

Wedding Policy of First United Methodist Church Mansfield

A WORD OF WELCOME

We are delighted that you are considering First United Methodist Church of Mansfield to be the place for your wedding. The ministers and staff want to help you in every way possible to make your wedding the beautiful and memorable event that you would like it to be. We hope that the following information is helpful to you in planning your wedding, knowing the rules and regulations of our church regarding weddings and in answering other questions you might have.

SCHEDULING YOUR WEDDING

All weddings are to be scheduled through the church office. Please call Mary Beth Mayo at 817-477-2287 X 101. Available dates and times will be given to you. Wedding Coordinator, Denise Wilkens will assist the Minister at rehearsal and during the wedding ceremony. The Wedding Coordinator will also be happy to meet with you and answer any questions that you might have. Weddings may NOT be scheduled on the following days: Thanksgiving Weekend, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Easter Week-End, and Sundays as well as yearly pre-determined dates based on activities of the church.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO BE MARRIED IN OUR CHURCH?

Priority on the use of the church for weddings is given to members. Members shall be defined as one of the following: bride, groom, parents, grandparents or guardians. At the time of inquiry about the availability of the church a person must be member of First United Methodist Church of Mansfield in order to receive the member rate. There are no exceptions. This is our policy.

YOUR WEDDING

The United Methodist Church believes that a wedding is a happy and joyous occasion and that its social importance is only incidental to its spiritual significance. **The wedding is a service of worship in which vows are made, prayers are offered, and a blessing is given.**

Methodist practice requires that all arrangements pertaining to the service of marriage must be made in consultation with the minister and/or the Wedding Coordinator. The trustees of our church have endorsed a few general policies and requirements, based on experience. These policies and guidelines are offered to aid you in thoroughly planning a sacred and dignified wedding. Please read the material carefully so that you may know the traditions and suggested procedures for our church. We thank you in advance for cooperating with us in maintaining these standards.

REHEARSAL

Wedding rehearsals are held on Friday evening, the night before the wedding at 6:00 p.m. Rehearsals shall last no longer than one hour. In the event of two weddings on Saturday the other rehearsal time shall be 5:00 p.m. The bride who booked her wedding first shall have her choice of rehearsal times. This will be scheduled at the same time that the wedding is scheduled.

FACILITIES

The Sanctuary seats 1,350 and has a family/bride's room. The Main Building has rooms available for the groom and groomsmen. A ceremony in the sanctuary can be scheduled for the following times based on availability:

- **Friday at 6:00, 7:00 or 8:00 p.m.**
- **Saturday at 2:00, 3:00, 4:00 or 8:00 p.m.**

The Chapel seats 227 and separate rooms are available for the bride's room and groom's room. A ceremony on in the Chapel can be scheduled for the following times base on availability:

- **Friday at 6:00 p.m.**
- **Saturday at 6:00 p.m.**

It is the responsibility of the wedding party to leave the rooms as they were found. The Church is not responsible for any items left behind. We do NOT have facilities for Rehearsal Dinners.

MUSICIANS

The staff organist is available most times, however, the names of other organists can be provided should the staff organist be unavailable. The staff organist must approve any guest organist. It is recommended that the wedding couple meet with the organist to select appropriate wedding/worship music. A piano is also available in the sanctuary.

The wedding service is the Church at worship and the Church in witness; the music should contribute to Christian worship and witness. Any music used in a Church wedding should be worthy of the worship of Almighty God. Our Organist will be happy to assist in the selection of sacred music to be played during prelude, processional, the ceremony and the recessional. The music need not be limited to the organ or piano. Recommended are also the harp, harpsichord, flute, violin, bell choir, trombone, clarinet, trumpet, guitar and chamber music ensembles can be used quite effectively. Musicians should be paid at the beginning of the rehearsal or prior to the ceremony if there is no rehearsal.

