



Weddings and Events Guidelines



First United Methodist Church
200 North 15th Street
Fort Smith, AR 72901
(479)782-5068
fsfumc.org

YOUR WEDDING AT FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The pastors and staff of the First United Methodist Church cordially welcome you to our church for your service of marriage. Christian marriage is a lifelong covenant between a man and a woman, their love giving birth to a new home and new life. This union is possible when Jesus Christ is the basis of unity. We wish you happiness in your marriage and want to help you in any way we can to make your wedding joyous and memorable. In this brochure you will find the wedding guidelines that have been approved by our Administrative Board. Basic guidelines apply to both members and nonmembers of our church.

If after reviewing this brochure you need further assistance, please call the church office, (479) 782-5068.

Member Weddings

Either the bride or the groom or one of their parents are members of First United Methodist Church for at least one year at the time it is placed on the calendar. Additionally a member of clergy or a child of clergy or a member or child of church staff of the United Methodist Church will be given member status.

Non-Member Weddings

Weddings of non-members will be at the discretion of the appointed pastors of First United Methodist Church. They will typically be for families with whom there is an existing relationship in the congregation. (For example: a constituent member or some similar circumstance.) An additional fee of \$500.00 will be assessed for non-members including a non-refundable deposit.

MINISTERS

The first step is to contact a pastor at FUMC who will perform the service. In order to avoid conflicts with the desired date, call him/her before you set the date, order the invitations, or make any other plans.

- An appointed pastor of First United Methodist Church will serve in all weddings held in our church.
- If there is a pastor you desire to officiate or assist in your ceremony, and they are not a member of the First United Methodist Church staff, he/she serves in this capacity at the invitation of our Senior Pastor. You will need to discuss this matter with our Senior Pastor and provide the name and address of the pastor to our Senior Pastor's assistant. He/she will then be invited by our Senior Pastor to serve in this capacity in our church. This protocol from the United Methodist Book of Discipline applies to any pastor other than the ones who are currently affiliated or appointed at First United Methodist Church.
- All couples wishing to be married by a pastor of the United Methodist Church are required by our Book of Discipline to participate in premarital counseling with the pastor. Time and dates for this counseling should be arranged between the pastor and the prospective bride and groom as early as possible. If there is another pastor whom you wish to have as your premarital counselor, a letter will be sent from the pastor of FUMC to the counseling pastor entrusting them to provide premarital counseling to the couple.

RESERVING YOUR DATE

An application must be filled out prior to securing your wedding date. The application may be picked up in the church office or filled out online at fsfumc.org/weddings. After the application has been received the Senior Pastor's assistant will set up an appointment for the couple to meet with the FUMC pastor to approve the wedding. As soon as possible following your initial consultation with the pastor from FUMC, the date will be placed on the church calendar by the Senior Pastor's assistant. If for any reason your date changes or the reserved date is no longer needed, please notify the church as soon as possible. The date may be needed for another church activity.

- No wedding is placed on the church calendar until the wedding application is returned to the church office.
- No weddings are scheduled on Sundays.
- There are certain religious holidays on which weddings may not be scheduled, including Palm Sunday Weekend, Easter Day Weekend, and December 10 through January 5.
- Weddings may be scheduled no more than 12 months in advance and must be scheduled with at least one month notice.

A SERVICE OF WORSHIP

The Services of Christian Marriage found on pages 115-138 of The United Methodist Book of Worship are the acceptable Orders of Worship for a marriage held in the United Methodist Church. If you desire to read these pages, The Book of Worship is available in our church office. Service I is also found on pages 864-69 of the United Methodist Hymnal. A ritual consisting of statements and vows prepared by individuals may not be substituted for the established ritual of the Church. The Christian marriage ceremony is a service of worship before God, conducted within the house of God. Reverence will be expected on the part of all present and the service will be under the sole direction of the pastor. The same guidelines which regulate our members also apply to non-members when you choose to be married at the altar of our church.

THE ALTAR GUILD

- Two members of the Altar Guild of the church will be on duty for every rehearsal and every wedding taking place in our church. These volunteers serve in order to assist the bride and groom and their families in any way. They also serve to protect the interests of the church. Their purpose is to make the wedding service a meaningful and memorable experience.
- The bride should contact the church for the names of the Altar Guild members who are assigned to her wedding and arrange a time for a pre-wedding conference for planning the details of the wedding. This conference should occur in the early stages of her preparations.

FACILITIES AND CAPACITY

- Roebuck Chapel seating capacity is 200.
- Memorial Chapel seating capacity is 100.
- Sanctuary seating capacity: 500 main floor only. (1,100 if the balcony is also used.)
- Family Life Center seating capacity is 500.

