

Introduction

Marriage is a personal covenant between a man and a woman who have committed themselves to one another in a life-long relationship. In the deepest level, a Christian marriage is a covenant of faith. In a Christian marriage God is consciously invited to be a witness to your covenant of love.

We are pleased that you have chosen our Church in which to seek God's blessing on your marriage.

Getting Started...

Your initial contact will be with one of our wedding coordinators. This is the best time to get answers to all your questions about your wedding day at First United Methodist Church of Riverside.

You may reserve either the Sanctuary or the Chapel for your wedding.

The Sanctuary seats approximately 550 people comfortably. The length of the aisle is 85 feet, with 27 pews per side. The Chapel seats approximately 24 comfortably.

The Sanctuary is furnished with our Aeolian-Skinner pipe organ. The smaller chapel is equipped with a sound system for recorded music.

We cannot accommodate weddings on Sundays, or the New Year's holiday, Easter week, the Independence Day holiday, the Thanksgiving holiday, or during the Christmas holiday.

Please read this booklet in its entirety and familiarize yourselves with the various wedding policies and procedures for our Church. We encourage you to use this booklet as a reference guide while you continue to plan your wedding. The Church reserves the right to alter portions of this booklet at any time.

Scheduling

The scheduling and arrangements for all weddings at First United Methodist Church begin at the Church Office. Please call the office to schedule an appointment with the wedding coordinator.

You will be asked to complete an application, which both the prospective bride and groom need to sign. This indicates both parties understand and agree to the conditions required by the Church. The application needs to be returned to the wedding coordinator with a non-refundable reservation deposit of \$200, which will be applied to your total bill. At that time your dates and times will be added to the Church calendar and reserved.

Please note dates when the Church cannot accommodate weddings.

Two months prior to the rehearsal, the bridal couple must complete the Wedding Arrangements form which includes:

- Names of maid/matron of honor, best man, photographer and florist, bridesmaids, groomsmen, ushers, flower girl(s), ring bearer(s), candle lighters
- Number of estimated guests
- Will there be a unity candle, memory candle, guest book
- Will there be guest musicians (instrumentalist and/or soloists)
- Dates of completed meetings with the Pastor, and date of completed arrangements with the organist

Rehearsal

If young children will be present, please bring a responsible adult who will supervise them during the rehearsal.

Wedding rehearsals are scheduled for one hour, usually the evening before the wedding day.

It is important that as many members of the wedding party as possible attend the rehearsal. It is important for each person to understand his or her placement, and to practice each person's role in the wedding ceremony.

Bring to rehearsal:

- marriage license
- unity candle, memory candle
- flower girl's basket
- ring bearer's pillow or tray
- guest book

Wedding Day

The bridal party must be at the church one hour before the scheduled start of the ceremony.

Wedding dates are reserved for four hours, allowing two hours before the beginning of the wedding ceremony, and approximately one hour after the conclusion of the wedding ceremony.

The time before the wedding is for floral setup and photography inside the Sanctuary; however, the chancel area must be cleared and quiet 45 minutes prior to the wedding ceremony. This time is reserved for the organist.

Dressing areas are provided for the parties of the bride and groom. These areas must be cleared of all personal items at the end of the ceremony. Please provide the wedding coordinator with the name of the responsible person who will safeguard these personal belongings and who will collect any personal items used during the ceremony (i.e., unity candle).

The rehearsal and wedding must begin at the time designated out of courtesy to others participating in your ceremony and other scheduled ceremonies.

Fees

The fee for your wedding at First United Methodist Church includes one hour for the rehearsal, the use of the Sanctuary or Chapel for four hours on the day of the wedding (beginning two hours prior to the beginning of the wedding ceremony and ending two hours after the beginning of the ceremony), and the services of the Pastor, the wedding coordinator, the organist, and the custodian. Extra time in the facility will be charged \$100 per hour to compensate the wedding staff.

A \$200 non-refundable deposit is required to reserve your date and time.

All fees are the responsibility of the bride and are due to the Church office 10 working days prior to the date of the wedding. If fees are not paid by the above timeline, the balance must be paid at the rehearsal using cash or cashier's check.

Please make checks payable to First United Methodist Church of Riverside (or FUMCOR).

The fees will be discussed at the time of your first appointment with the wedding coordinator.

Flowers and Decorations

The altar area and its furniture, banners and festival decorations are significant parts of our Sanctuary and will remain in place for the particular season of the Church year. No furnishings or ornament in the Sanctuary or Chapel may be covered or removed without prior consultation with the Senior Pastor.

Floral decorations are restricted to the chancel, pews and narthex. *Flowers and bows may only be attached to the pews by a bracket available through most florists.*

Rice, confetti and birdseed cannot be thrown in or around the Sanctuary.

The Church provides altar candles. Unity candles (one wide memento candle and two 12" tapers) and/or memory candles are provided by the bridal party, and given to the wedding coordinator at the rehearsal. The Church will supply a unity candle stand. Aisle candles, free-standing candles, or candles in pew holders are prohibited.

Presiding Clergy

A Pastor of First United Methodist Church of Riverside presides at all First UMC weddings.

Women have enjoyed full clergy rights in the Methodist Church since 1956. First United Methodist Church of Riverside has male and female pastors on staff. The presiding pastor for each wedding is determined by the schedules of the pastoral staff. Decisions for or against a presiding pastor will not be allowed based on gender.

