



# Wedding Guidelines

## Central United Methodist Church



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*September 2023*

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## ***Welcome to Central United Methodist Church***

*Your wedding is one of the happiest and holiest moments in your life. As you join your lives to establish a Christian home, our congregation rejoices with you and is eager to help make your wedding beautiful and memorable. The true beauty in all weddings lies in the spirit of those persons involved.*

*The staff of Central United Methodist Church, along with our pastors and worship leaders, have created the following Guide for hosting weddings at our church. Please contact the church office at 704.786.4109 with additional questions.*

*Central United Methodist Church welcomes the opportunity to be involved in the beginning of a Christian home through the covenant of marriage. We honor our United Methodist policies on weddings.*

## **THE CEREMONY**

Marriage ceremonies may be either religious or civil. All ceremonies performed at Central are religious and performed by an ordained pastor. There must be two witnesses at any marriage ceremony.

## **CONGREGATIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

Persons who are on our active membership roll, their children or grandchildren may schedule their wedding up to two years in advance. There is no fee for active members, their children or grandchildren to use the church for a wedding.

Non-members who desire to be married at Central may schedule our facilities up to nine months in advance. There is a fee for non-members. Before a wedding of a non-member is scheduled, our pastors must also approve.

We strongly encourage those being married in our church to make a commitment to be a part of Christ's Church as part of your marriage covenant and invite you to consider Central as your church home.

## **SCHEDULING**

The couple desiring to be married at our church should contact the church administrator and the pastor(s) you wish to use as early as possible prior to the anticipated date of the wedding to confirm availability and secure the desired date. Please fill out and return the "Wedding Information Form" and submit the deposit to the church office within two weeks of confirming the wedding date with the church and pastor(s). Failure to confirm the date with the pastor or failure to return the form, with deposit, may result in forfeiture of the scheduled date.

Central UMC is not available to host weddings on any Sundays throughout the year and the following days and church holidays:

- New Year's Eve (Dec. 31)
- New Year's Day (Jan 1)
- Holy Week, includes the Saturday before Palm Sunday (dates vary each year)
- Easter Monday
- Memorial Day (date varies)
- Independence Day (July 4)
- Labor Day (date varies)
- Thanksgiving week,
- Saturday before the first Sunday of Advent (date varies)
- Christmas Eve (Dec. 24)
- Christmas Day (Dec. 25)

## **CLERGY**

Central has several ordained ministers, any of whom may lead your service. These pastors have the final authority to make decisions regarding the ceremony and wedding activities that will insure that all activities are in accordance with the sacred nature of Christian marriage. Guest pastors may assist or perform the ceremony, with the advance permission of the Central UMC Senior Pastor. Please do not ask another pastor to participate before you have spoken with our Senior Pastor. Pastoral courtesy requires that one of the pastors at Central invite a guest pastor to participate in the service.

Our clergy encourage you to make your wedding service unique. When you schedule your wedding, church staff will provide the book, Christian Weddings: Resources to Make Your Wedding Unique by Andy Langford. This resource can assist in making selections for scripture, practices and music.

If the couple desires the pastors to attend any of the social functions associated with the wedding, please send invitations well in advance. In general, due to the demands of pastoral responsibilities, the pastors may not be able to attend rehearsal dinners, social events, or stay long at receptions.

## **PREMARITAL SESSION REQUIREMENT**

Pastors require that all couples seeking to be married at Central UMC participate in premarital sessions. The primary purpose of these sessions is to review the wedding ceremony and to explore various aspects of Christian marriage. Please schedule these sessions as soon as possible.

## **WEDDING DIRECTOR**

Once the church office receives a copy of your "Wedding Information Form", we will assign a Central UMC Wedding Director to assist with your wedding details at the church. The Wedding Director will contact you. Together with the director, you will complete a "Wedding Planning Questionnaire" to begin to work on details.

The CUMC Wedding Director will work with you throughout the process of planning your ceremony and church use. The Director will consult with you regarding the rehearsal and wedding approximately six weeks before the wedding using the "Wedding Information Form." The Director will also be present to direct the rehearsal and wedding. The Director will also serve as a liaison with church staff.

Wedding Directors from outside of Central UMC must have prior approval. Please speak with our church staff before choosing an outside director to participate in coordination of the ceremony.

Members of the Central UMC Wedding Committee will assist the Director and assist on the day of the wedding as church hostess.

## AVAILABLE FACILITIES

**Sanctuary:** Central UMC's sanctuary seats a maximum of 400 people and has an elaborate organ as well as a grand piano. We do not offer outdoor weddings.

**Fellowship hall:** The Coltrane Memorial Room has a maximum capacity of 180 seated or 360 standing. It is available for rehearsal dinners and receptions. This facility may also be reserved with the church by completing the "Wedding Information Form".

