

WEDDINGS AT FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

A wedding conducted at First United Church of Christ (heretofore known as *First UCC*) is a worship service. As such, all weddings will be done in a tasteful, religious, and worshipful context.

Your wedding may be as elaborate or as simple as you desire. Whether public or private, large or small, you will want to make this ceremony as beautiful, meaningful, and reverent as possible. This requires careful preparation and planning.

SETTING THE DATE

- Please call our office (339-5871) to inquire about the availability of the pastor and a date for the Sanctuary or Chapel for both rehearsal and wedding.
- Our sanctuary will seat 300 people, with extended seating for 75 available in the parlor. Our chapel seats 50 people.
- The pastor will meet with the couple to get acquainted, discuss these policies and procedures, and answer any initial questions. There will be no firm commitments before this meeting. If all parties then agree to go ahead, the couple will begin premarital counseling with the pastor.
- Please note that the bride and groom will be required to sign a contract at the initial meeting with the pastor acknowledging that they have reviewed the First UCC wedding policies at that meeting and that they agree to follow these stated wedding policies for their wedding.
- The couple will also need to read and sign the Facility Use Permit Form mandated by the First UCC Property Board.
- After this initial meeting with the pastor, the couple will need to set up an appointment with our wedding coordinator(s).
- We do not schedule weddings after 2:30 pm on Saturdays, due to a 5:00 pm worship service.
- Weddings are not scheduled on traditional holiday celebrations.

OFFICIATING CLERGY

- The pastor of this church will officiate at all wedding ceremonies here. When it is the wish of the couple to invite another pastor to *assist* in the ceremony, the couple must first receive the approval of the First UCC pastor before an invitation is extended. In all cases, the invitation will be extended to other clergy only by the First UCC pastor. The church building is not available for rental to couples who intend to supply their own officiant.

PREPARATION

- All persons seeking to be married in our church will receive pre-marital counseling by the pastor of this church.
- Because of the time needed for premarital counseling, the wedding is to be scheduled a full three months in advance of the wedding date. Extenuating circumstances may be discussed with the pastor.
- Pastoral premarital counseling requires a minimum of three sessions. The initial meeting with the pastor, in which general information is acquired, is not a counseling session.

LICENSE

- The marriage license is obtained by the couple being married. As costs and requirements vary from county to county, please apply at least three weeks prior to your wedding day. No blood tests are required in Ohio. The phone number for the Miami County Probate Court is 440-6050. The marriage license *must* be delivered to the officiating pastor before the ceremony may begin. A good way to handle this is to give the license to the pastor at the rehearsal.

INVITATIONS

- When ordering your invitations, the suggested form for the church address is as follows:

The First United Church of Christ
120 South Market Street
Troy, OH 45373

- Written directions and maps for inclusion in your invitations are available from the church office

MUSIC

- In any wedding, music adds dignity and reverence. The organist of First UCC will be happy to make arrangements for your wedding music. Music that is not considered a part of the normal organist repertoire may be used, but it will be the wedding party's responsibility to supply. Please note in the Schedule of Fees section that a \$25 fee is added to the organist's fee if there is a soloist that the organist will need to work with. If you would like our organist, Ms. Karen Aumick, to play, she needs to be contacted as soon as possible to discuss your wedding music. Ms. Aumick can be contacted at (937) 339-6039. In the event that Ms. Aumick is not available, First UCC has two substitute organists that may be used. FYI, organists from outside First UCC are not permitted, though pianists and other musicians are welcome.
- Wedding music for use at First UCC should be evaluated with the following criteria: if you plan on using music that would not be normally acceptable for a worship service, you must have that music pre-approved by the officiating pastor and the organist, if the organist is participating in the wedding. All music must be approved at least four weeks before the wedding. Last minute music substitutions are not permitted