A request for an assistant clergy from another United Methodist Church or from a different denomination must be addressed to the Senior Pastor.

Preparing for Marriage

Our hope is to prepare each couple for a healthy marriage that will last, building that marital relationship with each other around God. Therefore, marriage preparation is a requirement prior to a wedding service at First United Methodist Church of Riverside.

Marriage preparation consists of the couple meeting three times with the presiding Pastor for pre-marital counseling. It is the responsibility of the wedding couple to contact the Church and schedule appointments with the Pastor as soon as possible.

Wedding License

It is the responsibility of the prospective bride and groom to obtain the marriage license from the Riverside County Recorder's Office. A wedding license is valid for 90 days. Prudence suggests obtaining the license at least one month prior to the wedding date, if not sooner. A wedding cannot be performed at First United Methodist Church of Riverside without a valid marriage license.

The marriage license must be given to the wedding coordinator at the rehearsal.

The license will be signed after the wedding ceremony and forwarded to the County Recorder's Office. A copy of the license will be given to a person designated by the wedding couple—usually the maid/matron of honor or best man.

Music

Marriage ceremonies at First United Methodist Church are Christian worship services. The dignity of the service should be reflected in the music used, and should be suitable for a church service. The use of secular music is not encouraged and must be approved by the organist.

First United Methodist Church of Riverside has on staff a gifted organist whose fee is included in your cost. The organ is not available for use by anyone other than First United Methodist Church musicians.

The wedding coordinator will provide contact information to the bride who is responsible to contact the organist as soon as possible to discuss music selections and guest musicians.

First United Methodist Church of Riverside has soloists available for an additional fee.

Appropriate music will be provided approximately 20 minutes prior to the service while guests are being seated. Postludes are generally a maximum of 10 minutes following the ceremony.

Recorded music is not permitted in the Sanctuary.

Photography

We're delighted to have your photographer serve your wedding in our Church. We consider the ceremony a service of worship, and, therefore, place limits on all camera work.

Please discuss our schedule for photography with your photographer before the wedding.

The photographer must check in with the wedding coordinator at least one hour prior to the wedding. Photos taken in the Sanctuary before the ceremony must be completed one-half hour before the ceremony begins.

No flash photography is permitted in the Sanctuary until after the wedding ceremony. No photography (video or still) that intrudes into the solemnity of the service will be permitted.

Video cameras can be set on tripods in the balcony and/or behind the lectern. A video camera set behind the lectern cannot be repositioned during the ceremony.

Still photos may be taken only from the side aisles during the ceremony. Photographer(s) may not proceed beyond the first pew, and must not block the view of any guest. During the ceremony, which begins when special guests and family are being seated, the photographer may not stop any member of the wedding party for individual photographs.

Please notify your photographer that we expect him or her to abide by our policies. While we do not anticipate any difficulties with your photographer complying with our policies, he or she should understand that we reserve the right to refuse his or her service in the future if our policies are not observed.

Wedding Coordinator

First United Methodist Church employs wedding coordinators to assist with planning and coordinating your special day. The wedding coordinator's responsibilities include

- being liaison for the bride to assure the wedding day goes according to her wishes
- coordinating the wedding rehearsal and explaining each person's responsibilities
- providing the photographer a tour of the facility and reiterating our accepted practices
- directing the wedding party into the ceremony at the proper times
- coordinating with the designated person responsible for collecting personal belongings

Our wedding coordinators are trained in the policies and procedures acceptable to the Church and they are the bride's resource persons for all details relative to a wedding at First United Methodist Church of Riverside. Please understand that no one else is authorized to alter any plans as set by the wedding couple, or to direct any of the wedding party or church staff. Outside wedding consultants are not permitted to attend the rehearsal.

Reminders

Smoking is permitted only in designated areas. No smoking is allowed in any of the buildings.

Drinking of alcoholic beverages is not permitted in any part of the Church or adjacent parking lot.

We request no rice, birdseed or confetti be used in the buildings or on the grounds. Flower petals or bubbles may be used—notify wedding coordinator if either is going to be used.

Reception

Fellowship Hall is available for wedding receptions with a maximum of 200 guests. The United Methodist Women help facilitate a beverage reception for the wedding couple, and will cut and serve the wedding cake provided by the wedding party. If catering for larger food service is desired, the UMW Reception Coordinator will be the liaison between the wedding couple and the caterers with established relationships with the Church.

The fee schedule for Fellowship Hall is in addition to fees for the wedding. A cleaning deposit is required and is refundable providing Fellowship Hall is clean and undamaged.

The UMW Reception Coordinator will meet with the wedding couple to discuss fees and arrangements.

Smoking is not permitted in Fellowship Hall. No alcoholic beverages will be served or consumed on Church property.

Bride's Check List

- Complete Application
 - submit with deposit to reserve date/time

- Schedule pre-marital counseling sessions with pastor as soon as possible

- Discuss music selections and guest musicians with organist as soon as possible

- Complete Wedding Arrangements form
 - return to Church no later than 2 months prior to wedding date
 - pre-marital counseling and music arrangements should be complete

- Obtain marriage License minimum one month before rehearsal

- Final payment due 10 working days before rehearsal

- Bring to rehearsal:
 - Marriage License
 - Unity Candle, Memory Candle

- Arrival at Church 1 hour before the scheduled ceremony start