

Wedding Guidelines & Service Planning First United Methodist Church

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A Theology of Christian MARRIAGE

Marriage is an institution ordained by God, and scripture teaches that God forms each marriage relationship (Mark 10:6-9). The mystery of marriage is profound. Marriage stands as a reminder of Christ's commitment to and union with the church. Christian marriage is grounded in the grace of God. As commitment toward God increases, so does union with and devotion to one's spouse.

A Christian wedding is the beginning of a Christian marriage. A Christian wedding, unlike a civil ceremony, is first and foremost a worship service. Christian worship always centers in God and God's actions, and always includes the participation of the believing community. The wedding should be planned so that those in attendance are not mere spectators at a performance, but participants in worship. As the congregation prays together and praises God's saving presence, the couple pledges life-long fidelity as husband and wife. The two become one, bound together in the love of Christ.

Counseling Requirements

Pre-marital counseling is required for all marriages performed at First United Methodist Church. Pastor Jo Anne is a certified Prepare & Enrich Facilitator, and can provide marriage preparation through this program. The online couple's assessment costs \$35, and the counseling program usually requires 8-12 sessions. Pastor Jo Anne provides all materials beyond the online assessment. Couples who receive preparation classes from another counselor must provide a written certificate of completion to the Pastor at least three weeks before the wedding.

Minnesota Marriage License

The marriage license may be purchased from the Recorder's Office at the Brown County Courthouse (507-233-6657). The cost is \$115. The license is good for six months. Under Minnesota Law, completing 12 hours of premarital counseling with the pastor may qualify you for a reduced license fee of \$40.

Advance Notice and Off Site Weddings

The church requires three months between the couple's first inquiry and the wedding. Those wishing to be married on shorter notice, or at a location other than the church, must contact the Pastor. Expenses for food, lodging, and round trip mileage at the current IRS rate should be reimbursed to the Pastor for any off-site wedding rehearsal and ceremony, in addition to the customary honorarium for the pastor.

Music Guidelines

Updated April 2017

Music selected for your wedding should create and sustain a worshipful mood. The Pastor must approve all music selections. An organist/pianist from First UMC is available upon request. If microphones or recorded music are to be used, a Sound Technician from First UMC is required.

Other Considerations

- The wedding rehearsal must be placed on the church calendar when the wedding ceremony is scheduled.
- A Pastor from First UMC, or one approved by the Pastor, shall officiate the wedding ceremony.
- The Pastor must approve the wedding bulletin before it is printed. The wedding couple is responsible for printing the wedding bulletins.
- The Pastor officiating the wedding is in charge of the wedding rehearsal. If you plan to use a wedding coordinator from outside the First UMC congregation, the wedding coordinator must arrange all activities (decorating, photographs, etc.) directly with the Pastor, and may only work within the confines of church property at the discretion of the Pastor.
- No flash photography is allowed during the service, but you may arrange to have the service videotaped.
- The church building is to be respected as a reverent worship space. *No smoking or alcoholic beverages are allowed on church property.* The wedding party is responsible for general clean up of the church property, and for any damages incurred.

Suggested Honoraria for Wedding Personnel

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| First UMC Sound Technician | \$75 |
| First UMC Custodian | \$75 |
| First UMC Wedding Hostess | \$100 |
| Organist/ Pianist/Soloist | \$150 |
| Officiant/Pastor | \$150 |

Make checks payable to the individual. Payment is due at the wedding rehearsal. Non-members may include these checks with the building use fee due one week before the wedding (see below).

Building Use Fees For Non-Members

- \$200 includes Sanctuary, Library Lounge, additional rooms as arranged
- \$200 Fellowship Hall/Kitchen (if used to prepare and serve a meal to the wedding party)

Make checks for building use payable to First United Methodist Church New Ulm.
Payment must be received in the church office at least one week before the wedding.

