
SULLIVAN FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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Wedding Policy

“This is why a man will leave his father and mother and be united with his wife, and the two of them will be one body. Marriage is a significant allegory, and I’m applying it to Christ and the church. In any case, as for you individually, each one of you should love his wife as himself, and wives should respect their husbands.”
 —Ephesians 5:31-33

We are excited that you have found someone with whom you wish to enter into the honorable estate of marriage with! We are also glad that you wish to celebrate your happy occasion with us here at Sullivan First UMC! In preparation of your big day we ask that you adhere to the following requirements and planning as outlined in our Wedding Policy as well as the regulations listed in the Agreement / Application form. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask the pastor!

I. REQUIREMENTS OF THE BRIDE AND GROOM

Each Couple getting married at First UMC is expected to . . .

Clear your date and church room reservations (Sanctuary, Fellowship Hall, etc.) with the church office (812-268-4498) as early as possible. It is recommended that this be done as early as one (1) year in advance, but should be a minimum of three (3) months prior to your desired wedding date.

- Meet with the pastor well in advance of the ceremony for premarital guidance and wedding service planning. This includes an initial meeting of about thirty minutes and three to five additional premarital sessions lasting approximately one hour each. Exception to this requirement is at the discretion of the pastor.
- Participate in the Wedding Rehearsal at the time scheduled.
- See that all members of the wedding party are present for the Rehearsal (this includes all attendants, parents, or other family members who will be participants).
- Be liable for any damages incurred or any special cleaning required after the wedding.
- Arrange for the removal of all refuse, rented equipment, and personal items from the church immediately following the service.
- Pass along the rules and guidelines in this policy to photographers, florists, and all members of the wedding party, participants and guests and make sure they are followed.
- Follow all other rules and guidelines set forth in this policy.

II. WORSHIP SERVICE GUIDELINES

The United Methodist Church *Service of Christian Marriage* is not just a “wedding ceremony” for the couple and family but is a “service of worship” with its foundation in the historic Christian tradition. Therefore . . .

- God is the primary focus of ALL Christian worship. The focus is upon how God works to bring a man and a woman together in Holy Marriage, and that a marriage can only be faithfully lived when God is the third and primary partner in the marriage.
- There are three (3) different United Methodist wedding service liturgies to choose from and each one contains various options during the service. They are called: the *Traditional Wedding Service with Historic Language*, the *Traditional Wedding Service with Modern Language*, and the *Contemporary Service of Christian Marriage* as contained in the United Methodist Hymnal and Book of Worship (also see the Pastor about the possibility of using or blending liturgies from other Christian Denominations.)

Music is very important and must be selected with care.

- Many styles of music both sacred and secular are used in wedding services today. Music makes the service come to life and more personal for the couple. The music selected will be judged appropriate or inappropriate by the pastor based on its content and overall style in as it relates to the service liturgy selected by the couple. Congregational hymns for weddings, if used, are available for view in the *United Methodist Hymnal* located in the pew racks.
- The pastor, in consultation with the Music Director and/or Organist, must approve musicians and singers. Remember that the wedding service is not a performance but a service of worship to God.
- The church’s pianist and organist have first priority in playing for your wedding. If their schedules do not permit them to play or they are amenable to an outside musician playing in their stead then the musician of your choice may be used. The pianist / organist honorariums are listed on the Agreement form.

The wedding party, worship attendants, family members and other participants in the wedding should attend the rehearsal.

- The Best Man, Maid-of-Honor (Matron-of-Honor), Bridesmaids, “Junior” Bridesmaids, Groomsmen, Ushers, Ring Bearers, Flower Girls, Parents of the Couple, Musicians, singers, etc. must attend in order to know how they will participate, when to arrive, and where to be.
- The rehearsal takes about one (1) hour if the service is walked through twice and will take slightly longer if musicians and singers do a run-through of

their music. Keep this in mind as you contemplate rehearsal times in conjunction with rehearsal night dinners or parties.

Other Clergy may assist in your wedding service.

- Other Christian Clergy may be invited to assist or co-officiate as approved. The invitation to assist must be extended by the pastor of First UMC.
- In the United Methodist Church the pastor must be present, have part in, have direction and oversight, and be literally “in charge” of all services of the church (as outlined in the *Book of Discipline*).
- The order and liturgy for the Service of Marriage is at the discretion of the pastor.

