



# *Watoto* **CHURCH**

Wedding Guidelines



## WEDDING GUIDELINES

### 1. Booking:

- (a) A wedding date should be booked at least **Six (6)** months in advance with the appropriate Watoto Church Administrator.
- (b) Couples must complete their Wedding Booking Form and submit it to the Administrator(s) before any booking is confirmed.
- (c) No wedding will be booked on a DATE that coincides with a significant Watoto Church Event(s).
- (d) Wedding Ceremonies on Saturday at Watoto Church shall be conducted at **9:00 am, 11:00am and 1:00 pm** for a maximum running time of 90 (Ninety) minutes. *No weddings will be conducted on Sunday in any of the Districts.*

(e) Couples who so desire may apply for their wedding ceremony to be conducted during the week.

## **2. Application Forms**

All Wedding Application Forms issued by the Administration Office must be duly endorsed by the respective Cell leader and either Section or Zone Leaders and the Pastors at least two months before the date of introduction in church.

Application forms must be accompanied with (including everything else indicated on the Application Form):-

- (a) A letter of recommendation from one's local church if one party is not a member of Watoto Church.
- b) Marriage Certificates for the best-man and matron.
- c) An HIV Test and Counseling report not more than **six** weeks from date of booking. Tests must be done together as a couple at the recommended Health Service Providers. **i.e. IMC, CASE and SAS.**
- d) An Original letter of blessing from the parents/guardians of the bride-to-be.

## **3. Counseling**

- (a)** Couples must go through the appropriate:

(i) **Pastoral counseling/ One-on-One:**

before their wedding is conducted or officiated by a Watoto Church Pastor at the Church or at any Gazetted venue.

This includes at least four counseling sessions conducted by the Pastor and Marriage Mentors endorsed by the District/Assistant Pastor.

(ii) **Group Premarital Counseling Classes:**

Conducted as group sessions at the church. The classes which constitute **Twelve** mandatory sessions must be completed at least **Two** months to the wedding date.

(iii) If either party is **upcountry or abroad**, he or she must return at least **One** month before the booked wedding date, and undergo the requisite pre-marital counselling sessions.

Couples in such situations are advised to have online counselling with their District Pastors.

(b) ***No wedding will be conducted:***

- *If a couple has not booked and confirmed their wedding date with the Administrator.*

- *If a couple has not completed the requisite premarital counseling sessions.*

**4- Marriage Banns**

(a) (i) Couples must be introduced in Watoto Church after at least **THREE (3)** Pre-Marital Counseling Sessions, and Subject to submitting the fully completed Wedding Application Form.

(ii) **Wedding introductions** in Watoto Church are every 3rd (**Third**) Sunday of the month at the respective Celebration Points. All Paper work must be complete and returned to the Wedding Administrator at least **two months to the Wedding date**.

**(b) Marriage Banns** will be published One month to the wedding date and displayed on the Watoto Church Notice Boards in accordance with the *Laws of the Government Of Uganda*.

**(c) Couples** seeking a **recommendation to wed** at another Church need to attend at least **three** counseling sessions, one of which must be with their District Pastor and they must be introduced in their district. Please note that the Recommendation Letter will only be issued after the couple has fulfilled the above requirements.

## 5. Fees and Procedure:

a) **Wedding fees of Ugx 600,000/=** (i.e. Church Fee -450,000/- and Worship Team - Ugx 150,000/-) must be paid **two months** prior to the wedding date to confirm the booking.

Please note that **all fees** are to be paid at the **Watoto Church Accounts counter** and for every payment, a **receipt** is to be issued by the Cashier and copies submitted to the Wedding Administrator.

(i) Time Keeping means the Groom, Bride & Entourage arrive at church 15 minutes before the Time booked for their wedding.

(ii) Time Keeping will be rewarded with the Refund of the **100,000/=** and permission to take an offering in the service.

(iii) Any offering taken at a Watoto Church wedding ceremony is given, in its ENTIRETY to the couple.

A Lateness Penalty will be administered in the following ways to couples that do not keep time:


- No refund will be given to the couple who are not on site at booked time of their Wedding.
- No offering will be taken in the service for couples who arrive 15 minutes after the booked Time of their wedding.

## **6. Order of Service**

The Order of Service must be completed and submitted to the wedding Administrator at least **two months** to the wedding date.

a) Couples must liaise with the Worship & Creative Arts Office to plan the order of service and select the appropriate music at least **2 months** to the wedding.

-Couples must avail the special music they



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desire to be presented at their wedding to Worship and Creative arts office before the wedding day.

- Couples must avail a photo of their choice for projection on the overhead during the wedding service.

b) Watoto Church reserves the right to approve live/recorded songs, special artistic presentations and other guests of the couple intending to participate in the wedding ceremony at Watoto Church/Gazetted points.

## 7. Wedding in Gazetted areas

(a) A couple that intends to wed in a place that is not Gazetted as a place of worship is solely responsible for securing the necessary license(s) with the Registrar of Marriages and the Attorney General's office (**3 months**) in advance. Couples must engage their own lawyer for this process.

b) The couple must have the PRIOR WRITTEN CONSENT of the Ordained Watoto Church Pastor who will officiate their wedding.

c) The couple is responsible for sourcing the Worship Team, PA System etc. (This also applies to couples Gazetting Watoto Church-Venues i.e, (*Ssubi, Bbira & Lubowa*).

d) The wedding fees remain payable in full and is subject to the same conditions stipulated in part (**5 above**).

## 8. Weddings in PAG Churches

Couples wedding in PAG Churches (E.g. Masaka, Mubende, Bombo, etc) will pay a fee to cover Administration and Registration of Marriage costs.

Notification of weddings must be presented **three** (3) months in advance to the intended date.

### **9. Re-issue of Certificates**

A penalty fee of **50,000/=** will be charged if one needs a certificate reissued due to an amendment, damage/misplacement or loss. The church will only issue Certified copies. The replacement will be done when the following conditions are met:-

- i) Submission of a written letter, signed by both parties requesting for a re-placement.
- ii) Submission of a written Police letter confirming the loss. etc.

### **10. Preparation for the Wedding Ceremony:**

(a) **Wedding Rehearsals are mandatory** and are to be supervised by the Pastor or designated Administrative Assistant. They **MUST** be held with the entire bridal entourage, **1 week** before the wedding day.

(b) **Couples must have a Time Keeper** who **MUST** report immediately to the Watoto Church Reception/Administrator when the entire bridal team arrives at the venue of the wedding.



(c) **Couples must have their Ushering Team** introduced to the Administrator for briefing of their roles and responsibilities during the wedding ceremony.

### 11. Exceptions

- a) Persons who have been living together may apply to Sanctify their relationship in a church wedding to honor God.
- b) Persons who already have a Legal Registered Marriage [may apply to have the Church blessing in a church ceremony]. They will only receive the Watoto Church certificate and not another Government of Uganda certificate.
- c) **Divorced** persons will not be wed at Watoto Church.
- d) Non Watoto Church Couples will only be wed at Watoto if they have the prior written commitment of a Watoto Church Pastor.

### 12. Disclaimer

- (a) The Watoto Church Pastoral Team reserves the right to decide on whom to wed.
- (b) The Watoto Church Pastoral Team reserves the right to waive any of the conditions stipulated in this Wedding Guideline.

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