

A STATEMENT OF POLICY FOR WEDDINGS

Revised February 2, 2016

A wedding is one of the happiest and holiest experiences of life. As two Christian people join their lives to establish a Christian home, the church rejoices with them and is eager to help make the occasion of the wedding beautiful and memorable. With this in mind, let it be remembered that a Christian marriage is a service of worship. Consequently, all elements (music, both instrumental and vocal, readings, etc.) should be appropriate for a service of worship as well as consistent with Christian values. It is not necessary for a wedding to be elaborate in order to be beautiful. The true beauty lies in the spirit and attitude of those who take part.

In the happy excitement of planning for a wedding, many questions as to details arise. Often there is uncertainty as to what is proper. The following procedures are given to assist in the planning. The minister(s) and staff members will gladly answer any questions and render any help possible.

I. FACILITIES

1. The Sanctuary is available for weddings.
2. The Christian Activity Center (CAC) is available for weddings and /or receptions.

II. ARRANGEMENTS

1. When you decide to marry at Central United Methodist Church, the first person to contact is the pastor. In your preliminary consultation, you will clear dates for the wedding, the wedding rehearsal, the counseling sessions, and review the wedding policy.
2. Members of Central United Methodist Church will have priority in choosing dates over non-members up to 180 days prior to the ceremony. Church membership must exist at least six months before the wedding date. Children or grandchildren of current members of six-months standing will be considered members for the purpose of this wedding policy. Employees of CUMC of six-months standing will be considered as members for the purposes of this policy.
3. It is suggested that members reserve church facilities for a wedding at least six (6) months in advance.
4. Due to difficulties in securing adequate help, weddings will not be scheduled during Holy Week (from Palm Sunday through Easter Sunday, Thanksgiving weekend (Thursday through Sunday), Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day. Care should be taken in scheduling weddings December 26 through December 31 as many church employees, contract workers, and volunteers are unavailable during that period.
5. To reserve the Sanctuary for a wedding or the CAC for a wedding and/or reception, speak to the church secretary (phone 704-739-2471) after your

preliminary consultation with the pastor. Arrangements for the rehearsal need to be made at this time also.

6. The secretary can also secure the services of the custodial staff and help you contact other persons who may be needed, such as the music director and the wedding director.
7. The secretary will schedule the use of wedding flowers for Sunday worship and also make the proper bulletin announcements when requested.
8. It is the policy at Central Methodist not to charge members for the use of the facilities for weddings; however, there are fees for custodial services that apply to everyone who uses the facilities for a wedding.
 - a. A \$100.00 deposit is due from non-members at the time the application is made. This deposit is refundable up to two weeks (14 days) prior to the wedding rehearsal.
 - b. The remaining balance of applicable fees due to the church for nonmembers is payable to the church secretary at least two weeks prior to the wedding. This amount, minus the \$100.00 deposit, will be refunded if the wedding is cancelled.
 - c. Fees for the church organist are due directly to the organist at least two weeks prior to the wedding.

III. MINISTER

1. It is the policy for the current minister(s) of Central United Methodist Church to perform all weddings in this church. When it is desired, it is quite proper to have another minister assist, provided the minister of Central United Methodist approves. If this is your desire, ask the pastor of Central Methodist to extend the invitation to the visiting minister.
2. A pre-marital conference with the pastor is required, and the date for this should be set for two or three weeks prior to the wedding.
3. It is the pastor's privilege at Central United Methodist to officiate at the weddings of members. An honorarium to the pastor is a token of appreciation and is the responsibility of the groom. The suggested **minimum** honorarium is \$50.00.

IV. DECORATIONS

The bride's parents usually make arrangements for decorations with a florist, whom they will inform about the church's decoration policy. The following recommendations are given to preserve the proper atmosphere in the church and to safeguard the furnishings.

1. Since weddings are worship services it is perfectly permissible to use very little in the way of decorations.
2. Within the Chancel proper (the area from the railing back) there should be no decorations except the church's candlesticks on the altar, flowers in the vases on the pedestals, florists' candelabra, and the kneeling bench.¹

¹ Hoyt L. Hickman, United Methodist Altars (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 63.

