

Wedding Policy

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A wedding is one of the happiest and holiest moments in life. As two persons join their lives to establish a home, the church rejoices with them and is eager to help make the occasion of their wedding beautiful and meaningful. 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 take part.

In the happy excitement of planning for a wedding, many questions regarding details arise. Often one wonders just what is proper. The following procedures are outlined to guide in the planning. The ministers and staff of the church will be glad to extend every possible courtesy to the wedding parties.

I. Facilities Available

- A. The Sanctuary, which seats approximately 1,200 and Pirtle Chapel, which seats 80 to 90, are available for weddings.
- B. Receptions following the wedding ceremony may be held in the Parlor, Foyer, or Fellowship Hall.

II. Arrangements

The Wedding Coordinator is required for all Sanctuary weddings and Chapel weddings having more than twenty (20) guest and/or those requiring a rehearsal.

- A. Members of First United Methodist Church Hurst will have priority of dates over non-members and are requested to make reservations as far in advance as possible to avoid possible conflicts. Reservations may be made by telephone. A time will be set to review the wedding policy and sign the wedding contract. After the wedding contract is filed with the Wedding Coordinator, the date will be placed on the church calendar at a \$50 nonrefundable calendar fee which is applied to the total fees.

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- B. Non-members may not make reservations earlier than four (4) months (120 days) in advance. Tentative dates may be cleared by telephone, but complete and final arrangements can only be made by personal contact with the Wedding Coordinator. At that time, a reservation fee of 1/4 of the total cost is payable; a \$50 calendar fee will be a part of the reservation fee. If 1/4 of the total cost is less than \$50, then the nonrefundable calendar fee will be considered the reservation fee. The Wedding Coordinator requirements apply to non-members also.

- C. We ask that weddings be scheduled to begin no later than 7:00 p.m. or no later than 6:00 p.m. if a reception is scheduled to follow in the Parlor, Foyer, or Fellowship Hall. This allows adequate time for the custodians to prepare the Sanctuary and rooms for Sunday services and Sunday School classes. We ask that the receptions last no longer than two (2) hours after the wedding ceremony (no later than 9:00 p.m.) so the custodians may clean, sweep, and prepare the rooms for Sunday morning by 10:00 p.m. on Saturday evening.

III. Wedding Coordinator

FUMC-Hurst provides the services of a Wedding Coordinator who assists the pastor in the planning and directing of weddings. The Wedding Coordinator is required for all Sanctuary weddings, Chapel weddings with more than 20 guests, Chapel weddings with a reception and all weddings with a guest minister. She will coordinate wedding details with the church, minister, and bride/groom. She will meet with the bride to go over the church policy and information on the wedding contract. She will coordinate arrangements made by the bride/groom with florist/caters and the church. The Wedding Coordinator will direct rehearsals and weddings. The minister may or may not be present at the rehearsal depending on the arrangements made with the bride and Wedding Coordinator. The Wedding Coordinator will be available to assist a guest minister during the rehearsal and wedding. She will be available to coordinate and oversee the reception if held in the church, but she is not responsible for planning details or clean up. The Wedding Coordinator will meet the florist/caterer/decorator the day of the wedding for set up. If an outside wedding consultant is to assist the bride and her attendants, that person will be responsible to the church Wedding Coordinator and will not assume any responsibility for the direction of the wedding rehearsal or the ceremony. Working with the minister, our church Wedding Coordinator is in charge.

IV. Minister

- A. One of the ministers of FUMC-Hurst will be in charge of every wedding. Upon the invitation of the senior minister of the church, an outside guest minister may assist in the service.

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- B. At least one wedding conference with the bridal couple and the minister in charge is required. The conference will include the ideals of the Christian marriage and the responsibilities of the marriage vows. The couple is responsible for contacting the minister in charge to schedule this conference within two (2) weeks after date is set.
- C. The United Methodist Church's Order for the Service of Marriage or the alternate text for Service of Marriage is to be used. Any other service or addition to these services will need to be approved by the minister in charge.

V. The Music

A. Vocal and Instrumental

A wedding is a service of worship, and in keeping with the dignity of the service, appropriate music both instrumental and vocal should be performed in the context of the ceremony itself.

1. Our Committee on Worship urges that the vocal music be used to magnify the Glory of God which allows and creates the love which exists between man and woman. Secular love songs are not appropriate in the spirit of this service of worship and praise.
2. A congregational hymn is appropriate in the wedding service of worship. There are many congregational hymns, responses, and litanies available for use during a wedding in the *United Methodist Hymnal*.
3. When a wedding takes place during a specific season of the year (Easter, Christmas, etc.), music appropriate for that season is also appropriate for the wedding.

B. Musical Accompanist

1. No one but the church organist or his/her designated assistant shall play for the wedding ceremony. If an organist/pianist other than the regular organist or his/her assistant is desired, the guest organist/pianist must be approved in advance with the church organist still receiving the regular fee. This policy is in accordance with the guidelines for church musicians as recommended by the American Guild of Organist(s).
2. Other musical accompaniment is permissible if approved in advance by the minister in charge.

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3. The bride/groom should meet with the organist at least six weeks before the wedding ceremony. At this time, a final decision will be made on music selections (including the vocal music).
4. Ordinarily, the organist is not available for the rehearsal. If the organist is requested to be at the rehearsal (upon availability of the organist) then the organist fee will be increased to cover both the rehearsal and the wedding (see fees listed on contract).
5. Arrangements for soloist(s) should be made through the church organist or music director. **Solos must be approved and are permissible only if they are scriptural in nature.** Popular music of the secular genre, or non-scriptural selections, as well as, prerecorded music or accompaniment tracks are not permitted. If a vocal selection is desired which is not on the suggested list, the organist shall receive a copy from the soloist at least six (6) weeks prior to the wedding ceremony.
6. The soloist should contact the organist at least three (3) weeks prior to the ceremony to arrange a rehearsal time. The soloist should be prepared and be familiar with the vocal selection.
7. Soloists and organists will wear a robe when singing or playing. FUMC-Hurst will provide a robe prior to the wedding.

