



First United Methodist Church Wedding Booklet



INTRODUCTION

Congratulations! We are delighted that you have invited us to share the joy of your impending wedding and to join with you in preparing for a lifelong marriage marked by understanding and acceptance. We at First United Methodist Church are here to help you plan for your wedding and to prepare you for your life together as husband and wife.

This booklet has been developed to assist you in your wedding arrangements at First United Methodist Church. Your choosing to hold your wedding here means that you are incorporating a certain spiritual and theological understanding of what it means to be a husband and a wife. The Service of Christian Marriage, taken from the *United Methodist Book of Worship*, is a joyous Service of Worship where you, your family and your invited guests gather as the Body of Christ to worship the God of life, love and all creation. It is within this worshipful context that you will become husband and wife. Please read this booklet carefully. These suggestions and policies have been developed to help you and your families plan for a joyous celebration of your life and love.

It is our prayer that God, the Giver of Life and Love, will bless your life together as you share your vows with each other and with God. We look forward to sharing this important day with you and with helping you prepare for your marriage.

SCHEDULING YOUR WEDDING

Please come to the church office or call us at 337-2857 to schedule your wedding. Members are given first consideration for wedding dates. We will, however, welcome one non-member wedding per month. You will be asked to schedule an initial consultation with one of our pastors. No wedding date will be considered “set” until this consultation has taken place. During that initial session the Order of Service will be explored, the weddings policy booklet will be given, the fee schedule will be discussed, and a schedule for a series of “Pre-marriage Consultation” sessions will be determined. You will also receive a wedding schedule information sheet that you will be asked to return no later than 6 weeks prior to your wedding date. Your wedding fees will be due in full at that same time.

If you should need to make changes in your wedding rehearsal or ceremony times, it is imperative that you contact the church office and/or the officiating pastor to prevent conflicts in scheduling. If you should need to postpone or cancel a scheduled wedding date, please contact the office immediately to clear the date on the church calendar for another couple.

No weddings will be scheduled the weekend of Easter. Weddings on other holiday weekends (Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Homecoming Weekend, Thanksgiving and Christmas) will be at the discretion of the ministers.

THE MINISTER

A minister from First United Methodist church is expected to officiate at all weddings held in our sanctuary. If you desire that a guest minister be invited to serve as a “co-officiant,” please discuss these arrangements with one of our staff ministers so that an invitation can be extended to the guest minister. This procedure is according to regular ministerial courtesy and custom. Our staff minister will be in charge of working with you to plan the Order of Service and to determine how guest pastors, scripture readers, soloists, etc. will participate. A staff minister at First United Methodist Church will officiate at no more than two weddings a month in order to allow him/her some weekend family time. When you make your initial contact with the church office you will be asked if you have a preference for which minister you would like to officiate. If you have no preference, or if that pastor’s schedule is already full, your officiating pastor will be assigned to you.

PRE-MARRIAGE CONSULTATION

Consultations with your officiating pastor should be scheduled to begin a

minimum of six months in advance of the wedding that they might be completed at least six weeks prior to the date of the wedding. At these meetings, details of the service, your background as individuals and as a couple, the dynamics of your relationship, and a time for answering questions will be the focus. The numbers of sessions vary depending on the needs of the couple, but typically there will be three to six meetings. The times for your consultations with your officiating pastor will be scheduled at your initial meeting. If changes in the schedule are necessary please call or email the officiating pastor.

THE WEDDING CEREMONY

The Service of Christian Marriage from the United Methodist Book of Worship will primarily be the service used. The minister will discuss this service with you and advise you as to any additions to the service (such as scripture readings) you may desire. Should you desire to use another service, to write your own vows, or to adapt the service in any way you will need to discuss these changes with the officiating pastor. The pre-marriage consultations with your minister are optimum times to discuss the ceremony and to give and receive suggestions concerning your wedding.

IMPORTANT: The church will be opened **THREE (3) hours** prior to the ceremony to allow the wedding party to dress, to decorate the sanctuary, and to pose for photographs. Please notify those in your wedding party, your photographer and florist of this time frame. This point will be adhered to strictly. If additional time is required, an additional fee will be charged to compensate the Wedding Custodian and the Wedding Coordinator for their additional time. Should you plan to have your wedding pictures taken following the ceremony please notify your officiating pastor. In this case the church will be opened **TWO (2) hours** prior to the ceremony.

