedding

Because of the number of worship services, ministries, and other public events at Reformation, we recommend that you schedule your wedding at least **six months** in advance.

- Schedule your wedding with the church office before you schedule a location for your reception. We cannot guarantee the availability of the church or staff for a specific date on which you have already booked a reception site.
- There are various times during the year when the church is unavailable for wedding ceremonies. These include Holy Week (the week before Easter), Christmas (December 23-25), High Jewish Holidays, and a few other dates that vary each year.

Pre-Marriage Counseling

Our pastoral staff can provide or recommend pre-marital counseling services. We strongly encourage couples to complete this process at least three months prior to the wedding for the following reasons:

1. Pre-marriage counseling can deepen your insights about each other and can shape the way you prepare for the wedding as well as for your life together after the wedding. The closer you are to the wedding date, the harder it is to address new insights in a healthy and honest way.
2. As you approach the wedding date, more and more of your focus will be on wedding details. The premarital counseling process is most meaningful if you can give it your full attention.

Wedding Planning

Every wedding service must be planned in consultation with the minister who presides at your wedding. Please contact the presiding minister of your wedding at least 2-4 months in advance to set appointments and to arrange details.

The Presiding Minister

Weddings will be conducted by Reformation's pastors or by an ordained pastor secured by the wedding couple.

- Reformation pastors will conduct all member weddings as the schedule allows.
- Reformation pastors may conduct non-member weddings as the schedule allows. The fee for a Reformation pastor to perform non-member weddings, as well as provide pre-marital counseling, is \$500. This is independent from the venue fee.
- Guest pastors may be invited to participate in member and non-member weddings, but they must be pastors from a recognized denomination and must have their credentials registered in the District of Columbia prior to the wedding date. Wedding officiants must contact the DC Court Marriage Bureau to register.
- At Reformation weddings, while an ordained pastor must officiate at the vows, there are many roles that non-ordained leaders and friends of the couple may play in a wedding service. The couple can discuss these other roles with the minister presiding at their wedding.
- If you are considering the use of more than one pastor, please keep in mind the need to notify all involved clergy early. A shared service requires the coordination of schedules and additional preparation.

The Wedding Rehearsal

Most weddings require a rehearsal so that all people involved will feel comfortable with the service and able to participate fully in worship. The wedding rehearsal's generally begin at 6:00 pm and conclude at 7:00 pm usually the night before the wedding. We can be flexible with this time and day so please talk to the Reformation office staff and your presiding minister if you have a request. Everyone involved in the service should be present for the rehearsal. Those attending should include:

Presiding Minister

Wedding Coordinator, if the couple has one

Musicians and soloists--This is not a time for practice or trial runs, but to walk through the entire liturgy with the other leaders.

Persons reading scriptures or other readings during the ceremony.

Wedding party

Greeters/Ushers

Parents and children that are participating in the wedding, especially the procession.

Please be sure to have your wedding party here on time for the rehearsal! Traffic and parking can be particularly challenging, so please keep this in mind. You may want to provide a map as the Reformation neighborhood since there are several one-way streets and limited street parking.

Remember to bring the following to the rehearsal:

- The license: You cannot be married legally without a license. To eliminate the risk of misplacement on your wedding day, please bring the entire license package to the rehearsal, including the return-mailing envelope. The presiding minister will complete the license immediately following the marriage ceremony or just prior to.
- Three copies of your program bulletin.

Your wedding rehearsal will go smoothly and quickly if the number of people attending is kept to a minimum. We suggest that only the people who are part of your ceremony attend the rehearsal at the church.

Other Items

Capacity

Our church maximum capacity is 400 in the sanctuary. We have 20 pews on each side of the aisle; however, guests generally do not sit in the first pews that are reserved for close family members and friends of the couple.

Bulletins/Programs

Wedding service bulletins can help your guests follow the service. Please speak with your wedding coordinator, if you have one, or the presiding minister about printing these.

Candles

The church normally uses two candles, one on each side of the altar. They are used at all services. Couples may bring additional candles and candelabras at their own expense.

Greeters and Ushers

It is recommended that you appoint two people to greet your guests at the front door. The greeters can also serve as ushers. Two ushers for every 50 guests are recommended. Your greeters/ushers should be at the sanctuary 45 minutes before the service and should be ready to greet people at the doors 30 minutes before the service.

Decorations and Flowers

The seasons of the church year determine the color of the table-altar, pulpit, and lectern paraments. These paraments may not be changed and they vary per season. Please consult with the church office if you have questions.

- Floral or plant arrangements may be placed on the table-altar and high altar only if the table or altar is protected from becoming wet or soiled. Please do not place a plant or floral container of any kind directly on the table or altar.
- The church has plant stands you may use for floral arrangements.
- The only adhesives permitted in the building are blue painters tape or gaffers' tape. Scotch tape, masking tape and other adhesives are prohibited.
- Please do not use décor that may scratch that church furnishings – including any type of wire that does not have protective covering.
- To attach decorations to the pews we recommend plastic clips, ribbons or rubber bands. Chancel furniture may not be removed without the expressed permission of the church staff.
- Natural flower petals may be scattered inside or outside of the church. The couple must arrange for the petals to be cleaned up after the service.
- Birdseed may be used outside the building.

Music

The couple may contract with Reformation's director of music to accompany the wedding service. The fee is to be negotiated directly the musician. There may be additional fees for rehearsals with soloists or other musicians. We recommend live music to be shared during worship services, but we can also show you how to stream music to our speakers via Bluetooth.

Refreshments

You may bring light snacks and refreshments the day of the ceremony. They must be kept in the Blue Room or Fireside Lounge.

- Generally, the wedding party does not bring alcoholic beverages to the church building, unless they will be shared in a simple and public toast to the couple or wedding party. In other words don't bring a six- pack or a pint to pass around before or after the wedding.
- No food or beverages are allowed in the sanctuary.
- No smoking is allowed in any Reformation building.

Limousines / Cars

Parking for a special car or limousine for the wedding party is available in on the street in front of the sanctuary. There is a small parking lot for guests with limited mobility near the elevator. Other guests should park on the street. The Supreme Court lot on A Street, between 2nd and 3rd Streets, NE, is available to the public after 6:00 p.m. on weekdays and all day on weekends.

Photography and Videography

- Videos are acceptable if the cameras and operators are not intrusive. Flashes are not permitted during the ceremony.
- Photographers' or videographers are not allowed to be in the center aisle during the ceremony – they may use the center aisle during the processional and/or recessional.
- Your photographer may not stand in front of the first pew. During the ceremony, please keep movement to a minimum.
- Please remind your photographer that the church can be open 3 hours prior to the ceremony, (2 hours if pictures are to be taken after the ceremony), or until the time you have agreed upon with the church office.
- The photographer must completely tear down and clear out of the sanctuary at least 30 minutes before the ceremony for the seating of the wedding guests.
- The couple will be charged \$500 per hour for any time that goes over the 4 hours on the wedding day inside Reformation's buildings. This includes clean up of all equipment and departure from the building. You are free to use the church grounds outside after the 4-hour period but the church building will be locked.