

Information and Guidelines for Weddings

A Message to the Bride and Groom

Your wedding is a sacred union in the eyes of God. The wedding ceremony is a worship service and every element of the wedding (dress, music, decorations, etc.) should contribute to an air of, not only celebration but, reverence for the sacrament.

Officiating Minister

The official United Methodist Church policy on weddings is the Pastor of First United Methodist Church will perform all weddings at his church. The wedding service ordinarily will follow the form found in the United Methodist Hymnal (pages 864-960). Any variations on this service must be approved by the minister of FUMC. The bride and groom may choose a visiting ordained clergy in good standing to assist in the ceremony. A visiting minister must be approved by the minister of FUMC and follow the guidelines outlined herein. A written invitation to officiate at FUMC must be issued by our Pastor. The name, mailing address and telephone number of the visiting minister should be provided to our Pastor as soon as the church is booked.

Pre-Marital Counseling

The couple must participate in premarital counseling with the Pastor no later than one month prior to their scheduled wedding. In some events, a licensed therapist will be accepted with the Pastor's prior approval. However, the couple is still required to meet with the Pastor for a one session overview of the ceremony. Meeting with the Pastor will consist of at least four sessions of counseling and conclude with a general overview of the wedding ceremony. All couples should contact the Pastor at their earliest convenience to allow adequate time for these sessions. The fee includes all counseling materials.

Reservations and Appointments

A reservation for the use of the sanctuary for the wedding and rehearsal must be placed on the church calendar. The church usage fee must be paid at the time the date is placed on the calendar. The fee includes a rehearsal and is due 30 days before the wedding. A cancellation fee will be assessed if the wedding is cancelled 30 days or less from the wedding date. Call the office for current fees at (386)752-4488.

Music

Our church pianist and Director of Music is available to play at weddings and can assist you in the selection of appropriate music. You should contact the Director directly if you would like to engage his services. His fees are arranged by him and paid through the church office. Fees may vary depending on the number of pieces and complexity of the pieces you choose. A guest organist must be approved by our Pastor or Director of Music. If you are having a soloist and

wish them to conduct a private rehearsal prior to the wedding, you need to indicate this before asking the organist to quote a fee.

Decorations

We permit the following decorations: Altar flowers, outside door wreaths and bows, pew markers (bow, flowers, etc.), candelabras with dripless candles (must have protective floor covering underneath), unity candles (provided by the wedding party, usually the florist), other decorations as approved by the Pastor or Wedding Coordinator. Only the following furniture may be moved from the dais under the direction of the wedding coordinator or church pastor: Baptismal Font, Bible Stand. Under no circumstances can the altar be moved or the altar cross and candles be removed. Our altar rail is fixed and cannot be removed. No flowers are permitted on the altar if communion is served. The central aisle is used for seating and bridal entrance. It may not be blocked. The furniture in the Narthex is not to be moved unless previously approved by the Pastor or Wedding Coordinator.

Wedding Coordinator

Our wedding coordinator is the official representative of FUMC and is responsible for the events pertaining to the rehearsal and ceremony. You may use an outside coordinator for the actual ceremony and rehearsal but our wedding coordinator must be used for opening and closing the church and should be contacted by your outside coordinator for assistance.

Our coordinator's duties:

- 1) Seeing the guidelines for use of the church are followed.
- 2) Opening the church for the rehearsal and wedding in a timely manner.
- 3) Responding to questions from the bride and groom and their vendors (florists, photographers, etc.).
- 4) Handling other matters related to church use such as lights, heating and air conditioning, etc.
- 5) Assisting the Pastor and wedding party at the rehearsal and on the day of the wedding.
- 6) Arranging for cleaning before and after the wedding.
- 7) The wedding coordinator will open the church 2 hours prior to the service to receive floral and other decorations and will remain 1 hour after the service before closing the church. If your time needs are greater or you wish to have her open the church earlier than 2 hours prior to the service (for pictures, etc.) please make prior arrangements with the coordinator at an additional fee of \$50.00 per hour for her time.

Additional Guidelines

1. No wedding date will be guaranteed without the payment of the church usage fee. Please make checks payable to First United Methodist Church. Indicate date and time of ceremony on the check.
2. You or persons assisting with wedding (florists, musicians, etc.) may arrange a prior viewing of the sanctuary by making an appointment through the wedding coordinator.

3. No photographic or video equipment is allowed forward of the first row or pews during the ceremony except in the choir loft with an unmanned camera.
4. Only silk petals are allowed to be thrown down the aisle by the flower girls.
5. Nothing may be thrown at the bride and groom inside the church. We ask that only bubbles be used when the couple exits the sanctuary.
6. Unfortunately, we cannot offer the use of our nursery at this time for either the rehearsal or wedding.
7. No smoking inside church buildings.
8. No alcoholic beverages permitted anywhere on the premises.
9. No permanent attachments may be made to walls or furnishings.
10. If the church is used when decorated for special occasions such as Christmas or Easter, these decorations MAY NOT be removed.
11. Anyone participating in the wedding should attend the rehearsal if at all possible. This would include anyone doing a reading, soloists, musicians, etc. Attendance at the rehearsal helps insure a smooth ceremony. The rehearsal should not last more than 1 hour.
12. Marriage license must be brought to the rehearsal.
13. If the Fellowship Hall is being used for the reception, please do not drag heavy items across the floors.
14. If you require the church facilities (sanctuary, brides' room, or restrooms) to be opened more than 2 hours prior to the ceremony, an additional fee of \$50 an hour will be charged.

If you have additional questions prior to your rehearsal/wedding, please call our wedding coordinator: Kiersten Reiter, home (386)755-5983, cell (386)623-4465.