C. Sound Technician

A sound technician will be required at all Sanctuary weddings.

VI. Photographers

- A. We recognize the value of wedding photographs as a lasting remembrance and want to be cooperative while keeping uppermost the necessity of maintaining order, dignity, and sacredness of the occasion. Photographs may be taken in the Sanctuary, Hall, or Narthex preceding the ceremony.
- B. Once the ceremony has begun (the seating of grandparents and/or parents), the photographer must go to the balcony and remain stationary and in a discreet location. Photographs are to be taken without flash during this time. We request that the photographer not move around during the ceremony or cause a distraction for the bridal party or guests. Aisle shots of the bride must be taken from the back five (5) pews of the church.
- C. Weddings may be videotaped as long as the camera and operator remain stationary in the balcony. A camera in the chancel or choir area must be

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operated by remote. The Wedding Coordinator will assist the photographer in setting up video equipment in approved locations.

- D. The wedding party may return to the Chapel or Sanctuary immediately after the ceremony for photographs if desired. We must ask that all photographs in the Chapel or Sanctuary be finished before the reception.
- E. Wedding guests and family members with cameras should be requested to wait until the guests are dismissed to take photographs, and then only after checking with the official photographer.
- F. Photographers are cautioned about standing or placing equipment on the pews or furniture of the church. In case there are questions, you may check with the Wedding Coordinator or minister in charge of the wedding.

VII. Decorations

These regulations shall govern the work of all florists or parties decorating for weddings/receptions. The bride and/or her parents should have a clear understanding of the instructions prior to engaging a professional florist or planning any nonprofessional decorations for the Sanctuary, Chapel, or reception areas. The Wedding Coordinator will be available to discuss any questions you may have.

- A. Decorations should be placed so the view of the Cross is not obscured in any way.
- B. Only a kneeling rail (prie dieu) may be placed in front of the altar. Nothing is to be placed on the altar, baptismal font, pulpit, or the kneeling cushions.
- C. The area from center aisle to the altar table should be kept clear with the exception of the prie dieu.
- D. Communion railings and furnishings remain in their normal positions and may not be removed.
- E. If there are floral arrangements to remain for the following Sunday worship services, the Wedding Coordinator should be notified at the time of the signing of the contract. Recognition of floral offerings will be acknowledged in the Sunday morning Order of Worship bulletin.
- F. Only cut flowers, greenery, and votive candles (in votive holders) may be placed on the chancel rails and/or other rails. **No flower containers or tapered candles may be used.**

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- G. Pew bows or any type of floral arrangements should be attached in such a manner that they will not damage the structure of the finish. Nails, tacks, staples, pins, or anything that will mar the woodwork or walls should not be used. Tape, wrapped wire or ribbon that will not mar the ends of the pews may be used to fasten the bows or aisle candelabra.
- H. Only silk petals are to be dropped by the flower girl.
- I. We request that votive candles only be used individually and in the candelabras. Proper safeguards must exist to protect carpet and furnishings from wax drippings.

VIII. Florist or Decorator

- A. The choice of the florist/decorator must be with consent of the church office.
- B. The florist shall call the Wedding Coordinator a week in advance to set a time for decorating so the Wedding Coordinator can meet the florist and the building can be unlocked.
- C. The florist/decorator shall remove all decorations and equipment (except floral arrangements remaining for the following Sunday service) immediately after the ceremony. This is not the responsibility of the Wedding Coordinator or custodian.
- D. The florist/decorator is expected to observe the sanctity of the church and is responsible for leaving the church properties in the condition in which they were found. At no time should work materials be placed on the furnishings of the building or in the rooms being used.
- E. In case of damage, the florist/decorator (or parties decorating) should contact the Wedding Coordinator. If the damage goes unreported or uncorrected by the florist/decorator, that person or organization will be removed from the list of acceptable florists or decorators at the church.
- F. Florists and decorators are to follow guidelines for decorations (VII).

IX. The Rehearsal

The Wedding Coordinator representing the church is in charge of the rehearsal. The rehearsal will begin promptly at the scheduled time set between the bridal couple, minister, and/or Wedding Coordinator. One (1) hour is allotted for the rehearsal. All members of the wedding party should be present at the rehearsal. The minister may be

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present for the rehearsal, but is not required. The Wedding Coordinator is available to assist a guest minister.

X. Other Regulations

- A. The furniture in the Parlor, Foyer, or Fellowship Hall may be arranged within the room, but may not be removed.
- B. The serving or consumption of alcoholic beverages on the premises of the church property is prohibited by the law of the church.
- C. Smoking is not permitted inside the building.
- D. Rice is not allowed. It is suggested that bird seed or confetti be used in lieu of rice, but neither may be thrown inside of the building.
- E. The church will not be responsible for personal items brought to the church for use in the wedding or in the wedding reception; nor shall the church be liable for such items if lost, stolen, or damaged. Please do not bring valuables (jewelry, money, etc.) that you will not have on your person. We encourage you to mention this to your attendants also.
- F. No food or drink may be taken into the Sanctuary or Chapel.
- G. The care of equipment or property of the church used for the wedding or reception is the responsibility of the bride/groom. If any damage occurs, it must be reported to the Wedding Coordinator as soon as possible.