

**Handbook
For
Wedding Preparations**



*“One in the
Bond of Love”*

Christ United Methodist Church
400 5th Avenue SW
Rochester, MN 55902
(507) 289-4019
www.cumethodist.com

HANDBOOK FOR WEDDING PREPARATIONS

Congratulations on your engagement to be married!

Your wedding is one of the most important events in your life. The Pastors, staff, and congregation of Christ United Methodist Church are pleased to share this happy occasion with you, and wish to do everything possible to make it a most significant and memorable experience.

Your desire to have a church wedding indicates that you see your marriage as a commitment made before God, with emphasis on the Christ-centered character of the ceremony. While there is much room for flexibility in a church wedding, there are boundaries as well as opportunities. This booklet provides guidelines for your celebration.

Rev. Jenny Cannon, Lead Pastor

Important E-mail and Phone Numbers:

Church Office (507) 289-4019

Rev. Jenny Cannon ext. 207
jenny@cumethodist.com

John Varona, Organist ext. 210
john@cumethodist.com

Jack Jefferson, Director of Operations ext. 202
jack@cumethodist.com

Christ UMC Wedding Coordinator, please contact Jack Jefferson for contact information and to schedule a meeting.

POLICIES

I. ELIGIBILITY

Christ United Methodist Church's Pastoral staff conducts weddings for the members and friends of CUMC. Couples desiring a wedding at CUMC are encouraged to be regular participants in the worshipping life of this congregation. Requests for non-member weddings will be reviewed by the Pastors.

II. INITIAL APPOINTMENT WITH THE PASTOR

When you begin to plan for your wedding, call the church office to schedule an initial appointment with a Pastor. The Pastor reserves the right to arrange for a substitute if an emergency should arise.

At the first meeting with the Pastor you will discuss the process of preparing for your wedding and marriage, and how church staff may be helpful with your planning. You will also need to schedule a meeting with the church wedding coordinator to plan your ceremony. The meeting to plan details with the wedding coordinator will be one hour. Although your wedding day is important, the marriage relationship should remain the focus of your planning.

You are required to meet with the Pastor to discuss the strengths and the growth areas of your relationship. It is also within the rights of the Pastor not to honor your request to be married in CUMC if they believe that is in your best interest to wait until a later date.

If you would like other clergy to participate in your wedding, this should be discussed with the Pastor at CUMC before any such arrangements are made.

A. Premarital Counseling

CUMC uses an online assessment called “Prepare and Enrich”, which you will take on that website; this assessment costs \$35, which is payable online. Following this assessment, you will meet with a church-appointed counselor or pastor. Through your sessions you will have the opportunity to learn communication and relationship skills and grow deeper in your relationship.

III. MARRIAGE LICENSE

You should apply for your license in Minnesota at least four weeks before the wedding ceremony. The license should be brought to the church on the day of your rehearsal. Make sure the full names of your two witnesses are provided. A copy of the license must be provided to the wedding coordinator.

IV. USE OF THE FACILITIES

Any rearrangement of the church decor and decorations must be approved by the wedding coordinator or the Pastor.

1. Throwing of rice, birdseed, or any kind of confetti at the couple **is not permitted**, either indoors or outside the entrance. Bubbles are an acceptable alternative.
2. No alcoholic beverages are allowed in the church building or anywhere on the church property **at any time**.
3. Smoking is not permitted in the building or on the grounds.
4. You should consult with the wedding coordinator regarding the times to be in the building on the day of your wedding.

You may plan to use the agreed-upon spaces four hours before and up to an hour following your wedding.

If you will need more time before or after the service, you should arrange for it when you sign and return the wedding arrangements agreement; this will cost extra. The wedding coordinator and the custodian need to know in advance how much time is expected of them, and the fees will be set accordingly. See the wedding arrangements form for details.

5. You will discuss florist details with the wedding coordinator prior to the wedding. Please do not use an aisle runner. The church has twelve black wrought-iron aisle sconces and two five-tier brass candelabra on stands. Dripless candles for the sconces and candelabra are \$25.

You are responsible for purchasing your own unity candle or unity materials. The church has the tray for the unity candle and holders for the two accompanying candles.

6. Flowers must be delivered 1 hour before the service. Flowers may be left in the chancel for Sunday worship, if you wish. In that instance, notify the director of operations of this arrangement at least two weeks prior to the wedding, so that the church may acknowledge this gift in the Sunday worship bulletin.

V. WEDDING REHEARSAL AND SERVICE

Unless other arrangements have been made, the rehearsal is scheduled the afternoon or evening of the day before the service. The couple is responsible for ensuring that all members of the wedding party are present at the rehearsal. This includes the witnesses, attendants, ushers, parents ,

musicians and any other participants. Make sure all the persons are able to attend at the scheduled time, and can be prompt. Please inform all members of the party of the church address. The Pastor and the wedding coordinator are in charge of the rehearsal, which usually requires 1 hour to complete.

A. Wedding Music Guidelines

1. The sacred nature of Christian marriage must be reflected in the music you choose as a part of your wedding service. The music should be both joyful and worshipful. The texts of any special music need to express more than the love of one person for another, just as Christian marriage involves more than the affirmation of human love. To be consistent with our Christian understanding of marriage, music may be any style, but it should be scriptural, or be prayerful, or be a blessing which may be sung as a benediction.

