

Wedding Policies & Procedures

We are so excited that you picked us to be a part of your special day. Due to the large number of requests for EastLake Pastors to perform wedding ceremonies, and the busy schedule of EastLake Church (ELC), the following procedures have been set up in regards to performing wedding ceremonies:

- 1)The bride or groom must be members Eastlake Church. (Attended membership class & signed covenant) If you are not yet a member, you can sign up for our next class by clicking membership under the “next steps” tab at <http://eastlakechurch.com/next-steps/membership>.
- 2)All premarital couples must complete our **Premarital Mentoring Program**. This is provided in two formats: a couple of times a year we offer a marriage preparation class. If the timing of the class doesn't work with the timing for a couple's wedding, then the options are:
 - **Volunteer** - Your mentors are a married couple specifically matched to work with your individual needs. You will work with them throughout using the book “Things I Wish I Had Known Before We Got Married” by Gary Chapman. The Mentoring is provided at no additional cost and is based upon the availability of the mentoring couple
 - **Professional - Through Lighthouse Psychological Services (619-248-8608)**. Fees for this counseling vary. Please contact them for detailed information.

The Pastors of EastLake Church have determined the following qualifications, based on Biblical truths:

- 3)**Bride and groom have individually confessed a personal commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.** EastLake Church will not marry an unbeliever to a believer in marriage (2 Corinthians 6:14-18). God's Word is clear about spiritual compatibility between marriage partners.
- 4)**Bride and groom must abstain from physical intimacy or living together.** Sex is a gift from God. He is the one who created it! Therefore, we must follow God's directions alone regarding our sexuality. The Bible gives us clear instructions for sex within the parameters of the marriage relationship (2 Corinthians 6:3),

While many of those who come to EastLake Church are honoring God through abstaining from sexual intimacy, there are many who do not fall into this category. Couples who are physically intimate or are living together are asked to enter into a covenant with God and EastLake Church to abstain from a sexual relationship until their wedding day. We would like the opportunity to encourage you to make this commitment with us, understanding that this is God's best for your marriage relationship. We would love the opportunity to help you take right steps. An opportunity to discuss your circumstances with the Pastor will be available at your first meeting.

Scheduling Wedding Times and Pastors

Because of our weekend service schedule, Pastors are not available after 1pm on Saturdays through Sundays at 4pm and our venue availability is limited to occasional Friday evenings and Sunday evenings from 4 pm to 8 pm only. We have several venues available at EastLake Church depending on the needs of your ceremony. If the wedding will be taking place somewhere other than ELC, the pastor performing the wedding ceremony must agree on the location and the time of the ceremony. Off site locations must be local.

Church events and Pastor's personal travel schedules take priority over a request to preside at a wedding. In the event the Pastor you have scheduled for your wedding must leave town unexpectedly or is detained due to a tragedy or family emergency, we will find you a replacement.

Wedding Costs

EastLake Pastors are available to perform wedding ceremonies for members of EastLake Church at no cost*.

*Our Torrey Pines Church location does have fees for ceremonies held at that location. You will work directly with them to find what those fees are based on what your wedding plans include.

Our ELC Premarital Group Class or Mentoring Program is free for members.

Wedding Specialist: \$300. Present for 1 meeting prior to rehearsal, rehearsal & wedding ceremony.

*Please Note: this person helps facilitate a smooth rehearsal & wedding ceremony. They work as a liaison between bride, groom and church facilities/pastoral staff for a ceremony taking place in an EastLake Church on-campus venue or they work as a liaison between bride, groom and pastoral staff for an off site ceremony. They are not available to plan your wedding. A Wedding Specialist is **required** if the ceremony will be held at an EastLake Church venue and is **optional** if your ceremony will be held at another location.

Frequently Asked Questions

1.) **How do I get started?**

Fill out the Wedding Application online at <http://eastlakechurch.com/member-services>. You will be contacted after we have processed the application.

Please allow up to 1-3 weeks for this process. If you haven't heard anything please contact us at weddings@eastlakechurch.com

The first step we take once you are contacted is to set up a meeting with one of our Pastors. EastLake Pastors enjoy meeting with the couple two times prior to the wedding day. Once as soon as you book your wedding. This is when you will go over and sign the pre-marital covenant in the pastor's presence. You'll meet again two weeks before the wedding. At these meetings, your Pastor will confirm any special requests, readings, etc. Also, this is a chance for your Pastor to get to know you two and hear your story! This meeting will be scheduled directly with your wedding pastor.

2.) **Who supplies the marriage license?**

Marriage license bureaus in California require that both the bride and groom must apply together, in person. You'll need specific identification - like a photo ID or driver's license.

The Chula Vista Branch Office for the Assessor/Recorder/County Clerk is on the Corner of 3rd Avenue and I Street. For details and directions go to this web link:

http://arcc.co.san-diego.ca.us/services/marriage_licenses.aspx

3.) **Who does the Premarital Mentoring?**

Your Premarital Mentoring will be done either through a class offered a couple of times a year or with a married couple who has received special Premarital Training. These couples have been married for at least ten years and exemplify Christ-centered marriages. They are open and honest about sharing their experiences in their own marriage.

4.) **What do we talk about at the Premarital Mentoring sessions?**

You will discuss many subjects throughout your time together. These subjects include marital roles and responsibilities; skills for communicating and resolving conflicts; realistic management of finances; your sexual relationship; your family of origin; and much more! Your relationship strengths will be discussed, as well as areas that need growth.

5.) **What should I expect from the Premarital Mentoring experience?** You should expect to be challenged, strengthened, educated, and better prepared for your upcoming marriage. You will probably experience some laughs, some tears, and some pleasant surprises!

You should leave your Premarital Mentoring with some problem areas identified, some new marital skills learned, and most importantly - a more realistic expectation of what marriage will be like!

May God richly bless you individually, and as a couple, as you embark on this exciting journey together!

"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. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no man separate." Mark 10:7-9 (NIV)