WEDDING PARKING: The Wedding Coordinator will request “Sunday Parking” for the afternoon or evening of your wedding. This means that wedding guests are allowed to park on both sides of Dubuque and Jefferson Streets near the church. On the day of the wedding the staff parking spaces in the alley off of Dubuque Street may be used by members of the wedding party or they may be reserved for family members/guests needing special accommodations. Please consult with the officiating pastor or the wedding coordinator no later than the Wednesday prior to your wedding if you desire to have some spaces reserved.

WEDDING TIMES: No wedding may begin at the church later than 7:00 p.m. This guideline allows our Wedding Custodian enough time to prepare the Sanctuary for the following day's worship services without needing to stay unduly late to complete the work.

MARRIAGE LICENSE: The wedding couple is responsible for securing the marriage license prior to the ceremony. A license may be obtained at any county courthouse in Iowa and is valid for one year. The license should be dropped off at the church office no later than the Wednesday preceding the wedding.

WEDDING MUSIC: We believe that the purpose of music for all services at First United Methodist Church is to honor and glorify God. Appropriate music, both vocal and instrumental, is available from a vast body of sacred, classical, folk and contemporary literature. We have a Holtkamp pipe organ and a full-size Baldwin grand piano that are often used for wedding ceremonies. We strongly urge that the church's organist play at all weddings where organ music is to be provided. An arrangement for the use of a soloist and/or other musicians is the responsibility of the wedding party, as well as the payment of any fees/honorariums to those asked to participate.

THE WEDDING REHEARSAL

Rehearsal Time: Rehearsals are customarily held the evening before the ceremony, usually between the hours of 5:00 and 7:00 P.M. Entrance for the wedding party for the rehearsal and before the ceremony is through the Dubuque Street door and in the Courtyard Entry, accessed from Jefferson Street or from the alley off of Dubuque Street. After 5:00 p.m. the church's parking places in the alley may be used by members of the wedding party. The elevator is to the left of the alley entrance and there is also a handicap accessible door at this entrance. Please bring 3 copies of the wedding program along to ensure that the rehearsal will go smoothly. Rehearsal time is an important time and all those taking part should plan to be at the church promptly at the scheduled time. Allow approximately one hour for the rehearsal. The time is arranged with the minister.

Before the Rehearsal You Should Have:

- o Arranged music selections and solos with our organist.
- o Determined the number of pews you will require to seat relatives.
- o Decided if you wish to use the kneeling bench for the ceremony.
- o Determined if you wish to use the church's candelabra.
- o Delivered the wedding license to the church office.

- o Paid any remaining balance of your church fees.

At the Rehearsal: The staff minister from First United Methodist Church will conduct your wedding rehearsal. There will be a careful practice of the processional and recessional and a review of the service by the minister. The wedding coordinator will instruct the ushers and candle-lighters and answer miscellaneous questions concerning church policies. Typically the wedding rehearsal can be expected to last no more than one hour from the time that it actually begins. Members of the wedding party are asked to please come to the rehearsal dressed in clothing appropriate for a church sanctuary - even if the clothing is casual.

Every effort should be made to ensure that the rehearsal starts on time.

MEMBERS OF YOUR WEDDING PARTY

- o Should dress and conduct themselves in a manner appropriate for the occasion.

First UMC is a non-alcohol and no-smoking area. Please remember that the service is in the church and is an act of worship.

- o If a Flower Girl or Ring Bearer is to take part in the wedding, they should be old enough to carry out these duties. Children vary in their age abilities and should be chosen very carefully.

- o Ushers are needed for your ceremony and the minister can give helpful advice about the number you will need.

DECORATIONS IN THE SANCTUARY

- o The pulpit, lectern, altar and altar railing shall remain in place and not be removed.

- o Wedding candles may be used only within the chancel area, (inside the chancel rail), including those in the candelabra. Should hurricane lamps on the pews be desired, please consult with your officiating pastor. The two brass, 7-tier candelabra are furnished by the church free of charge and may not have any decoration attached to them, nor should they be moved from their position in the altar area. The church supplies the candles used in its own candelabra.

- o Other candelabra brought in must have plastic sheets placed beneath them for protection against dripping on the wood or carpeted flooring. Even "dripless" candles will spray wax if there is a draft. Candles for the rented candelabra will be provided by the wedding party.