Most photography must be done before, and/or after, the service.

- NO flash photography may be done during the service (which is defined as after the Bridal Entrance until after the benediction by the Pastor).
- Existing light photographs (non-flash) may be taken during the service.
- Photographers engaged to take pictures must consult with the pastor prior to the service and make necessary arrangements.

Videotaping of the service and videographers must be approved and advised by the pastor prior to the rehearsal.

- Videographers should plan to be at the rehearsal so they may be instructed where to place stationary cameras and lights appropriately.
- There will be no “wandering” videographers on the main floor of the sanctuary.
- If sun-gun lights [video lights] are used, they must be turned on before the service begins and turned off after the service ends.

Remember, it is the duty of the Bride and Groom to see that the rules of this policy are followed and that all participants and guests are informed of the proper use of all facilities.

III. BUILDING USE POLICY *(These are particular to weddings. For all regulations see “Building Use Regulations”)*

1. **The church building (Sanctuary, Fellowship Hall and all rooms) is available on a first come, first served, basis and will be reserved by the Church Office once the Pastor agrees to and sets the Wedding and Rehearsal dates.**
2. If there are two requests for the same date, a church member is given priority over a non-member.
3. Because of Sunday morning worship services, all persons must be out of the church building by 9 p.m. Saturday so that the church Custodian may complete his/her duties.
4. No weddings will be scheduled after 7 p.m. any day of the week.
5. NO alcoholic beverages are permitted or are to be consumed in any part of the church building or anywhere on the church grounds.
6. NO smoking is allowed anywhere in the church building, including restrooms and basement areas. No exceptions.

IV. DECORATIONS

Your florist or decorator will want to be advised to the following guidelines concerning flowers and decorations. It is the duty and responsibility of the couple that the florist or decorator read and abide by the following items:

- Flowers or decorations must not block or hide the cross, the altar, or any Christian symbols. All Christian symbols must remain and be visible in the Sanctuary.
- It is mandatory that water proof/absorbent pads be placed under all palms, ferns, and floral pieces as well as real candlesticks and holders. Only no-drip or oil candles may be used in the Sanctuary.
- Pew markers, bows, isle candles, wall decorations, etc. may be used if attached in such a way that causes no marring or damage to the walls or wood finish. Duct tape or foam double-sided tape may NOT be used in any way.
- The church will not be responsible for any decorations, clothing, rented apparatus, or floral arrangements left in the church after the service and/or reception is over. It is expected that everything belonging to the florist, decorator, wedding party, or involved families be removed immediately following the service or reception.
- The church will provide a stand for a guest book, candelabra, and/or a unity candle stand, if requested.
- A white isle cloth (runner) may be used but must be furnished by the wedding couple or florist.
- The throwing of rice or paper confetti is prohibited inside or outside the church building. Birdseed may be used outside of the building only.
- Florists and/or decorators must make arrangements through the church Office Manager for appropriate times to gain access to the church for wedding preparations.

IV. HONORARIUMS AND CHURCH USE DONATIONS *(The following are considered appropriate minimums)*

- **PASTOR** *(for premarital counseling, rehearsal, and wedding service)*
\$100.00
- **ORGANIST** *(for rehearsal and wedding service)*
\$100.00
- **SOUND TECHNICIAN** *(for rehearsal and wedding service – IF NEEDED)*
\$75.00
- **CUSTODIAN** *(for rehearsal & wedding preparation and clean-up)*
\$60
- **PERSONS WITH NO AFFILIATION, BUILDING USE**
Damage deposit;
\$100.00
- **MEMBER & CONSTITUENT, BUILDING USE**
\$0.00

(No donations are asked from church members. However, a monetary gift is always appropriate)

BUILDING USE MONEY SHOULD BE REMITTED TO THE CHURCH OFFICE 10 DAYS PRIOR TO THE WEDDING SERVICE. ALL OTHERS MONIES SHOULD BE GIVEN DIRECTLY TO THE INDIVIDUALS AT THE WEDDING REHEARSAL.