FURNISHINGS AND DECORATION OF THE SANCTUARY/CHAPEL

- Our chancel furniture (pulpit and lectern, communion table, vestments, cross, wall hangings, pictures, etc) are not to be removed. Weddings during the four weeks of Advent and other seasons of the church are approved with the understanding that the **Sanctuary decorations will not be removed or moved for the wedding ceremony.**
- Most local florists are acquainted with our facilities and will be able to suggest various decorations for your consideration. Please be advised that you may not use nails, tacks, or any form of tape when decorating.
- If you wish to leave your floral decorations for use in the Sunday worship service, please inform the church office no later than the Wednesday before the wedding.
- Candelabra, aisle runners, pew ribbons, unity candles and other decorations may be ordered from your florist. Aisle runners need to be at least 50 feet long. Only *dripless* candles may be used in the Sanctuary. *Carried* candles must be protected by glass from open exposure.
- A kneeling bench is available for the couple's use.

NURSERY

- The church nursery is available for use. If needed, nursery attendants are to be provided by the wedding party.

PHOTOGRAPHS/VIDEO TAPES

- Only non-flash photography is allowed during the wedding ceremony. Processional and recessional pictures may be taken by the designated photographer, provided the movements of the wedding party are not blocked in any way. Other photographs may be taken before or after the service. The pastor will be happy to re-enact any part of the service for the photographer. Please arrange to have all photographs with the pastor taken as soon after the service as possible.

WORSHIP BULLETINS

- Many couples provide worshippers with a bulletin. Most religious bookstores carry wedding bulletin covers. It is the responsibility of the couple to purchase, type, and reproduce these bulletins. Prior to having them printed, the copy must be reviewed and approved by the pastor. Below is a sample Order of Worship.

THE WEDDING OF GROOM AND BRIDE

DATE

FIRST UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

ORDER OF WORSHIP

PROCESSIONAL

GREETING

OPENING PRAYER

PRESENTATION OF THE BRIDE

DECLARATION OF INTENTION

SCRIPTURE READING

WEDDING HOMILY

EXCHANGE OF VOWS

BLESSING AND EXCHANGE OF RINGS

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

LORD'S PRAYER

LIGHTING OF THE UNITY CANDLE

DECLARATION OF MARRIAGE

BLESSING OF THE MARRIAGE

BENEDICTION

INTRODUCTION OF COUPLE

RECESSIONAL

REHEARSAL

- A rehearsal date should be set at the initial meeting with the pastor and wedding coordinator. The usual time for the rehearsal is the evening before the wedding. Most rehearsals take between one hour and an hour and a half. The entire wedding party, including ushers and parents, is expected to be present and on time. *Please be courteous of those officiating and assisting with your wedding and honor this schedule.*

SMOKING AND ALCOHOL

- Use of alcohol and tobacco are not allowed in the church. Any use of these substances will result in the person being asked to leave. All members of the wedding party are to be sober at both the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony.

RICE AND BIRD SEED

- For safety and health reasons, the use of rice and bird seed is not allowed.

THE WEDDING DAY

- First UCC provides changing space for the bride, groom, and their attendants. The entire wedding party (bride, groom, attendants, ushers, family members, etc.), are encouraged to be at the church no later than **one hour prior** to the ceremony. This will allow time for last minute details. Obviously, if photographs are being taken prior to the wedding, the wedding party should arrive much earlier. FYI, a *wedding coordinator* will be at the church at the appointed time for the rehearsal as well as the wedding day, so that last minute problems can be handled by her.

PARKING

- Parking is at a premium in downtown Troy. *First Place Christian Center*, located behind our church buildings alongside Canal Street, is *possibly* available for parking. If you think you may need access to that parking lot, please be sure to ask about it at your initial meeting so the pastor can seek permission from the building's owner, *First United Methodist Church*. Adjacent businesses sometimes allow their properties to be utilized for parking, but only if we check with them first.
- Designated Handicap Parking signs are available if needed.

EXPENSES AND FEES

- The typical First UCC wedding usually ranges in cost from \$400 to \$750.
- A fee schedule is available upon request.
- All fees are due in the church office on the Monday prior to the celebration of the wedding ceremony.
- Please note that the rehearsal will not take place nor the wedding performed until all fees are paid.