

ABOUT YOUR UPCOMING WEDDING



We are glad you are planning to celebrate your wedding at First United Methodist Church. The celebration of Christian marriage is an occasion of great joy and excitement and, at the same time, of great significance and reverence. It is a sacred ritual in which two persons pledge themselves to each other under the blessing of God and are united in the covenant of matrimony. To ensure your ceremony is a joyous occasion the Worship and Music Committee have prepared these guidelines to answer your questions. Our goal is to help you plan a service of worship which is dignified and meaningful.

ARRANGEMENTS

In order to schedule a wedding at First United Methodist Church, the couple shall:

- † **Secure the date of your wedding, and submit the “Wedding Application”** form through Virginia Guffey. Available dates on the church calendar can be discussed at this time. Mrs. Guffey must be notified if any changes in time occur.
- † **Contact the minister officiating your wedding** at least three months prior to your ceremony. You will want to contact the officiating minister early in your planning to schedule counseling at mutually convenient times.
- † **Contact the *Director of Music and Worship***, Lamar Drummonds, three months prior to the ceremony. The music staff at First United Methodist is responsible for all music at your ceremony.

SCHEDULING

The wedding ceremony and rehearsal should be scheduled through Virginia Guffey, as to the day and hour of each. Mrs. Guffey should also be notified if any changes in time occur.

Ceremonies may be scheduled as late as 6:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday. Rehearsals are usually scheduled at 6:00 p.m. the day prior to the wedding.

Weddings will not be performed at First United Methodist Church on the following days: New Year’s Eve, New Year’s Day, days during Holy Week, the Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Thanksgiving weekend, during Advent, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Sundays.

MUSIC

The First United Methodist organist will play for all weddings in the sanctuary or chapel. If you wish to use another organist, you must secure permission from Lamar Drummonds, *Director of Music and Worship*.

The music staff believes music suitable for the marriage service directs attention to God and

expresses the faith of the church. The staff will work with you in the selection of appropriate music in keeping with the joy and solemnity of the occasion, as well as engage any soloists or instrumentalists that you desire. All music must be appropriate to a United Methodist worship service.

The *Director of Music* must approve all musicians (vocalist, instrumentalists, etc.) if they are desired in addition to the organist. A list of principal Baton Rouge Symphony musicians who play at First United Methodist regularly can be supplied upon request. There are varying fees for each additional musician which are not included in the church's standard fee.

Checks payable to additional musicians (soloists, instrumentalist, etc.) should be dispersed at the ceremony.

WEDDING FEES

A non-refundable deposit of \$200 for the sanctuary or chapel is required to reserve your wedding date. Payment of all fees is required three weeks prior to the wedding ceremony. Checks should be made payable to First United Methodist Church and can be mailed to Mrs. Virginia Guffey, First United Methodist Church, 930 North Boulevard, Baton Rouge, LA, 70802.

- † **Sanctuary – \$1000**
~ includes minister, organist, building use, custodial fees and security on the day of the ceremony
- † **Chapel – \$900 (*members*), \$1100 (*non-members*)**
~ includes minister, organist, building use, custodial fees and security on the day of the ceremony



MINISTERS AND CEREMONY

One of the ministers of First United Methodist Church must perform the marriage ceremony. You may, if you desire, include a clergy relative or clergy family friend as one of the assisting ministers. Please speak to the minister conducting your wedding and he or she will extend an invitation to the other clergy.

A pre-marital conference with the officiating minister is required to consider the spiritual and theological aspects of the covenant of marriage. The officiating minister will explain at this conference the additional pre-marital requirements for couples having their wedding at First United Methodist Church.

If you wish to have programs/bulletins at your ceremony, you must provide a sample for review by the minister prior to having them printed. First United Methodist Church will not print programs/bulletins for the wedding.

Wedding parties are strongly encouraged to visit with the minister before finalizing any wedding plans, including the sending of invitations.

THE REHEARSAL

When scheduling your wedding, the date and hour of your rehearsal must be also set in order to avoid conflict with other wedding rehearsals. Weddings and wedding rehearsals are reserved on the church calendar on a first-call basis, and if changed, the date or time relinquished immediately becomes available. If you would like to request a change in the time of your wedding or rehearsal after the “Wedding Application” form has been submitted, you must contact Virginia Guffey for approval.

Because of the number of weddings scheduled, the wedding party should arrive 15 minutes prior to the designated rehearsal hour. One hour is allotted for wedding rehearsal time. The wedding rehearsal should begin promptly in a quiet, dignified, and reverent manner. Members of the wedding party are reminded that, while the wedding is a joyous occasion, the service takes place in a building dedicated to the worship of God.

A minister of First United Methodist Church and a member of the Wedding Committee will be present at every rehearsal and shall direct the rehearsal. The minister is responsible for interpretation and application of the church’s policies for each wedding. Ushers should be present at the rehearsal.