**Dressing Rooms:** Typically, the bride and her bridal party dress in the Parlor (across from the front of the sanctuary). The groom and his party dress in the Youth Room downstairs. You may have light refreshments and soft drinks in these rooms (no alcohol). Plan to do hair and makeup in the restrooms, or before arriving. Plan on arriving no more than three hours before the wedding.

**Nursery:** Families may provide a nursery during the rehearsal and wedding using the church nursery. The nursery should be left clean and neat after use. The church is not responsible for hiring or paying nursery workers for an event. A list of qualified and trained nursery workers can be provided.

**Parking:** Ample parking is available in our Church Street lot, our larger side lot and at the Wells Fargo Bank next door to the church (weekends).

**Please include all room reservation requests on your Wedding Information Form.**

**Note that alcohol is not allowed in the building for any event.**

## REHEARSAL

Typically, a rehearsal is held the afternoon or evening before the wedding. We suggest the rehearsal be scheduled 2 hours before the start time of the rehearsal dinner. The couple shall be responsible for communicating the time and location of the rehearsal to the wedding party and families. Please encourage everyone to be prompt out of respect for all involved and events to follow. The church wedding director and the presiding pastor will lead and guide the rehearsal.

## CEREMONY ACCESSORIES AND DECORATIONS

The Sanctuary is a place of beauty and dignity. It does not require elaborate decorations to make a beautiful wedding. If you wish to add accessories or decoration for the ceremony, you are responsible for securing and purchasing all flowers, candles and other desired items.

Please consider the following when considering ceremony decorations:

- No church furnishings are to be moved without the approval of the church's wedding director and presiding pastor.
- A church sexton will put up white paraments (coverings for the pulpit, lectern, and communion table) prior to the wedding.

- A unity candelabra (two side candles and a central candle) and/or kneeling cushion owned by the Central congregation may be used as part of the ceremony.
- Standard candles may not be used in the sanctuary. The church's liquid wax candles on the communion table may be used instead of candelabras. A plastic sheet should be placed under other candles to prevent hot wax from damaging the floor. Dripless candles in metal holders should be used in other candelabras. No candles are allowed in the windows. Someone should be appointed to see that candles are extinguished after the ceremony or after pictures are made. A representative of the couple is responsible for cleaning any wax that hits any surface such as the woodwork or carpet. If this is not done, the deposit will not be refunded.
- Floral arrangements may be used beneath the cross behind the communion table. We recommend fresh flowers but silk flowers may be used in arrangements. Indoor tossed flowers/ flower attendants must use silk petals.
- During the Advent/Christmas season, and the Lent/ Easter season, there may be special decorations in the church for the season. These decorations must remain up during the wedding service.
- Floral arrangements may be left for use in the church Sanctuary or Narthex for Sunday morning. We will be happy to note your gift in our Sunday worship bulletin. Please notify the church office with the wording you would like to recognize the gift.
- Set up for the ceremony may begin no earlier than the rehearsal day. All decorations should be removed (except gifted florals-see above) from the building immediately after the services. The building must be left in the condition in which it was found.
- No tacks, nails, or scotch tape may be used on the pews, kneeling rails, or other woodwork. Pew ribbons may be attached with ribbons.
- No rice, bird seed, confetti, or glitter should be used inside or outside the facilities. Bubbles outside are preferred and encouraged.

## **MUSIC**

The wedding is a service of worship; therefore, the music selected for the service should be of a sacred nature. You should contact the church organist directly to insure availability. If the church organist is not available, a list of other organists will be provided. The church organist must approve anyone who would play the organ or the piano.

Live music is strongly recommended.

The couple should select all music with the CUMC organist. All details concerning the music for the wedding should be cleared with the CUMC organist as soon as possible after the wedding date is set.

Music other than organ and piano may require an additional sound engineer.

## **WEDDING BULLETINS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Wedding bulletins are the responsibility of the couple. The pastor should proof the information regarding the service prior to printing.

If the couple desires to invite Central UMC congregation to the service, an invitation should be sent to the church office for the invitation to be printed in the church bulletin two weeks prior to the wedding.

The couple is responsible for placing any information concerning the wedding in the local newspapers.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY AND RECORDINGS**

Photographs and video recordings of your wedding are treasured keepsakes, but these should be made in ways that do not distract from the wedding ceremony. Professional photographers are allowed, but must be discreet and avoid detracting from the sacredness of the wedding covenant ceremony.

Flash photographs in the sanctuary should not be taken once the pre-service music begins. The wedding bulletin should inform guests that no pictures should be taken during the ceremony. Ushers may also alert guests to this expectation.

