

INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on your decision to marry! Our church family of Christ United Methodist Church rejoices with you on this happy occasion.

We believe that a church wedding is a special act of Christian worship, not a public performance or social display. It requires of us a worshipful attitude of celebration. A church wedding is also a civil act and is regarded by our courts as a legally binding commitment. Therefore, we know that when we marry, we do so in the presence of God and of our fellow human beings, under God's law and human law.

The reservation of your wedding date should be made through the church office. You will be assigned to a Wedding Coordinator through whom you will make the rest of the arrangements.

The Wedding Coordinator will work with you and the pastor to make your wedding meaningful. Although there are many so-called "authorities" who will offer you advice on how to plan your wedding, remember that there are no "rules" which apply to every wedding. Be assured that we have had a good deal of wedding experience from which we can offer you much helpful advice. If you have any questions, direct them to the Wedding Coordinator.

PREMARITAL COUNSELING

As of January 1, 2009, premarital counseling is available through the Samaritan Counseling Center located at 8650 Pioneers Blvd. If you desire to use their services, you and your fiancé will meet for three 2-hour sessions. In these sessions, you will learn important skills, as well as gain support, knowledge and tools for your new life path together. Please contact the center at (402) 483-5117 to make arrangements. There is a \$200 fee for their services.

You will need to schedule a meeting or two with the church pastor. These conversations will be helpful to you and your pastor to discuss basic wedding information and how your wedding service can be tailored to meet your needs.

REHEARSAL AND CEREMONY

Rehearsal

The wedding rehearsal is generally scheduled one or two days before the wedding. Since many couples enjoy a pre-nuptial dinner on the evening of the rehearsal, we believe it is best to schedule the dinner to follow the rehearsal. This will allow you to have a relaxed and unhurried meal together.

Everyone who has a part in the wedding service should plan on attending the wedding rehearsal. Naturally, this would include the bride and groom, their parents, the maid/matron of honor and bridesmaids, the best man, groomsmen and ushers, the ring bearer and flower girl, candle lighters, the organist and other musicians, and the pastor. **We ask that everyone be prompt for the rehearsal as it will take less than an hour to complete.** When you come to the rehearsal, **PLEASE BRING THE WEDDING LICENSE DOCUMENTS WITH YOU** and give them to the pastor. They will be signed and returned to you after the ceremony.

**Because of liability issues, items/clothing/gifts are not allowed to be left overnight in the building.*

Ceremony

The wedding ceremony is the central event of a big day in your lives. It may be as elaborate or as simple as you choose in consultation with your pastor. Our facility will be available to the wedding party three (3) hours before the start of the ceremony. We encourage the taking of posed photographs before the ceremony (see paragraph on photos). Allow two (2) hours or more for preparation and pictures. Plan to be through with the photo session at least 45 minutes before the ceremony.

MUSIC

The music you choose for your wedding should be appropriate for an act of worship. The themes expressed through the music should be harmonious with a Christian understanding of love and commitment. Keeping love and commitment in mind as you select your music, involvement by all of your guests is especially meaningful through the use of singing a hymn. Your pastor or professional musician can help you in your selection. After selecting your music, it is important to discuss the placement of music in the service with your pastor.

Many weddings require the participation of an organist. The CUMC organist can be contacted through the church office at (402) 489-9618. The organist will:

1. *Meet for initial consultation to select music;*
2. *Be at rehearsal practice with wedding party and soloist;*
3. *Play for the wedding*

Fee: \$175.00

Please note that this fee is to be paid directly to the organist. You may contact him/her for payment arrangements. This fee is not included in the wedding fees charged by CUMC.

DECORATIONS & PHOTOGRAPHS

Our church is designed as a house of worship with a beauty which inspires our worship. We trust that you will find our sanctuary to be a beautiful place for your wedding.

Decorations

There are several decorations which you may choose to enhance the beauty of our sanctuary. Floral arrangements may be used, but we ask that the number of arrangements be kept within the limits of good taste. You may use our candelabra in addition to the Christ candle and the altar candles. If you choose to use candelabra, we ask that you use our brass candelabra with the liquid filled candles.

Please note that there is a \$25.00 charge for wedding decorations left at the church overnight, and \$10.00 per day for every day after that items are left.

Photographs & Videotaping

Photographs & videotapes will provide a wonderful remembrance of your wedding. Use the services of a competent, professional photographer.

Photographs may be taken during the processional and recessional, and during the ceremony as well by your photographer. Photographs of the ceremony may be taken only from the back of the church and without flash. Videotaping of the ceremony is permissible. The camera must be stationary. Your pastor can help you select an appropriate place to set it up. It is the usual custom for couples to have their posed photographs taken before the wedding, and we strongly encourage you to do this. **Photographs MUST be finished 45 minutes before the ceremony is to start.**

THE DAY OF THE CEREMONY

Dressing facilities for the bridal party:

The bride and her attendants dress in Room #103. A full length mirror and special hanging racks are provided. The groom and his attendants dress in the Room #211, adjacent to the chancel area of the sanctuary. No clothing deliveries should be made to the church. Apparel should be brought to the church at the time of the wedding. It is recommended that special care be given to valuables. Christ United Methodist Church will not be responsible for lost or stolen items. The bridesmaids and groomsmen shall be responsible for cleaning out the dressing rooms of clothing and other personal items, preferably before the ceremony.

Food for the bridal party:

If you would like to provide snacks for the bridal party, please make arrangements with your wedding coordinator so setup can be made in the Family Life Center. **No food or drinks are allowed in the sanctuary.**

Guest Book: The church will provide a guest book table and table cover. It will be placed in the main entrance and the guest book should be opened approximately one half hour before the wedding begins. Late arriving guests should be given a chance to sign the book at the reception.

Gift Table: Space is available for gifts that guests bring to the wedding. (Gifts can be placed on tables in the parlor area.) The gift attendants would begin duties approximately one half hour before the wedding begins. We recommend that the gifts NOT be opened at the church. It is important that special care be given to wedding gifts by this attendant, including taping cards to gifts, so that they do not get separated, and perhaps a special box or basket available for cards (which may contain money). The attendants shall be responsible for seeing that the gifts are transported to the place designated by the bride and groom.

Three Hours Before the Wedding: The church and rooms will be open. The bride or a representative should check with the Wedding Coordinator regarding arrangements.

FEES AND POLICIES

Fees paid directly to the church:

Custodial Fee	\$ 75.00
Wedding Coordinator Fee	\$ 200.00
Use of the Sanctuary	\$ 500.00

Fees Paid to Individuals:

Pastors Fee	\$ 150.00
Organist (If applicable)	\$ 175.00

A \$100 deposit is required to reserve the wedding date on the church calendar. The balance due to the church must be paid 2 weeks prior to the wedding. All except \$100.00 is refundable up to 1 week prior to the wedding in the event of a cancellation.

Please Note: Saturday Weddings are to be scheduled at 5:00 p.m. or before.

Policies

Rice, birdseed, potpourri, etc is **NOT** to be distributed to arriving guests. **They may NOT be thrown IN or AROUND the church building.**

All vehicles are to be removed from the parking lot after the wedding ceremony. NO vehicles shall be left overnight.

Smoking & Alcoholic Beverages

Our church observes a **NO tobacco (including chewing tobacco) or use of alcoholic beverages policy** in our building and on the grounds outside including the parking lot. **WE ASK YOU TO FOLLOW THIS POLICY.**