- o A "Unity Candle" may be placed on the altar for use during the ceremony. You are responsible for furnishing the three candles to be used and the candle holders.

o Flowers may be placed upon the Altar. The church has brass vases with liners that may be used for this purpose. The church also has two flower stands that may be placed next to the altar and used. If you wish to leave all or some of your flowers to be used by the church during worship the next day; please make sure your officiating pastor is aware of this.

o Bows or flowers for the pews **must be tied on or secured with elastic. NO TAPE IS TO BE USED**, please.

o Our Board of Trustees ruled against the practice of throwing rice and bird seed after the ceremony, due to ecological and safety liability concerns. Soap bubbles may be blown, small bells may be rung, or the wedding guests may applaud the couple upon their exit from the church. Please consult with your officiating pastor regarding which door you plan to use as you exit the church.

o Petals may be scattered along the main aisle during the processional as long as an aisle-runner is used. Please be mindful of the choice of flower petals, as some varieties will stain the carpet.

PHOTOGRAPHS & VIDEOTAPING

Flash photographs may **NOT** be taken in the sanctuary during the wedding ceremony in order to avoid disruption of the flow of the service. A professional photographer may photograph, without flash, during the service from the back of the sanctuary or the balcony only. Videotaping is permitted from the back of the sanctuary or the balcony. Most bridal couples choose to have the majority of their photographs taken prior to the service.

WEDDING GIFTS BROUGHT TO THE CHURCH

The wedding party assumes responsibility for all gifts brought to the church or reception. Remember that the church is open as a public building. Normal precautions should be taken to ensure gifts are protected. Persons should be designated to take charge of gifts before and during the ceremony and to transport all gifts from the church building after the wedding concludes.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

o The payment of your wedding fees is expected to be completed no later than six weeks prior to the date of the wedding. This practice eliminates the problem of having to contact you just prior to or at the rehearsal in order to collect any unpaid balance. Please be in touch with your officiating pastor should special arrangements need to be made.

o In accordance with church guidelines, consumption of alcohol and smoking is strictly prohibited in the church and on church grounds. *Any consumption of alcoholic beverages by members of the wedding party prior to the ceremony*

is sufficient cause for cancellation of the service and forfeiture of the damage deposit.

o Food and beverages *are not* allowed in the sanctuary or narthex. Bottled water may be brought into these areas.

o Fellowship Hall is available for members of the wedding party who wish to relax while waiting for photographs and the commencement of the ceremony. Should you wish to bring in sandwiches or snack food please contact your wedding coordinator to make arrangements. A soft drink machine is located in the lower Dubuque Street entrance off of Fellowship Hall for 50¢ each. Please be courteous and pick up after yourselves and recycle your cans in the container provided adjacent to the pop machine.

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

It is important to note that for persons with limited finances, or those wishing a more intimate service, special arrangements may be made by consultation with your officiating pastor. Of course, all discussions of these matters are confidential.

ENTRANCE FOR THE PHYSICALLY DISABLED

Automatic Door Openers are located at both courtyard entrances, accessed from the alley off of Dubuque Street or from Jefferson Street. They are operated by pushing a pressure plate located outside the doors. The elevator is located in this entry area. If you find that you need additional accommodations for those with special needs, please contact the office at 337-2857 and we will be happy assist you.

SPECIAL MEASUREMENTS

o The Guest Book Table provided by the church measures 3' x 3' and can be fitted with a white linen owned by the church or a table cloth can be provided by the couple in their chosen colors.

o The Main Aisle is 52.5 feet long and flanked by 36 pews, (18 on each side). If an aisle runner is used, it should measure no less than 75 feet in length.

o Measurements for top of pews are 1½" x 16½" if elastic is to be used for pew decorations.

o The main sanctuary seats 700 people and approximately 1,000 people if the balcony is used.

CHURCH PERSONNEL ASSISTING AT YOUR WEDDING

WEDDING CUSTODIAN: The Wedding Custodian will be available to unlock the church prior to the wedding ceremony and will be in attendance to assist in accepting delivery of flowers, to see that the sanctuary is in order

before the ceremony, (placing the kneeling bench and candelabra in the chancel area if desired), to clean up following the service and for any other custodial emergencies which might arise, as well as to operate the church's sound system.