The minister must receive the marriage license at the rehearsal.

No wedding rehearsal will be conducted when any member of the wedding party is clearly under the influence of any intoxicating beverage or substance.

GUIDELINES FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

The following are strict policies regarding photographs, motion pictures, or videotaping in the church. An additional copy of these guidelines will be provided for you to give to your photographer.

Photographers are expected to maintain a low profile to preclude any distraction to those participating in or observing the ceremony.

No flash photographs may be taken by friends from the time guests begin arriving until the entire ceremony is completed. Please ask your ushers to inform guests with cameras of this policy.

During the ceremony, available light photographs may be made from the center of the balcony.

Photographers will not ask members of the wedding party to stand on kneeling cushions; or to sit, kneel, or lean on the pulpit, altar, or altar rail for posed photographs, nor will they themselves stand on the pews or any church furnishings.

The ceremony may be videotaped from a fixed location in the center of the balcony. No operator or photographer will be allowed in the choir loft or chancel area during the ceremony. No camera lights are allowed.

The bride and photographer should plan poses for various photographs before the ceremony to conserve the time of the wedding party, guests and church staff.

It is the bride's responsibility to see that the photographer, relatives, and friends are informed of these photo policies.

First United Methodist Church has a Director of Television Ministries who can film your ceremony. The use of any church television facilities or equipment must be arranged in advance, on a fee basis, with the Director of Television Ministries. Only members of the FUMC Television Ministry will be allowed to use this equipment.

Pictures should be completed 45 minutes prior to the ceremony and all pictures should be completed within 30 minutes after the ceremony.



GUIDELINES FOR FLORISTS

The sanctuary and chapel of First United Methodist Church are places of beauty and dignity. Excessive floral displays and elaborate greenery are discouraged. An additional copy of these guidelines will be provided for you to give to your florist.

The florist is requested to complete all arrangements at least two hours before the wedding. All decorations are to be removed immediately following the wedding. **A fee of \$50.00 will be charged if any decorations are left.** The florist will be responsible for any damage to the building or furnishings.

Church furnishings may not be moved. This includes seasonal banners, baptismal font, altar, altar rail, pulpit chairs and pews. Pedestals for flowers or greenery may not restrict the minister's movement behind the altar rail.

Protective material shall be placed under all candelabra or single candles.

Candelabra are not permitted within one foot of the altar kneeling cushions.

Candles or candelabra may not be placed where lighting requires reaching across the altar rail with the exception of the unity candle.

Flowers, plants, candles and candelabra shall not be placed on church furnishings: organ, piano, pulpit, altar, altar rail, baptism font or kneeling cushions.

Altar candles shall not be removed. The altar cross and paraments remain where they are since they indicate the sanctuary is a place where worship is conducted. No other items shall be placed on the altar.

Pew candle holders with globes may be used provided the fastener does not damage the pew or its finish.

No tape, tacks, staples or plastic may be used to secure any decorations in the church.

Aisle cloths are not used in First United Methodist Church due to safety issues for both the wedding party and departing guests.

MISCELLANEOUS

Smoking, alcohol, and illegal drugs are not permitted in the church building or on church property.

Ministers will refuse to perform a wedding for anyone considered to be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs at the time of the wedding.

The church is not responsible for personal items brought to the church to be used in a wedding.

Please remove all of your personal belongings, and those of members of the bridal party, immediately after the wedding.

Food and drink are not permitted in the sanctuary or chapel.

Rice, birdseed, rose petals, or other objects are not to be thrown inside or outside the church as it is a safety hazard.

Please inform the church coordinator in advance if special arrangements are necessary to accommodate the handicapped.

Parking is available on East Boulevard and America Street.

Check with the Convention and Visitors' Bureau (225-383-1825 or visit their website, <http://www.visitbatonrouge.com/events>) for parades, festivals, or other activities that might interfere with the wedding, parking, or access of guests to the church.

NOTES & QUESTIONS:

CHECK LIST:

- Fill out Wedding Application & read Wedding Guidelines.
- Return application to Virginia Guffey at FUMC along with a \$200 deposit to secure date.
- Contact Lamar Drummonds 3 months in advance of wedding date to secure music.
- Give Photographer and Florist First United Methodist Church Guidelines.
- Schedule pre-marital counseling with Stacey Kidder or any other counseling office (be sure they send a summary of the session) – this should take place 8 weeks prior to the wedding date at the very latest.
- Contact Virginia Guffey once counseling date is secured to schedule a session with your officiating minister.
- Leaving/not leaving your flowers for the following Sunday? Confirm with Virginia Guffey.
- Don't forget to get your Marriage License!
- Bring Marriage License with you to wedding rehearsal.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH GUIDELINES FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

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