

Exceptions to this policy may be made by
the lead pastor. *(revised October 19, 2010)*

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Our Wedding Policies



Revised October 19, 2010

First Church
A United Methodist Congregation

Congratulations!

Weddings are exciting. Amid the busyness of selecting invitations, fitting gowns, and ordering flowers, don't forget the best part of the wedding—it is the beginning of a Christian marriage. At First Church, we believe that the engagement period should be a time to focus on preparing for your life together, not for your wedding day alone. Many of our policies and expectations stem from this belief.

Christian Marriage

Our pastors perform ceremonies of Christian marriage. We believe that there is a sacred element to marriage because it is a means by which God's grace and blessings come to us. There are other people (e.g., judge, justice of the peace) who are authorized to perform civil marriages for those who are unwilling or unable to commit to the standards of Christian marriage.

Commitment

We are committed to your success in marriage. All of our interactions with you will be geared toward helping you to achieve that goal. In turn, we expect you to demonstrate a commitment to your own marital preparation and to the cause of Christ. Commitment to the cause of Christ is demonstrated by your participation in the life and ministries of First Church (or another Christian church if the couple is from out-of-town). At the very minimum, you are expected to regularly attend worship (at least 3 Sundays a month) for at least 6 months before your wedding. Because the Bible clearly states that Christians are to marry other Christians (2 Corinthians 6:14), both the man and woman are expected to demonstrate this commitment. More specific information on the expectations regarding commitment to the Christian faith can be provided by the pastor.

Coursework

A privately contracted counselor offers pre-marital coursework that will help you prepare for a successful marriage. This coursework includes three sessions with the counselor (Amy McGovern) and then a meeting with the officiating pastor to go over wedding details. Completion of the coursework is required. We attempt to schedule the sessions at convenient times. Additional information on the pre-marital coursework is available in the "Count Down to Your Wedding" wedding details, which is available in the church office.

Making Arrangements

Scheduling the Wedding.

First Church is a very busy place! Before a definite date is planned, please call the church office to ensure the availability of a minister, organist and the church facilities. Please do not make other contractual arrangements (e.g., reception hall, DJ, etc.) before confirmed dates are received from the church.

Wedding Music

Organ music at all services shall be provided by the organist of the Church, Diane Havrilla, and an immediate contact with her is advised (326-1806). She will be happy to discuss with you wedding music for the organ and your vocal soloist, if a soloist has been chosen. (Please note the extra fee for soloists.) This conference should be arranged as soon as possible. If musicians other than the church organist are desired it is strongly suggested that they be used as part of the pre-service recital or service music with the organist playing at least the processional and recessional. If the church organist is not used, the musicians (or at least the leader of an ensemble) must be present throughout the rehearsal.

Alcohol and Tobacco

1. Smoking is prohibited in all of our buildings for your health and safety.

2. Use of alcohol on the church premises is prohibited. Use of alcohol prior to the rehearsal or wedding by the members of the wedding party may cause, at the discretion of the pastor, cancellation of the rehearsal or wedding.

Fees

Fees are established to compensate for use of facility and staff responsibilities. Fees for members are not required for asterisked(*) items because their financial support of the facilities and staff is assumed. "Member" signifies that either the bride or groom is an active member of First Church.

Fees for Pastor, Organist, Counselor and Custodian should be separate checks made out directly to the individuals. All fees are due in the Church office two weeks prior to the wedding.

Deposit (to secure date)	\$100
Sanctuary	\$100*
Pastor	\$150*
Organist	\$100 (+\$25 per soloist)
Counselor	\$100
Custodian	\$100
Coursework materials	\$30

Fellowship Hall and the Christian Life Center may be rented for a reception facility for an additional fee. A listing of fees charged for optional services is provided in the "Facility Use" policy available at the information centers.

Other pastors.

First Church does not "rent" the sanctuary for weddings, but will allow other pastors to use the sanctuary if they have need of it. For example, pastors of other churches may need a larger sanctuary for adequate seating or may wish to use First church because their own sanctuary is being renovated. See above for "*Scheduling the Wedding.*"