

## Weddings at First United Methodist Church

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First United Methodist Church welcomes all couples who wish to get married. We are excited to serve your wedding ceremony in keeping with the faith and practices of the church. You are also invited to join us on Sundays at the 10:45 a.m. worship service to see the church and meet our pastors, wedding coordinator, and organist. Please notify your wedding coordinator in advance of your plans to attend service.

### **Scheduling**

All scheduling needs to be done through the church office. Please call 402-466-1906 to begin the process. Please be aware that a wedding date will not be added to our church calendar until a non-refundable \$100 deposit and \$25 scheduling fee is received. This deposit will be considered a partial payment of the wedding fees.

It is our policy not to schedule weddings after 4:00 p.m. on Saturdays, and no weddings, may take place on the weekends of these holidays: New Year's Day, during Holy Week (Palm Sunday through Easter Day), Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day or any days that conflict with church activities.

Fees differ for members and non-members. An outline of our fees can be found at the back of this booklet. Unless the bride or groom, their parents or guardians, or their grandparents have been members of First United Methodist Church for at least 6 months before scheduling a wedding, the wedding is considered a non-member wedding.

There is a \$50 rescheduling fee if the time or date of the wedding or the rehearsal changes after the initial booking.

### **Ministerial Staff**

Due to the high volume of weddings at our church, we cannot allow couples to request a specific pastor. The pastor will be assigned to your wedding no later than 3 months before your wedding.

Some couples are members of a smaller church and wish to use our sanctuary due to its size. In this case, we do allow for another United Methodist minister to officiate, but you would still use our coordinator and abide by our church policies.

### **Required Pre-Marital Counseling**

Pre-marital counseling is required of all couples wishing to get married at First Church. Most couples will meet with the pastor two or three times before their wedding. During these sessions, you will discuss readiness for marriage, communication, and the place of Christian faith within the marriage. This is the time when you can discuss the details of the service.

It is your responsibility to contact your assigned pastor **three months prior** to your wedding. You can reach them through the church number (402) 466-1906. Failure to contact the officiating pastor could result in postponement of your wedding.

### **Facility**

Our spacious sanctuary seats approximately 350 persons on the main floor and 600 in the balcony. For smaller weddings, our chapel is available to seat 75 people or less.

Dressing rooms are available for both the bridal attendants and the groomsmen/ushers. A separate room is provided if you wish to have snacks for your wedding party. We recommend that all personal items be removed from the dressing rooms prior to the photo shoot.

We will unlock the church 2 hours before the wedding ceremony is scheduled to begin. It is our policy to allow only a four-hour block of time for weddings at First Church. This includes the time needed for floral setup, decorating, dressing, pictures, ceremony, receiving line and cleanup. Any additional time required will be billed at \$25 per half hour.

### **Wedding Coordinator**

It is our policy that each bridal couple must work with one of our wedding coordinators. You will be assigned a coordinator after you have set a date.

(Wedding Coordinator continued)

Our coordinators are very helpful in guiding and advising you on your wedding details.

Your Wedding Coordinator will:

- Consult with the bride and groom to go over guidelines;
- Collect all deposits, fees and forms;
- Prepare the marriage license;
- Unlock the church on the day of the wedding;
- Direct the wedding party at the rehearsal and wedding;
- Run the sound system and lighting during the services;
- Custodial duties after the ceremony;
- Take care of many other small details.

Your Wedding Coordinator will not:

- Run personal errands for the wedding party;
- Schedule appointments with the pastor or the organist for the bridal couples.

## Music

The First Church organist will play the piano and/or organ for all rehearsals and weddings or will arrange a competent substitute. It is your responsibility to contact him and arrange to meet with him three months before your wedding. Our organist will be able to guide you in picking out appropriate music for the ceremony. A wedding is a worship service and the selection of music should be respected as such. If you choose to use a soloist, there is a \$25 charge per soloist, per hour of rehearsal that our organist must accompany.

Our church organist is Brent Shaw and can be reached at [brent@firstumclincoln.org](mailto:brent@firstumclincoln.org) or call 466-1906.

WE DO NOT ALLOW THE USE OF PRE-RECORDED MUSIC OF ANY KIND.

## Wedding Programs

Wedding programs can serve both as a “table of contents” for the service and they can be great souvenirs for the guests. First Church is not responsible for providing programs; however, your pastor and your wedding coordinator are able to help with any questions that you may have.

## Attending the Rehearsal

Plans for the wedding service are made with the pastor during pre-marriage counseling. The rehearsal, usually held the evening prior to the wedding is when the

logistics of the service (where to stand, how to process, etc.) are discussed with the whole wedding party. Depending upon the number of persons involved, the time required is usually 45-minutes to one hour.

