

# **Guidelines and Policies for Weddings**

## **First United Methodist Church of Cedar Falls**

319-266-1713 [aboutfirst.com](http://aboutfirst.com)

### **Guidelines and Policies**

The First United Methodist Church of Cedar Falls has been providing ministry in the name of Jesus Christ for over 160 years in our community. An important part of the ministry has been the celebration of weddings. We celebrate with you on your upcoming occasion and pray for God's blessings on your new marriage. Our building is very special to us because it provides our congregation a place for worship and growing together in our faith. We hope you will respect our church, and we ask that you follow our guidelines and policies.

We are eager to help make the occasion of your wedding beautiful and meaningful. The wedding is a service of Christian Worship and as such, our Christian faith and traditions must be respected. It is not necessary for a wedding to be elaborate in order to be beautiful. The true beauty lies in the spirit and attitude of those who share in your special day.

The church and the staff want to do everything possible to help your wedding be such an experience. There are, however, certain guidelines and policies that have been designed to preserve the dignity of worship, to protect church property, and to insure the integrity of our United Methodist Church.

### **Pastor**

All services held in our church must be officiated by the pastors appointed to serve our congregation unless a guest pastor has been approved by our pastors. The decision to perform the ceremony is the right and responsibility of the pastor, in accordance with the laws of the state and The United Methodist Church. The wedding service must meet with the approval of our pastor and follow within the guidelines of our Wedding Policies.

We expect our pastor to meet with an inquiring couple for the minimum of four times prior to the wedding. Our pastors use a well-known marriage assessment tool called *Prepare and Enrich*. There is a \$35 charge for that online assessment that is paid directly by the couple when they take the assessment.

All wedding services will be developed by the pastor in consultation with the couple. All elements of the service must meet with the approval of the pastor. The typical honorarium for pastors is \$250.

## **Arrangements**

The first step in scheduling a wedding is to meet with the officiating pastor as far in advance as possible. This will assure the availability of the church as well as the pastor.

The Church is not available for weddings on the following days:

New Year's Eve and New Year's Day

Holy Week

Thanksgiving Day and day after

December 24, 25 and 26.

Please note: Christmas decorations will be in the sanctuary beginning the first Sunday in Advent (end of November) through twelve days after Christmas.

## **Facilities Available**

The Sanctuary, Chapel, Fellowship Hall and Gathering Place are available for weddings. The Sanctuary can accommodate approximately 350. (350 is everyone sitting close.) The Chapel and Gathering Place maybe used for a small wedding. The Fellowship Hall can accommodate 250.

Receptions and rehearsal dinners may be held in the Fellowship Hall or Gathering Place.

The Parlor is available for the Bride's Room. The Groom's Room is in the Choir Room. Both rooms are located on the same level as the Sanctuary, and can be locked. The church recommends taking all precautions in bringing personal items to the church. The church will not be responsible for personal items brought to the church for use in the wedding, nor shall the church be liable for such items if lost, stolen or damaged.

## **Music**

All music must be submitted at least one month prior to the wedding and meet with the approval of the officiating pastor. Because the wedding ceremony is a service of Christian worship, we believe that the wedding music should be consistent with such a spirit.

If you choose organ for your service our organist will play for weddings at our church. If our organist is unable to play at your wedding, you may choose someone else, and they must meet with the approval of our organist. It is your responsibility to contact the church organist and schedule your wedding. Please do this as soon as you have your wedding permanently scheduled on the church calendar. Our organist will gladly meet with you to plan music for the service. Our organist's fee is \$125 and is paid directly to the organist. Our organist also plays piano and electronic keyboard. Organist's email: [bevan.lucas@gmail.com](mailto:bevan.lucas@gmail.com)

## **Sound and Video System**

First UMC has audio and video presentation, recording and streaming capability. These systems are to be operated by First UMC technical crews, only.

