

Wedding Policy



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WEDDING POLICY

The vision of First United Methodist Church is that we are a body transforming lives for Christ through service, study and worship. A wedding service is a worship event that celebrates God's joining together of man and woman in relationship with Christ. The policy governing weddings at FUMC is written with the understanding of wedding as a worship service of the church. The primary officiant of weddings shall be a United Methodist Minister licensed to do weddings in the state of Louisiana and approved by the senior pastor, Doug de Graffenried.

The sanctuaries, traditional and Crossroads, are places of worship, not rental halls. The pulpit, lectern, and altar railing in the traditional sanctuary are not to be moved or misrepresented. The altar, music equipment, and elements of worship on the stage in Crossroads also are not to be moved or misrepresented.

All weddings are to be performed giving respect to the life of the church. Weddings that take place during the season of Advent must respect the sacred symbols and decorations of Christmas that are in place. This includes the Chrismon tree, poinsettias, candles, etc. These items shall not be moved. Weddings at any time of the year shall not use decorations of any kind that are contrary to Christian thought and conduct including Halloween and Gothic decorations.

Respect for the church, its facilities, and grounds are expected at all times. No food or drink is allowed in either of the sanctuaries, Traditional or Crossroads. No smoking is allowed in the church building. Rice may not be thrown anywhere on church property, inside or outside, for safety reasons. Bird seed though is permissible outside the church. All decorations and personal items must be removed from the church immediately following the service. Flowers may be left for worship services the following day if arrangements to do so are made in advance with the church wedding hostess.

Members of the wedding party are expected to conduct themselves in a manner respectful of the church and the service to be performed. Under no circumstances is any member of the wedding party allowed to come to the church or participate in the service under the influence of alcohol or drugs. *ALCOHOL AND DRUGS ARE STRICTLY PROHIBITED ON CHURCH GROUNDS.*

RESERVATIONS

Reservations are to be made with the administrative assistant in the church office. Dates for both the wedding and wedding rehearsal must be cleared in advance on the church calendar through the senior minister and church wedding coordinator. Weddings should be scheduled as soon as possible. It is recommended that reservations be made no less than four months in advance.

Weddings, rehearsals or receptions will not be held on Sundays, New Year's Day, Holy Week, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, or New Year's Eve. No weddings will be allowed on the last two Saturdays in November or any Saturday in December because of the Christmas Festival. Weddings will also not be held the Saturday following Vacation Bible School. Weddings are typically held on Saturdays and reservations for a day other than Saturday must be approved by the senior minister and the Church Board.

Please note that approximately four weeks preceding Christmas, the church will have seasonal decorations that **cannot** be moved. Christmas decorations will adorn the inside and outside of the church during Advent.

The reservation for a wedding date will not be approved until the Wedding Application is completed and deposits are paid. Failure to supply these items to the church office in a timely manner may result in the loss of desired wedding date.

WEDDING HOSTESS

The wedding hostess of First United Methodist Church in consultation with the couple will make all final decisions regarding the form and procedure of the wedding service. The church wedding hostess will oversee *all* weddings at FUMC. Her guidance is *mandatory* for all weddings. She will contact you regarding readings, music, photography and floral arrangements as well as direct the rehearsal and ceremony and reception (if held at the church).

MUSIC AND SOUND

Music selected for a marriage service should be chosen keeping one criterion in mind: Is it appropriate for Christian worship? Too often music is chosen from the viewpoint of sentiment. Popular love songs may be inappropriate and too superficial for a Christian service. Our church organist usually plays for weddings held in the traditional sanctuary, and it is strongly recommended that *you schedule the organist as early as possible to confirm the desired date and time.*

Sound systems are used in both sanctuaries, Traditional and Crossroads. A technician, on staff and approved by the church, is required for any wedding service held at FUMC.

PHOTOGRAPHY and VIDEOGRAPHY

Cameras and flashbulbs may not be used in either sanctuary, traditional or Crossroads, during the sacred service. A picture of the bride may be taken of the bride as she enters the sanctuary and a picture may be taken as the couple leaves the sanctuary. Time exposures may be taken from the balcony of the traditional sanctuary during the service. The bridal party may take pictures prior to the service or following service. For pictures taken prior to the service, it is recommended that all photos be completed no later than 45 minutes prior to the service time and *must* be completed no later than 30 minutes prior to the service time. Video is welcome during the service provided that it does not interfere in the wedding service.

