

Dressing rooms are available one hour prior to the start of a wedding for use by the bridal party. If you wish, more time may be purchased. The wedding coordinator will be able to provide you with the fee for additional time. Following the wedding, the rooms should be left in the same condition in which they were found. The church assumes no responsibility for personal possessions left unattended during the wedding or rehearsal.

There is no smoking and no alcoholic beverages permitted on the church grounds.

Holy Communion may be served during the service if it is open to all in attendance.

CHECKLIST

- Contact the church office at least six months to a year prior to the desired date of your wedding. You will be referred to a wedding coordinator who will answer your questions, clear the date on the calendar, and arrange for a minister to officiate at the service.
- Confirm the wedding date with the church office by providing a \$200 deposit. Your date is not reserved until the deposit has been paid.
- Four months before the wedding, confirm the date and time of the service and the rehearsal time. ANY requested changes in the time of the wedding or rehearsal, or if additional time beyond one hour before to one hour after the start of the wedding is needed, contact the wedding coordinator for prior approval. Other weddings or services may be planned on the same day as your wedding.
- Two months before the wedding date, schedule an appointment with the pastor.
- One to two months before the wedding, an appointment should be made with the church organist to discuss musical plans for the wedding. Remember, all music in the service must be approved by the organist and pastor.
- Three to six weeks before the wedding, obtain your marriage license from the county.

Please contact First Church for pricing and availability.



First United Methodist Church
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Our Ministers: Michael Pearson, Melissa Rynders, and Todd Rogers

Your Wedding



at
First United Methodist
Church

YOUR WEDDING IS AN ACT OF WORSHIP AND PRAISE

Your church wedding in the Christian tradition is more than a recognition or commemoration of a legal contract between two persons. We believe that marriage is part of God's desire for human beings and so we celebrate marriages with worship traditions thousands of years old. In a Christian wedding, as the vows of marriage are made, those in attendance give praise to God for the love which has drawn the couple together. The couple makes promises in the presence of God, under the cross of Christ. Here at First United Methodist Church, we strive to make the celebration of marriage a holy event in the lives of the couple being wed and their guests.

HOW BIG SHOULD MY WEDDING BE?

Your wedding can take on a life of its own if it gets too big. Couples planning a wedding often become so caught up in the details of the wedding that they miss the meaning of the celebration entirely. What should be a highlight of a person's life becomes a headache instead.

The sanctuary at First Church seats 500 persons comfortably. An additional 150 persons may be seated in the balcony. Smaller gatherings can be seated using the front section of the sanctuary only. The chancel area feels crowded if more than fourteen persons are in the wedding party. If there are additional persons you would like to have involved in your wedding, they may serve as ushers, guest book attendants, greeters, soloists, or readers.

Smaller weddings may take place in the beautiful Jones Chapel. The chapel seats about 65 persons. We recommend no more than three attendants per side in chapel ceremonies.

A pastor from First Church will officiate at the service. The church organist/pianist will provide musical accompaniment. A wedding coordinator is required for weddings at First Church. The fee for the use of the sanctuary or chapel, a pastor, organist, and wedding coordinator, as well as a custodian and an acolyte, is included in the wedding fee for non-members. The wedding hostess will be your primary contact person with the church and will assist you and the pastor with the details in the planning for your wedding.

MEETING WITH THE PASTOR

If a pastor from First Church is officiating at your wedding, you need to make contact with the pastor as soon as you book the date. The pastors adjust the premarital counseling sessions to the needs and the schedule of the couple. If you wish for another United Methodist pastor to officiate that is fine. Please have the pastor contact us as soon as possible. Generally both bride and groom are expected to attend worship services during the months before your wedding. If you are both from out of town, you may receive premarital counseling in the city where you live. This can be conducted by a pastor or other counselor; please ask the pastor/counselor to notify the church office when the sessions are complete. The officiating pastor may wish to speak directly to the pastor/counselor.

If you wish to have a pastor outside the denomination perform your ceremony, this requires approval by a First Church pastor. Please give the visiting pastor a copy of our wedding policies and ask her or him to contact our church office and speak with one of our pastors.

WHAT ABOUT PICTURES OF MY WEDDING?

Photographers are welcome to take photos before and after the wedding service. However, we ask that no flash photos be taken during the service itself. Professional photographers have the equipment and skills to do their job within these guidelines.

Many couples have videos made of their weddings. We have some simple rules for videographers. An attended camera on a stationary tripod may be placed against the side wall of the sanctuary, opposite the organ. A second camera may be placed at the rear of the sanctuary or in the balcony. Under no circumstances are persons with video cameras to move about the building during the service. No special lights may be used. Concealed wireless microphones may be used with advance approval of the pastor. Please make sure everyone in your wedding party is aware of this.

WHAT KIND OF MUSIC SHOULD I HAVE AT MY WEDDING?

Music is an important part of a wedding service. All music for services at First Church is expected to reflect the sacred nature of the service. The church organist can provide beautiful music appropriate for the occasion. Special requests for music must be approved a month in advance of the service by the organist and the pastor. Soloists are welcome in your service and should arrange practice time with the organist outside of the rehearsal time. Recorded music, played over the church's sound system, is allowed. We strongly recommend that you audition any friends or acquaintances you might ask to provide music for your wedding. Qualified musicians are welcome to use the sanctuary piano.

WHAT ABOUT THE WEDDING REHEARSAL?

Rehearsals are normally scheduled for the afternoon or evening before the wedding. It is important that every member of the wedding party be present and prompt. A rehearsal is not a formal event, and people may come comfortably dressed. At the rehearsal, the wedding hostess will go over all the details of seating, ushering, placement of the wedding party, and so forth. Wedding rehearsals are not designed to provide rehearsal time for special music. Again, musical rehearsal needs to be scheduled separately. The wedding rehearsal usually lasts about an hour.

DONATIONS

Fees for weddings at First Church defray the actual costs of maintenance, utilities, and all of the personnel involved in providing a wedding. The wedding coordinator will advise you of current costs. A \$200 deposit is required to be paid to the church office in order to confirm your wedding date. All costs must be paid to the church office in full four weeks prior to the wedding rehearsal. An honorarium for the pastor may or may not be included in the wedding costs. Please read your contract carefully.

OTHER IMPORTANT STUFF

A tradition has developed recently around the lighting of a Unity Candle on the altar. The lighting of the candle is included as an option in the pastors' regular order of worship. The Unity Candle and the tapers used to light it can be provided by the church for an additional fee.

The church does not provide flowers for your wedding. However, flower arrangements in appropriate colors will enhance the beauty of your wedding. Several local florists can assist you in selecting flowers. The wedding coordinator can recommend skilled florists, as well as other vendors such as bakers, photographers, musicians, etc.

We regret that because of liability issues, the church cannot provide rooms for childcare for weddings.

We do not allow rice or birdseed to be thrown at weddings. You may substitute bubbles or flower petals for this ancient tradition of sending off a newlywed couple.

We do not allow the use of aisle runners or wedding arches in the sanctuary.