Stationary video cameras must be placed as inconspicuously as possible, not obstructing the view of the congregation nor movement of the wedding party. No handheld video cameras are to be used. A video camera may be used in the choir area, but not the communion table area.

Videographers and Photographers should be dressed appropriately for the wedding.

## **SOUND SYSTEM**

Central's sound equipment is very sensitive and designed with sound/acoustics as a high priority.

1) For wedding ceremonies in which the pastor and one additional speaker use a microphone, the pastor and wedding director will set up the system.

2) For wedding ceremonies which include multiple singers, readers or instrumentalists, the system must be operated only by someone from Central UMC who is trained on the system and a sound operator must be secured for your date (church can provide a list). Sound equipment must not be disconnected or moved without the assistance of persons knowledgeable about the system.

Music other than organ and piano may require an additional sound engineer. A sound operator may only be needed for the rehearsal. More complicated services will require a sound operator for both the rehearsal and the service.

The wedding director and our in-house sound operator can determine your needs for your service.

We are not able to connect our A/V system to outside sources.

## **CATERING**

Central UMC does not have catering staff available to provide rehearsal dinners or receptions. If a meal or reception is held at Central through facility rental, the caterer must contact the church administrator two weeks prior to the wedding to confirm details. For health safety regulations, you may use only qualified caterers. Our church staff will provide access to the facility for the caterer. The church kitchen may be used by catering staff. The couple/caterer is responsible for purchasing all necessary items for the reception. Church food and paper supplies are not to be used. Caterers are responsible for cleaning all the food and other supplies out of the kitchen and fellowship hall. If the space is not left as found, the deposit will not be refunded.

## **THE MARRIAGE LICENSE**

The couple must obtain a marriage license before they may be legally married. A marriage license is secured from the Register of Deeds. No waiting period is required before the ceremony can take place. No physician's certificate is required. The license is good for sixty days after it is issued. You may get a license at any Register of Deeds in NC. The Cabarrus County Register of Deeds is located at 65 Church Street, South, in downtown Concord (704.920.2112). Please bring your marriage license to the presiding pastor at the wedding rehearsal.

On your wedding day, the presiding pastor will secure the necessary signatures and mail the license back to the Register of Deeds. After the wedding, you may obtain a registered copy of your license from the Register of Deeds. You will not receive a copy from the pastor on your wedding day.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

All persons getting married at Central UMC must meet North Carolina eligibility requirements.

## **ADDITIONAL GUIDELINES**

- Facility rentals are not full day rentals. Please arrive no earlier than 3 hours before the wedding ceremony start time and 2 hours before other scheduled events. Set up and decoration in advance must be coordinated with the wedding director.
- The couple is responsible for any damage to the sanctuary, fellowship hall or any other rooms used during the wedding events.
- No smoking is permitted inside any of the facilities.
- No alcohol is permitted on the church property. Members of the wedding party should not participate in either the rehearsal or wedding under the influence of alcohol.
- All Wedding participants and third-party vendors are subject to the guidelines in this document.
- The church is not responsible for personal items such as wedding presents, purses, or gifts. The church will not be held liable for items lost, stolen, or damaged. Please have someone made responsible for security.
- No animals are permitted on the church premises other than approved service animals.
- If you have any further questions about the facility use, ceremony planning or other aspects of your wedding, please do not hesitate to call the church office at 704.786.4109 from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm Monday through Friday.



## FEE CHART FOR CHURCH USE AND FACILITY RENTAL

There is a \$500 fully refundable deposit due when you reserve the church (regardless of membership). This will be deposited. The deposit will be returned after the church staff completes the final inspection & cleanup of the Sanctuary and related rooms. If any damage occurs, if any area used is left disordered, or if there is any indication there has been alcohol on the premises, there will be a deduction from the deposit. Damages exceeding \$500 will be the responsibility of the wedding couple.

The following fees are required for facility rental:

Sanctuary (church members): No fee

Sanctuary (non-church members): \$1,200

Fellowship Hall (non church member): \$300

Cleaning Fee (all facilities): \$400

Presiding Pastor (paid to Pastor): \$350

Director's Fee (paid to Wedding Director): \$300

*The Director's fee covers the planning sessions, the rehearsal, and the service.*

Organist (paid to organist): \$350

Sound System Operator (paid to operator): \$200

All fees should be paid directly as indicated above to the persons involved 30 days prior to the wedding. If you are only using our sanctuary, the use and the sexton/cleaning fees are still required.

Once your wedding date is secured, each couple is responsible for obtaining the following vendors (if their services are required/desired) to assist in the wedding:

1. Florist
2. Photographer/videographer
3. Caterer