Photographers and videographers are cautioned about damaging furniture by standing on pews or chairs or placing equipment on furniture in the church. *The photographer or videographer is responsible for any damage so caused.*

DECORATIONS

All decorations for the wedding and reception (if applicable) must be approved by the wedding hostess. No tacks, pins, nails, staples, tape or glue guns are to be used to fasten decorations to the furniture or building. Only removable tape, wrapped wire, or ribbon are permissible. Non-drip or oil candles with protective cloths only are to be used in the sanctuaries. Window sills may be decorated provided that decorations do not hang over into the walkway for safety reasons. Aisle cloths and flower petals may not be used due to safety issues. Protective coverings must be used underneath candelabras and candles in window sills to protect the surface beneath. Candles used in the aisles must be above head height and have globes covering candles. Felt must be used between the pew and clamp to protect the furniture from further scratching. *The florist is responsible for any damage resulting from decorations used in the service.*

Immediately following the wedding service all candles must be extinguished. All flowers and decorations must be removed once wedding guests have departed. Flowers may be designated for use in Sunday services if arrangements are made prior to the wedding with the wedding hostess.

RECEPTIONS

If a reception held at FUMC is to be catered, the caterer must discuss arrangements and plans with the wedding hostess. Professional caterers are expected to use their own equipment for preparing food for an event. If the couple is planning their own reception and food, the wedding hostess will arrange the use of church equipment such as plates, cups, etc., if so desired.

The couple is responsible for making sure the kitchen is cleaned following the reception. All dishes and utensils must be washed and properly stored, countertops wiped down, garbage disposed of and bags tied, and floor cleaned. **NO FOOD MAY BE LEFT IN THE KITCHEN.** All utilities must be turned off before leaving and, in the case of the Family Life Center Industrial Kitchen, doors must be locked. Failure to clean and secure the kitchen may result in loss of deposit.

WEDDING DAY

The church will be unlocked no earlier than two (2) hours prior to the service. Any photographs taken before the wedding *must* be completed no later than 30 minutes prior to the service start.

MISCELLANEOUS

Please inform your friends that pictures are not permitted during the service.

Please bring your marriage license to the church office *no later than the morning of the rehearsal.*

All users of church facilities are expected to be good neighbors with respect to parking, noise, other disturbances, and trash. Please be respectful of those who live and work around the church facilities.

The church is not responsible for loss of or damage to personal items.

If you have any questions, please call the church office at 318-357-8296 or stop by at 220 Amulet. Church office hours are Monday through Thursday 8:30 am until 1:30 pm, or by appointment.

MEMBERSHIP

Persons who unite with the Methodist church support the local congregation through their prayers, their presence, their gifts, their service, and their witness. In order to be considered a member of First United Methodist Church, an individual must have joined the congregation at least six (6) months prior to scheduling a wedding date on the church calendar and actively participate in the life of the church on a continuing basis.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE AND FEES

Refundable Deposit	Paid as soon as possible to secure wedding date
1st Payment	Due 90 days prior to wedding date, 30% of fees
2nd Payment	Due 60 days prior to wedding date, 30% of fees
Final Payment	Due one week prior to rehearsal, remaining balance

The wedding application must be completed and returned to the church office with all deposits in order to secure the wedding date. Please make checks payable to *First United Methodist Church*. All other forms must be returned no later than 60 days prior to the wedding date.

Should your event need to be cancelled, all fees and deposits will be refunded up to two (2) weeks prior to the event date.

Required Deposits and Fees for use of Traditional Sanctuary/Crossroads:

	Non-Member	Member
Refundable Damage Deposit	\$1000	\$1000
Rental Fee	\$750	\$0
Minister	\$250	\$200
Wedding Hostess	\$200	\$200
Sound Technician	\$100	\$100
Custodian	\$200	\$200

Rental of the church for a wedding service includes the use of the parlor as the bride's room and the use of Bostick Hall for the groom's room.

Oil candles and brass candelabras, pew candleholders, bridal cloth, crystal and silver are available for use with a wedding service. Additional fees for these items are charged as follows:

	Non-Member	Member
Oil Candles and Brass Candelabras	\$25	\$0
Pew Candleholders (candles not included)	\$50	\$0
Bridal Cloth	\$5	\$0
Crystal and Silver	\$50	\$0

Depending upon the needs of your event, other rooms and services are available. Additional deposits and fees may apply for their use. Additional fees that may apply:

	Non-Member	Member
Organ/Organist	\$200	\$200
Bostick Hall and Kitchen Reception Deposit	\$500	\$500
Bostick Hall and Kitchen Reception Rental Fee	\$150 + \$50 per hour over 3 hours	\$50 + \$10 per hour over 3 hours
Bostick Hall and Kitchen Reception Custodian	\$100	\$100
Family Life Center and Kitchen Reception Deposit	\$600	\$600
Family Life Center and Kitchen Reception Rental	\$300 + \$50 per hour over 3 hours or \$400 all day	\$150 + \$20 per hour over 3 hours or \$250 all day
Family Life Center and Kitchen Reception Custodian	\$100	\$100