THE MUSIC

Music is a very important part of a wedding service, but it must, in the same way as the liturgy (ritual), focus the worshipers' attention on God. Music written for radio, movies, Broadway shows, other secular settings, or even some music written specifically for weddings may be very beautiful and evoke strong romantic emotions, especially if attached in some way to past experiences. However, these songs usually focus on the love between a man and a woman and are not appropriate for use in a service of worship of God. The text or verbal message of wedding music must emphasize the power of God's love which comes to reside in us, thus enabling us to love each other. A good, simple test is to ask, "Would this song be appropriate for a regular worship service at our church?" or "There is much sacred music appropriate for the wedding service which is beautiful and available. The organist or worship leader will help you find appropriate, beautiful music, providing you with as many choices as possible. The lead pastor has the responsibility of upholding the liturgical quality of the music used for all wedding services and must approve all selected pieces.

Sanctuary or Chapel Weddings

If possible, please make an appointment with the organist approximately three months prior to the wedding. The principal choices will concern:

1. The prelude
 2. The processional
 3. The recessional
 4. Vocalists
 5. Other instrumentalists
 6. Use of hymns for congregational singing
 7. Bulletins
- The organist's fee includes: 1. a one-hour consultation with the bride and groom; 2. a one-hour rehearsal with soloist or instrumentalist; 3. the rehearsal; 4. the wedding and preparation thereof. Further consultations or rehearsals may result in additional fees.
 - The staff organist of First United Methodist Church must approve any guest organist desired for a wedding service. The guest organist may be required to attend an orientation session with the staff organist concerning either the sanctuary or chapel organ and appropriate music. The use of musical instruments other than the organ must be approved by the church organist.
 - No sound equipment other than that provided by the church may be used. Recorded accompaniments are generally NOT allowed. Church sound equipment will be operated by church staff ONLY.

Family Life Center Weddings

- If possible please make an appointment with the worship leader 3 months in advance. The fee includes a one-hour consultation with the bride and groom, a one-hour rehearsal with guest soloist or musicians, the rehearsal, the wedding and preparation thereof. Further consultations and rehearsals may result in additional fees.
- The worship leader must approve all guest musicians and may require their attendance at an orientation session.
- The sound and lighting equipment will only be operated by a staff member or trained volunteer approved by staff. No changes to the stage lighting is allowed.

THE REHEARSAL

For weddings where there is music and a bridal processional, a rehearsal is necessary and is usually scheduled on the evening prior to the wedding. The bride and groom, their parents, the attendants, the ushers, pastors, organist and other musicians should be present.

- Allow 90 minutes for the rehearsal.
- Immediately following the rehearsal, the bride and groom and their attendants will be shown the dressing areas and rest rooms available for their use. In these dressing areas please do not hang gowns or other clothing on light fixtures, mantles, furniture, etc.
- These dressing areas cannot be guaranteed to be secure; therefore, ALL PERSONAL PROPERTY, ESPECIALLY ALL VALUABLES and MONEY are the responsibility of the owner at all times.
- Punctuality is imperative; be certain that all participants know the time that the rehearsal will begin!

ON YOUR WEDDING DAY

- The bride and groom will notify their attendants, families, the church office and the Altar Guild representatives the time chosen for their arrival at the church for dressing and pictures.
- The church will be open and custodians available up to 4 hours prior to the time of the wedding. Altar Guild representative will be there to assist. (If additional hours are needed, a custodial fee of \$40/hour will be charged. *See the Fees section.)
- All personal items should be removed from the church immediately following the wedding ceremony or after the reception if the reception is held at the church.

WEDDING PLANNERS

Many brides hire wedding planners to coordinate all the details of their wedding. The wedding planner must adhere to the wedding policies of our church with regard to music, flowers, decorations, and photography. The church staff or Altar Guild volunteers will direct the rehearsal and the wedding with the assistance of the wedding planner. The bride will be responsible for letting her wedding planner know of this church's policies.

CONDUCT

Alcoholic beverages are not permitted on the church property, including parking lots and buildings. Anyone who violates this policy may be removed from the wedding ceremony. Our church is a completely smoke-free campus.

RECEPTION

Several areas of our church are available for receptions: Narthex, Fireside Room, Great Room, Parlor.

- Final costs must be individually calculated.

EXIT

No rice or rice substitutes, such as birdseed, confetti, etc., may be thrown anywhere inside our buildings. Outside, only real flower petals, bubbles, or sparklers may be used and must be disposed of properly. The bride and groom are responsible for informing their wedding party of these policies.

FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS

The policy of the First United Methodist Church is that the natural beauty of the Sanctuary or Chapels or Family Life Center be enhanced by simple decorations, not overpowered or replaced by another look. Your decorating plans should be discussed in detail with the Altar Guild representative and approved by the lead pastor during your pre-wedding conference.

