



PERSPECTIVES

WRITINGS FROM OUR DISTRICT APOSTLE

Weddings

A wedding should be a beautiful time of joy as a man and woman join together in holy matrimony and receive God's blessing on their union. Our church desires to join in celebrating this by offering a church wedding held by our ministers. The intention of this perspective is to create consistency in conducting weddings and oneness in our understanding of matrimony across the nation.

As outlined in our Catechism [CNAC 5.3.7.1], couples, where at least one partner is New Apostolic, may receive a wedding blessing at their request. This blessing of God contains powers that will enable the married couple to fashion their future together in a manner desired by God. This includes the serious endeavor on the part of the couple to pursue their path of life together in love and with respect to God's ordinances.

To provide a couple with the tools needed to pursue this path of life together, we strongly encourage they participate in our [Prepare/Enrich](#) program with a certified facilitator. We have a number of our ministers and members who are certified in this program across the U.S.A. and other certified facilitators can be found on the [Prepare/Enrich](#) website. Please urge all couples to participate in this pre-marriage program.

In order to be prepared as the officiant and to prepare the couple to receive the blessing of God, good planning and early communication between the couple and the minister are indispensable. The following points should be considered:

1. A wedding is the public ceremony that starts the divine institution of marriage [CNAC 13.3.1a]. **The purpose of a church wedding is to receive the blessing of God.** This blessing:
 - a. provides strength for enduring love and fidelity
 - b. promotes the willingness and ability to serve, help, and understand one another
 - c. helps partners to forgive each other and reconcile differences (CNAC 13.3.2)
 - d. inspires the presence of God into their life as they pursue and shape their path of life together

Thus, this blessing solidifies and strengthens the established relationship of the man and woman. This is what a couple *should* be seeking from a New Apostolic minister.

It is also acceptable for a couple to first complete the legal aspect of their marriage at a city court. After this process, they can then have the blessing at our church or other suitable venue.

2. **Our church understands that a wedding is both a joyful and holy event.** The expression "holy matrimony" implies the presence of the Divine in a marriage. Thus, it is vital to ensure an environment where the couple, their families, and the guests will be able to perceive the activity of the Holy Spirit. To create this environment, our ministers follow the wedding liturgy of our church, especially with regard to format, music, procedure, etc. The minister may refuse



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anything connected with the liturgical portion that he feels may compromise God's blessing, as his role is to ensure a holy environment exists for the wedding service. Elements of the ceremony to be aware of are:

- a. **Vows.** According to our liturgy, the bride and groom may say 'yes' or 'I do' after the minister reads the vows. Another option is to repeat the vows phrase by phrase, as spoken by the minister (examples of vows can be found on [Minister Companion](#)). If a couple has asked to share their personally prepared vows, the minister, in consultation with his district rector, has the discretion to allow these, provided they fit generally into our examples and do not deter from the sanctity of this moment in the service.
- b. **Venue.** Naturally, a church wedding lends itself to a holy atmosphere. However, if another venue is desired by the couple, they should be advised to select a location in keeping with the above-mentioned aspects of holiness. Consideration should be given to privacy, possible distractions from other activities, weather, etc.
- c. **Minister:** New Apostolic ministers are bound to a ministerial mandate that defines the geographic area in which they serve. Ministers cannot perform weddings outside their ministerial mandate, unless by special exception from the apostles of both areas (on a case-by-case basis). If an exception is made, any costs are the responsibility of the minister or the couple.
- d. **Non-NAC ministers.** On the request of couples belonging to different confessions, a minister of the denomination of the non-New Apostolic partner can speak a few words of greeting and congratulations after the benediction or at the reception. This could be a prayer, a Bible reading, or a few words of greeting.

Before every wedding, ministers should inform their district rector or apostle and review the wedding service procedure outlined in the Liturgy of the New Apostolic Church USA booklet (pages 31-33). A digital copy of this booklet can be downloaded on [Minister Companion](#) (search "liturgy booklet" and look for Liturgy Booklet Volumes 1-3). For any questions not addressed here, consult your local apostle. Also, special attention should be given to stay true to the wording of the blessing, as outlined in our liturgy.

Lastly, as our Catechism (CNAC 12.2.3.1) states, love for God and one another is an important prerequisite for keeping the blessing in the marriage undiminished, as well as for finding the strength to lead a life together in harmony and mastering difficult situations with God's help. As ministers in Christ's church, we have an obligation to allow the Holy Spirit to use us to bring the wedding couple the blessing that God desires to bestow upon them.