All participants in the wedding service, including parents, attendants, flower girl(s), ring bearer(s), candle lighter(s) and ushers should be present and on time. If you are having a guest pastor participate in your ceremony, he or she is also expected at the rehearsal. If you are working with another wedding consultant, please be aware that First Church’s pastor and wedding coordinator will be in charge of all proceedings at First Church. In the event that a visiting United Methodist pastor is officiating, the First Church wedding coordinator will assist him or her.

Solo music will not be performed during the scheduled rehearsal. Soloists using microphones may practice with the sound system operated by the wedding coordinator either right before the rehearsal or after pictures have been taken in the sanctuary on the day of the wedding.

## Getting Your Marriage License

The wedding is a service of worship, but it also confirms the legal requirements for a marriage. You must have a marriage license prior to the service as the pastor cannot officiate at a wedding unless the marriage license is in his or her possession.

You can obtain a marriage license at the Lancaster County Clerk’s Office in the City-County Building, 555 South 10<sup>th</sup> St., Lincoln, Nebraska. The fee for the marriage license is \$15. The 24-hour/60 second Marriage License Information Line is (402) 441-8448.

To verify your date of birth, a driver’s license, birth certificate or passport is required. You will need to know your birthplaces, social security numbers, the date any previous marriage ended, your parents names, your mother’s maiden name and also your parents’ birthplaces. Both the bride and groom must be present to sign the application. For additional information you can call the Lancaster County Clerk’s office at 441-7484.

You will receive two different copies of your marriage license; one is an “official” copy and the other is a “commemorative” copy. We request that you bring both copies and the complete names and current addresses of your witnesses to the church office the week prior to your wedding.

(Marriage License continued)

If you are having a guest clergy person perform your wedding, you will need to provide his or her current address also. The licenses will be prepared and available for the pastor and witnesses to sign on the day of your wedding.

## **Photography**

We encourage pictures be taken before the wedding, but we can accommodate other requests. The wedding party may take pictures anywhere on the church property, we just ask that things be returned to the way that they were found.

Flash may be used while the bridal party is entering and exiting the sanctuary, but not during the ceremony. Photographers are also allowed in the balcony, but they may not distract from the wedding ceremony. No special lighting may be used during the ceremony.

## **Decorations**

White paraments are provided by the church and are placed on the altar and the pulpit for weddings. Seasonal decorations in the sanctuary or chapel must remain in place for any wedding scheduled during those time periods, i.e., poinsettias, Easter lilies, etc.

Due to potential damage to the church, tacks, nails, staples, adhesive tape, or scotch tape are not to be used to attach decorations. Please be aware that the wedding couple will be charged any cost over the security deposit of repairing any damage done to the church building or property.

## **Flowers:**

Flower arrangements may be placed on the altar at First Church. The altar in the sanctuary is 79 inches long and 25 inches deep and has two brass altar candles placed on top.

First Church also has a pair of square pedestals that may be used for floral arrangements. They can be placed in different areas on the chancel or on the floor in the sanctuary.

If the flower girl will be dropping flower petals down the aisle in the processional, you must use artificial petals as real petals will stain the carpet and can be slippery.

## **Pew Decorations:**

Many couples choose to decorate all or a few of the main aisle pews with bows, tulle, flowers, or wreaths. There are twelve rows of pews on each side of the center aisle of the First Church sanctuary and a total of fourteen pews in the chapel. **Pew bow hangers, florist tape, masking tape, elastic bands, or ribbons are the only items that may be used to attach pew decorations.** The church has 12 pew hangers available to use at no cost.

## **Candles:**

The two brass candles on the altar will be lit prior to your ceremony. First Church also has a pair of brass seven-branch candelabras with white oil candles available for renting. They may be decorated with flowers, greenery, ribbons, or other materials as long as the decorations do not impose a fire hazard or damage the candelabras. If you choose to rent candelabras from another source, you should be aware of the various types of candles that may be used. Dripless candles or metal candles with wax inserts are two options. Experience has demonstrated that if you rent candelabras with metal inserts, you will need two sets of inserts. One set is used for the photography session and the other for the wedding.

(Please see next page for wedding costs)

## Wedding Costs

All fees must be paid to the Wedding Coordinator by the end of the wedding rehearsal. Payments for non-First Church clergy, organists, instrumentalists or vocalists should be made in accordance to arrangements made with them.

	Non-Member	Member	Your Charge
Booking Fee .....	\$25	\$25	
Sanctuary .....	\$300	\$50	
Pastor's Honorarium.....	\$150	\$100	
Wedding Coordinator .....	\$200	\$200	
Organist .....	\$150	\$150	
Additional rehearsals with organist for soloist .....	\$25/each	\$25/each	
Extra building time (per ½ hour/maximum 1 hour total) .....	\$25	\$25	
Candelabras .....	\$50	\$30	
Security Deposit .....	<u>\$200</u>	<u>\$200</u>	<u>\$200</u>
(Will be returned if guidelines have been followed)			

TOTAL AMOUNT DUE:

The fees listed in this section are an approximate amount to assist you in your wedding plans. Please note that they may be subject to change without notice.