- No Chancel furniture will be moved in either Roebuck Chapel, the Sanctuary, or the Family Life Center. No decoration will be used which hides from clear view the worship symbols in the Chancel, such as the cross, the Holy Bible, the Altar table. The only furniture on which flowers may be placed are the flower stands. Church floral containers (urns, vases) may not leave the church. **This is true for ANY event held in a place of worship.**
- Arrangements for access to the building for your florist must be made with the Business Administrator well in advance. These arrangements should include the time of arrival, time of departure and which door to enter. (All doors may not be unlocked!)
- The use and placement of flowers, decorations or candles will be responsibility of the bride and any damage resulting from such use must be assumed by the bride. The bride is responsible for the actions of those she hires to decorate and should notify the florist and/or other decorators of the church's policies.
- There will be no taping, gluing or tacking of decorations to any wood or plaster surface, especially pews.
- Water must not remain on wood surfaces--table or floor, especially the chancel flooring. Florist should check for standing water.
- Floral fixative (leaf polish) must not be sprayed inside the church.
- Wax candles used, other than those provided by the church, require that protective paper or plastic be used under each candelabra (including a unity candle). Candelabra and pew candle holders are available at the Church for use at weddings. Only candles provided by the Church are allowed to be used in church-owned equipment. The charges for this equipment and candles are listed in the fee section of this brochure. The use of individual pillar candles (large or small) placed on the Choir Rail or Communion Rail in the sanctuary have been known to splatter wax badly on wood paneling and furniture. Therefore, votive candles ONLY may be used on these rails.
- Church custodians remove all decorations immediately following the service. A request for ANY special handling (other than discarding) of flowers, ribbons or equipment must be made to the church Business Administrator at least two working days before the wedding.
- Florists should return to the church on Monday following the wedding or within two business days to retrieve any equipment which has been used for the wedding. Frequently florists must be called and reminded about equipment which has been left at the church. For this reason, the name, address and telephone number of your florist must be on file with the church office prior to the date of the wedding.

- Many couples find it meaningful to honor or memorialize loved ones by having their wedding floral arrangements remain at the church for use at the Sunday worship services. In order to ascertain if the Sunday following your wedding is available, contact the Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible. Since our church has many memorial flowers, a calendar is kept. Wedding arrangements can be used only if the date has not already been scheduled for other flowers. Calling early increases the possibility that your flowers can be used and ensures that correct information will be placed in the Worship Bulletin.
- On Mondays, our Flower Committee rearranges our Chancel flowers and delivers them to shut-ins and hospitalized members. On the Wedding Form you are asked if our Committee may distribute your flowers in this manner.
- You must provide your florist with these guidelines.

PHOTOGRAPHY and VIDEOGRAPHY

The person who hires the photographer and videographer is responsible for explaining church policy prior to the wedding. A consultation with the lead pastor may be required. Because the wedding service is a religious worship service, all photographers and videographers (amateur and professional) are asked to act with the same reverence and dress in the same manner as others who attend the service. All videographers (who are clearly visible to wedding guests) must be dressed in a similar fashion to wedding guests.

- BEFORE or AFTER the service, any desired pictures may be made. Should the photographer wish to use rooms other than those specifically provided for dressing and the ceremony location, these rooms must be scheduled in advance with the Senior Pastor's assistant. No pictures should be removed from church walls.
- During the service, no flash pictures, no additional lighting, and no movement of photographers or videographers visible to worshipers will be allowed. A picture of the bride and her escort may be taken at the back of the sanctuary. Pictures of bridesmaids may be taken in the foyer. Time exposures which do not require flash are allowed.
- Video recording is allowed during the service from a stationary point in the sanctuary or chapel, i.e., the camera operator does not move around. No additional lighting is allowed for video recording. The place for the video camera will be explained to you during your appointment with the Altar Guild member assigned to your wedding. Setting up video equipment, especially in the balcony of the sanctuary, requires between thirty minutes and an hour. The equipment should be ready and the operator in place without need for further movement by the time the prelude begins thirty minutes prior to the stated time of the wedding. Wedding guests who arrive thirty minutes before the wedding should not observe the setting up of camera equipment. Video equipment may not be plugged into church sound equipment.

***You must provide your photographer and videographer with these guidelines.**

NURSERY CARE FOR INFANTS AND CHILDREN

Nursery care is not a service usually provided by our church for weddings.

- A request from the family to the Director of Nurseries must be submitted two weeks prior to the wedding date.
- An estimate of: 1) the number of children expected; 2) the ages of the children expected; and 3) the length of time nursery care is needed will be required. The minimum fee is \$80.
- Charges increase as the number of children increases and the length of time of service increases. All charges must be individually finalized. (Safe Sanctuary for Children Guidelines, which have been adopted by our church, mandate that TWO nursery workers are present at all times. Private babysitters hired by families are not allowed.)
- The nursery fee will be billed to the family by the church as part of the wedding fees and the nursery workers will be paid by the church. Do NOT pay the nursery workers directly.