It is also appropriate for the congregation to sing one or two hymns, since this is a worship service.

Pre-recorded music is not permitted. You should consult with the Pastor regarding wedding music before you make any specific plans about your music selections. At that meeting you may share your ideas. The Pastor may suggest other possibilities for you to consider. Music deemed inappropriate for the wedding service is better used at the reception.

2. If you would like organ or piano music, let your Pastor know at your first meeting. They are prepared to suggest appropriate organ and vocal music.

3. If you would prefer to use a family member or a friend as an organist, please discuss this at the time of your meeting with

the Pastor. We can honor such a request only if the guest musician is approved by the CUMC organist. This person must follow our music guidelines, and secure the necessary practice time on these instruments. **In this situation, a consultation fee should be paid to the CUMC organist according to the fee schedule.**

4. Soloists are available from within the church if you do not wish to ask a friend or relative. You should request names when you meet with the music director.

B. Sound System

If your musicians require use of microphones you will need to consult with the wedding coordinator early in the planning process. You must make arrangements in advance with the music director for all sound needs. A lapel mic for the Pastor and one additional microphone are available without special arrangements, but must be communicated with the wedding coordinator for setup.

C. Photographer

Photographs may be taken by amateur or professional photographers, but **no flash pictures are allowed during the wedding service.** There are many advantages to having pictures taken before the wedding.

Photographs in the Sanctuary must be completed no later than one hour before the ceremony so that the Sanctuary may be straightened and guests may be seated without delays. The Pastor is to be informed of any pictures which she or he will be involved.

The photographer may not move chancel furnishings. Please instruct your photographer to be as unobtrusive as possible, staying behind the last person seated in the congregation. This will help maintain the beauty and dignity of your wedding.

Videotaping is permitted, but must not intrude in the ceremony or affect the lighting desired by the couple.

D. Children in Wedding Party

If you want a flower girl and/or ring bearer, use great care in their selection. Many small children cannot cope with the length and excitement of the day. Please assign someone to watch and help with the children. Children under seven years should not be expected to stand at the altar for the service, but should be seated with relatives after they have walked in the procession.

E. Reception Line

Reception lines should be kept simple. We suggest the reception line include only the couple and their parents.

F. Gifts

If gifts are brought to the church, the church assumes no responsibility for their safety. Gifts should be removed promptly at the end of the reception, or service.

Once the wedding ceremony begins, the dressing rooms will be locked to keep valuables secure. The church cannot be responsible for such articles left unattended.

G. Ushers

At the rehearsal you should discuss seating arrangements of parents and special guests with the wedding coordinator. All

ushers should arrive ready for work at least one hour prior to the wedding, earlier if pictures will be taken before the wedding. The custodian will light the candles fifteen minutes before the start of the service.

Guests may be seated anywhere available, unless the couple request otherwise. Following the recessional, selected ushers return at once to escort the parents and grandparents from the nave. You may choose whether you would like to have the ushers escort the rest of the guests out of the Sanctuary. The couple may decide to have a receiving line or greet guests themselves at the pews, or to receive them at your reception.

H. Dressing Rooms

The Family Room and Room 140-141 are available as a dressing rooms beginning four hours prior to the wedding. Note: The dressing room and/or Fireside Room are the only areas of the church that allow food consumption. Do not consume food in the commons area.

VI. WEDDING RECEPTION

You may arrange to hold your wedding reception at the church if you wish. The church does not provide catering for weddings; you may arrange for an outside catering service for a reception at the church. Contact the director of operations early in the planning process to help you make these arrangements. CUMC does not allow alcohol on the premises.

VII. CHECKLIST

- _____ Has the initial meeting with the Pastor been held?
- _____ Have your follow-up meetings been scheduled?
- _____ Has the church been reserved with a definite date and time for wedding and rehearsal ?
- _____ Has the \$250 deposit been made?
- _____ Have any extra rooms or time been paid for and booked?
- _____ Has the music been properly arranged with the Pastor and organist?
- _____ Has the marriage license been given to the wedding coordinator on the night of the rehearsal?
- _____ Has the entire wedding party (parents included) been notified of the rehearsal and wedding times, as well as the church address (on front of booklet)?

CUMC Suggested Honorariums & Fees

_____ *Building Use/Deposit: Fee*

\$250.00 (Paid to CUMC)

*If a Member, this is returned at time of wedding.

_____ *Pastor: Suggested Honorarium*

\$ 250.00 (Pd. to Individual)

Name: _____

_____ *Organist: Fee*

\$250.00 (Paid to Individual)

Name: _____

_____ *Custodian: Fee*
\$30/hour if using the Church after 3pm
on weekends (Paid to Individual, if using)

Name: _____

_____ *Wedding Coordinator: Fee*
\$250.00 (Paid to Individual, required)

Name: _____

_____ Sound Technician or videographer: Fee
\$150 (Paid to individual, if using)

Name: _____

_____ "Prepare & Enrich" Registration: \$35 online

_____ *Dripless Candles (12): \$25.00 (Paid to CUMC)*
(for candelabra/aisle sconces — Optional)

revised September 2021



Christ United Methodist Church
Creating committed Christ-followers for the transformation of the world.