Audio/video technicians are not included in other fees paid to the church, and must be arranged through the First UMC Media Office. We encourage wedding planners to contact our Technical Director as soon as their date is confirmed. Email [chris.congdon@aboutfirst.com](mailto:chris.congdon@aboutfirst.com) or call 319-266-1713.

### **What requires an audio/video technician to be present:**

- Playing of pre-recorded music
- Projection of pictures or videos
- Recording or streaming the ceremony
- Live musicians which require audio mixing and sound-checks

AV Techs are to be paid before the beginning of rehearsal or ceremony.

- Rehearsal \$ 75
- Ceremony \$100
- Post-production (video editing & distribution if required) \$100

## **Pictures and video**

The official wedding photographer is asked to be as unobtrusive as possible during the ceremony. Pre-service photo sessions should conclude no later than 45 minutes prior to the service to allow guests to be seated and the wedding party enough time for final preparation. The un-official wedding photographers (everyone who has a phone) are asked to place their cameras in silent mode and keep them as low as possible.

Third-party video crews are welcome. We ask that they also remain as unobtrusive as possible during the ceremony. The balcony is available to photographers and videographers.

## **Wedding Hosts or Greeters**

We have learned from experience that there is the need for Wedding Hosts or Greeters to be stationed at the front doors and the intersection that leads to the Sanctuary. The Wedding Hosts need to be recruited by you. They can greet your guests as they arrive to let them know they are at the right church, and direct them to the Sanctuary, bathrooms, etc.

## **The Rehearsal**

Members of the wedding party need to be reminded that throughout the wedding rehearsal they are in a holy place dedicated to the worship of God and should act accordingly. The officiating pastor is in charge of rehearsal and wedding. All rehearsals will begin promptly at the scheduled time, and all members of the wedding party are expected to be present. The marriage license should be delivered to the pastor on the night of rehearsal. Rehearsal usually lasts for one hour.

## **Wedding Decoration Guidelines**

In decorating for the wedding celebration, it is important that all symbols of the church be respected. Arrangements for decorating the church need to be made with the officiating pastor.

- Nails, tacks, staples, pins, tape or anything which will mark the wood work or walls cannot be used.
- Wrapped wire or ribbon that will not mark the surface maybe used on the ends of the pews to fasten bows. Do not use tape.
- Please stay away from decorations with glitter.
- Aisle Runners are not recommended for safety reasons.
- All decorations and equipment must be removed immediately following the ceremony. The church will not be responsible for decorations left after the wedding. The church must be left in the same condition in which it was found.
- In case of damage, you will be held responsible charges necessary to repair the damage.
- Items available for the wedding:
  - Two brass Candelabras
  - Unity Candle Holder – you must provide the unity candle and two tapers
  - White altar clothes will be used
  - Guest book table
  - Kneeling Bench

## **Wedding Bulletins**

Printed bulletins containing the order of worship and names of the participants can be used. You are responsible to seeing they are printed.

## **Other Policies**

- Alcoholic beverages may not be served anywhere on church property either prior or following the wedding.
- Smoking and vaping is not permitted in any part of the church.
- Rice, confetti, bird seed, bubbles, glitter, etc. may not be used inside any part of the building. It is recommended that these items be passed out following the service, and used outside. The wedding party is responsible to any personal injuries due to the use of these items.
- To preserve the beauty of the Sanctuary or Chapel beverages or food are not allowed. Food and beverages are allowed in the dressing rooms. Please make your wedding party aware of this policy.

## **Wedding License**

Please note that the Marriage License must be given to the officiating pastor on the day of rehearsal. The Marriage License can be obtained from any Court House in Iowa at the County Clerk's Office. There is a three day waiting period between the time of application and the issuing of the license, and may be used anytime within six months after it is obtained.

If your wedding plans change, (postponed or cancelled) be sure to notify the church office or pastor at once.

## **Address to use on your Wedding Invitation**

First United Methodist Church  
718 Clay Street  
Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613