The Wedding Custodian is required by the church and the fee for their service is not negotiable.

WEDDING COORDINATOR: The Wedding Coordinator will be available to the wedding party at the time of the wedding rehearsal and also the day of the ceremony. She will assist the minister and the wedding party with the rehearsal and will be available before, during and after the wedding. Our Wedding Coordinators are very familiar with the church and its wedding policies. Her duties include: helping the bride, her attendants and family at the rehearsal as they "walk through" the ceremony, coordinating the processional with the organist and minister, giving instructions on ushering and seating, assisting the bride and attendants on the wedding day with photographs and questions, and as a liaison between the wedding party and the policies set forth by FUMC to insure that the ceremony goes smoothly.

The Wedding Coordinator is required by the church and her fee is not negotiable.

ORGANIST: To ensure a working knowledge of the organ and the church's vision for the ceremony, we prefer that our church organist play for all weddings at our church. Prior to the wedding, the organist will assist with music selection in consultation with you and the officiating pastor. The organist will attend the rehearsal as necessary, attend one rehearsal and a short warm-up with any other instrumentalists or vocalists, and will play for the wedding ceremony. It is the responsibility of the wedding couple to contact the church organist to secure her services for the wedding and to set the date to meet with her to explore the choices of music. Should there be a scheduling conflict; the organist will secure a competent musician to play for the service. The fee for the organist is set by the church and is not negotiable. Other instrumental ensembles - wind, brass, string, bells, piano and harp, etc. - are optional music sources for the service. Should you desire this for your wedding please consult with your officiating pastor. It is the responsibility of the wedding couple to secure these musicians if desired and any fees will be set by them.

Soloists may be chosen by the couple or by consultation with the church's

musicians. Iowa City and the University have a wealth of talented musicians to consider. The organist is available to accompany the soloist at the organ or piano. Practices will consist of one rehearsal and a short warm-up prior to the wedding hour. *Extra rehearsals may require extra fees.*

RECEPTIONS

First United Methodist Women handle all requests for church wedding receptions after they have been scheduled through the church office. Contact the office at 337-2857 if you wish to hold your reception in Fellowship Hall. Our office staff will give you the phone number of a UMW contact person to arrange the details.

CHURCH FEES

First United Methodist Church is a warm, hospitable and welcoming church. With this in mind, we have instituted the policy of welcoming one non-member wedding per month. Non-members are asked to pay an additional \$200 Facilities Use Fee to those listed below. The required fee schedule is as follows:

MINISTER'S HONORARIUM:	\$200.00
ORGANIST:	\$150.00
WEDDING COORDINATOR:	\$100.00
WEDDING CUSTODIAN:	\$100.00
DAMAGE DEPOSIT **	<u>\$250.00</u>
TOTAL (Members):	\$800.00
(Non-Members):	\$1,000.00

** The Damage Deposit is refundable provided all church representatives (officiating pastor, wedding coordinator & wedding custodian) agree that the Wedding Policy was adhered to by the wedding party.

First United Methodist Church Wedding Personnel

PASTORS

Paul Akin, 338-9259, pastor-paul@icfirstchurch.org

John Raab, 338-5075, pastor-john@icfirstchurch.org

ORGANIST

Jin-ah Knapp, 337-2857x225, jin-ahyoo@uiowa.edu

WEDDING COORDINATORS

Peg Raab, 354-5712, margaret-raab@uiowa.edu

Melody Russell, 338-5938, mrussell@wl.k12.ia.us

Karen Williams, 351-1728, walnutrow@aol.com

WEDDING CUSTODIAN

Tristan Thiede, 338-2052, tristan-thiede@uiowa.edu

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN RECEPTION COORDINATOR

Jean Kuhn, 337-2944

BUSINESS MANAGER

Hillary Biancuzzo, 351-0800, hillarybiancuzzo@icfirstchurch.org

OFFICE STAFF

Angie Mason, 337-2857, angie-mason@icfirstchurch.org

Liz Swanton, 337-2857, liz-swanton@icfirstchurch.org

First United Methodist Church

214 East Jefferson

Iowa City, Iowa 52245

phone: 319.337.2857 fax: 319.337.0485

email: businessoffice@icfirstchurch.org web: www.icfirstchurch.org