If a soloist is used, one rehearsal time prior to the wedding rehearsal may be arranged with the organist. Congregational hymns are appropriate and add to the corporate nature of the worship service. The use of the A/V Technician is required and is included in the fees for a wedding.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO TAPING

No photography requiring additional lighting (flash photography) is permitted during the ceremony while the participants are at the altar. The best wedding pictures are those posed immediately following the service when the photographer is given free access to

all areas.

Photographs may be taken during the processional and the recessional. Videotaping may be done from the rear of the Sanctuary or from a stationary video camera in the choir loft. There will be no standing on pews or furnishings. Camera equipment is not to be fastened to, leaned against or stood on railings or furnishings. Please do not use the Narthex as a photographer's studio. Following the ceremony, 30 minutes will be allowed for the taking of pictures.

DECORATIONS

Only votive or spring-loaded candles are allowed to be used in the sanctuary. A minimum of 2 feet of floor covering must be used to protect the carpeting and the furniture. No lit candles, hurricane lamps, etc. are to be used in the pew area, choir loft or altar rail. No tape of any sort is to be used on the pews or other furniture.

Please begin preparations by florists no more than 2 hours before the ceremony. You are guaranteed that time. It is the responsibility of the bridal party to forward all wedding policy information to florists, caterers and photographers. Caterers and florists must remove all decorations immediately following the marriage service. It is not the responsibility of the Wedding Coordinator or Custodian to do that clean up. Florists and caterers are expected to leave the facilities as they were found and to compensate the church for any accidental damage that may occur. The church is not responsible for items left unattended during any time of the wedding preparation, ceremony or time following.

WEDDING ARRANGEMENTS

The use of church facilities must be compatible with the church's purpose and must not interfere with regular church activities and needs. The wedding must be scheduled through the Office. All facilities needed for the rehearsal and the wedding must be reserved at the time the wedding is scheduled. The wedding and rehearsal will be directed by the minister in charge with assistance from the Wedding Coordinator because local policies, denominational procedures, and knowledge of the church plan are necessary. The wedding party is responsible for arrangements for musicians, florists, photographers, etc. Every effort should be made to see to it that the church premises are ready for use by the church following the Wedding ceremony and reception.

GUEST MINISTERS/STANDARD POLICIES AND RULES

When a Minister from another church is desired, it is proper and necessary that the pastor in charge of our church, FUMC Mansfield, officially approves and invites that minister. The visiting pastor should call our Senior Pastor and introduce him or herself. Use of facilities, furniture, fixtures or equipment must be arranged in advance of the rehearsal. The furniture at the altar area may NOT be moved. PLEASE DO NOT MOVE OR OTHERWISE REARRANGE THE FURNITURE IN THE SANCTUARY, NARTHEX OR ATRIUM.

Immediately after the ceremony and after all the guests have left, please remove all decorations and wedding accouterments.

PLEASE OBSERVE THE “NO SMOKING” RULES FOR THE ENTIRE CHURCH CAMPUS AND GROUNDS.

NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES MAY BE SERVED OR CONSUMED ON/IN THE CHURCH CAMPUS.

Birdseed, bubbles and flower petals may be used outside the church building. Rice, confetti or paper are prohibited. Flower girls are to drop only silk flower petals not real flowers. If children are to be a part of the wedding party, it is recommended that they be four years of age or older. Due to the worship significance of the wedding ceremony, shouts and/or calls of approval from the wedding party or guests are inappropriate.

When no rule or regulation exists for a situation or a special consideration makes it expedient for the Minister who is conducting the ceremony is authorized to make a binding decision. In the event that it is a visiting minister, the wedding coordinator in dialog with the Minister is authorized to make a binding decision.

CONCERNING THE HONORARIUM

Caterers, florists and musicians have a set fee commensurate with their time and skill. While the minister has no “set charge”, it is customary for the groom to pay him/her for his/her time and services which include, of course, the total responsibility for the wedding, rehearsal and pre-marital counseling.

**** THE CHURCH RESERVES THE RIGHT TO AMEND THIS POLICY AT SUCH TIME AS THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES DIRECTS.****

*****Fees are listed in the policies kept by the Wedding Coordinator*****