AND THIS WORD

The First United Methodist Church finds great joy in the opportunity to enrich this part of your life by focusing your hearts and minds and those of your family and friends on the sacred nature of your wedding service and marriage vows. Our prayer is that Almighty God will bless your marriage, bringing peace and lasting love to your new life together.

FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

- All financial arrangements for the wedding, including fees for candelabras and pew markers, reception, the pastor(s), organist, nursery workers or any other First United Methodist Staff Member, must be made in the Church Office and PAID IN FULL ONE MONTH IN ADVANCE OF THE WEDDING DATE.
- Fee agreements between the bride and all others who are NOT members of the First United Methodist staff are totally the responsibility of the bride. The First United Methodist Church will neither set nor collect those fees.

DEPOSITS

For members, deposits are not required.

*For nonmembers, a deposit in addition to the Non-member Facility Fee is required before the date is placed on the church calendar.

This non-refundable deposit is applied to the total charge (see page 9 for totals).

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| Deposit for Use of Sanctuary | \$200 |
| Deposit for Use of Roebuck Chapel | \$100 |
| Deposit for Use of Family Life Center | \$150 |
| Deposit for Use of Memorial Chapel | \$100 |
| Deposit for Use of Fireside Room | \$150 |
| Deposit for Use of Narthex | \$100 |

***Non-member Facility Fee \$500 (as mentioned on page 2)**

| FACILITY FEES | Member | Non-Member (includes Non-refundable Deposit, Facility fee, and Non-Member fee) |
|---|---------------|---|
| • <u>Use of Sanctuary</u> | \$300* | \$1,000* |
| • <u>Use of Roebuck Chapel</u> | \$150** | \$750** |
| • <u>Use of Memorial Chapel</u> | \$100** | \$700** |
| • <u>Use of Family Life Center</u> | \$300** | \$950** |
| • <u>Use of Fireside Room</u> | \$150*** | \$800*** |
| • <u>Use of Narthex</u> | \$150*** | \$750*** |
| • <u>Candelabra (includes candles)</u> | \$60 per set | |
| • <u>Pew Markers (includes candles)</u> | \$10 each | |

* Includes 6 hours duration from beginning to end clean up. You may specify to arrive up to 4 hours prior to the ceremony and 2 hours for ceremony and clean up. Large weddings or those with an elaborate amount of decorations will be charged an additional \$25 an hour for extra clean-up time.

** Includes 4 hours duration from beginning to end clean up. You may specify to arrive up to 2 hours prior to the ceremony and 2 hours for ceremony and clean up. Large weddings or those with an elaborate amount of decorations will be charged additional \$25 an hour for extra clean-up time.

***For a reception after a wedding it includes 2 hours after the wedding ceremony is complete. Additional fees will be charged for use of church equipment. Please see "FACILITY FEES" above.

FEES (FUMC Staff)

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|--------------------------|---|
| Custodians | Will receive \$40.00 plus their on-the-clock time. Their fees are included in the facility fees. Elaborate clean-ups requiring more than the allotted time will be charged an additional \$25.00 per hour to be paid to the custodians. |
| Organist/Worship Leader | \$200 Organist |
| Sound Equipment Operator | Will receive \$50.00. This fee is included in the facility fee for Family Life Center |
| Nursery Workers | \$80 minimum (Will be individually determined based on number of children, ages of children, required length of time.) Workers get clock time plus \$20.00. |
| Pastor Gift | Customary \$250 |

WEDDING CHECKLIST for FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

(Use this checklist to help keep you on track.)

- ___1. Read First United Methodist Church's Wedding Information Brochure in its entirety.
- ___2. Secure services of desired clergy.
- ___3. Fill out, sign and return Wedding Information Form to the church office as soon as possible to secure your date.
- ___4. Place wedding on the church calendar. Wedding Information Form must be returned; nonmembers must pay deposit.
- ___5. Schedule premarital counseling appointment with pastor. (After date placed on calendar)
- ___6. Provide florist, photographer and videographer with a copy of church's guidelines.
- ___7. Meet with a member of the Altar Guild assigned to your wedding. (8-12 weeks before)
- ___8. Meet with the organist/worship leader. Secure any other instrumentalists or soloists. (8-12 weeks before)
- ___9. Get approval for nursery care, if needed. (2 weeks before)
- ___10. Consult Business Administrator of the church to determine the final fees (6 weeks before if not sooner)
- ___11. Complete financial arrangements. (4 weeks before)