3. Artificial flowers are not to be used in the Sanctuary. (This does not apply to flowers worn or carried by the wedding party.)²
4. The two candles on the altar should remain in place and be lighted along with any other candles for the wedding service. **No decorations may ever be placed on the marble altar.**³
5. No decorations are permitted in the choir loft. Furniture and worship symbols are not to be moved.
6. No nails, screws, staples, tacks, sticking tape, or glue may be used in any part of the Sanctuary or CAC to fasten any decorations to the furniture or building, nor can any carpentry work or temporary construction be erected.
7. The furniture, floor, carpet, and altar must be fully protected at all times from moisture, wax, marks, or scars.
8. An aisle cloth, if used, must be fastened with a heavy duty tape.
9. When using the pew candles, the wooden poles are to be secured to pews along the center aisle with sturdy elastic bands.
10. Drip-less candles must be used in the Sanctuary and also in the CAC.
11. All decorations must be removed by the florist following the ceremony unless special permission is sought and granted to postpone removal and cleaning until the following day. The building must be left in the condition in which it was found. The florist is responsible for any damage done by their crew.

V. WEDDING PROGRAM

1. Please print the following in the wedding program:
 “Flash photography is not permitted during the service. This wedding is a solemn religious ceremony.”

VI. CUSTODIAL DUTIES

1. The custodian is responsible for putting the facilities in order before and after the rehearsal and ceremony, with the exception of the area for which the florist is responsible.
2. The custodian is also responsible for cleaning the CAC before and after the reception. Tables and chairs are available for use if desired; **however, table coverings and cloths are not provided by the church.** The custodian will set up the reception area according to your wishes. (*see Wedding Application*)
3. The custodian will be out of the building one hour prior to the service and will return one hour after indicated finishing time on the wedding application.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

VII. MUSIC

1. Since the Church considers the wedding a sacred religious service, only music of an appropriate character is acceptable. Arrangements for all wedding music must be made through our church music director and organist, who have final approval of all music used.
2. The church organist shall ordinarily play at all weddings at Central United Methodist. If the couple wants to use another organist, this shall be at the discretion of the music director, organist, and the minister. Wedding parties are to negotiate fees with the organist in relationship to the amount of work that is required.
3. It is suggested that taped music not be used in the Sanctuary since both an organ and a piano are available. Taped music can, however, be used more appropriately for a wedding service in the CAC due to a sound system which is set up for this. Use of a church approved sound technician is required.

VIII. PHOTOGRAPHER/VIDEOTOGRAPHER

1. Flash pictures may be taken before the processional or after the recessional but not during the service.
2. Photographs by time exposure may be made from the rear of the sanctuary.
3. Photographs may be made in the Sanctuary or CAC prior to the ceremony, or the wedding party may return to the Altar after the ceremony for pictures if they desire to do so.
4. Flash pictures are not to be taken by anyone during the ceremony.
5. Video recordings of the service are permitted, provided the equipment is confined to the rear of the sanctuary or to the balcony and does not detract from the service. An un-manned camera may be discreetly placed in the choir loft.
6. A tape recorder may be used, provided it is inconspicuous and is under supervision.
7. Church video and photographic equipment may not be used.
8. **No camera or filming of any kind is permitted in the aisles before, during, or after the ceremony.**

IX. WEDDING DIRECTOR (being developed)

X. SOUND TECHNICIAN

1. Any use of the sound system for a wedding or reception requires the use of a church-approved sound technician.
2. Arrangements for a sound technician **MUST** be made at least two (2) weeks in advance. Otherwise the sound system in the CAC and/or Sanctuary may not be used.
3. Fees payable for a sound technician are outlined in the fee schedule and are payable directly to Central United Methodist Church.
4. Fees for sound services not outlined in the fee schedule must be negotiated with the sound technician.

XI. USE OF ADDITIONAL CHURCH FACILITIES

If needed, the following areas are available during weddings: Sanctuary, Narthex, Parlor, Christian Activity Center, and Choir Room.

1. The bride and her attendants may use the church Parlor to dress
2. Groomsmen and ushers may use the choir room.
3. The Bridal Party is required to remove all articles of apparel, boxes, and other personal items immediately following the wedding and/or reception.
4. Food and drink are not allowed in these areas with the exception of the Christian Activity Center.

XII. RECEPTION

The Christian Activity Center is available for receptions, if desired. **There are additional policies applicable for the use of this facility.** A copy of these policies is available from the church secretary when arrangements and reservation dates are scheduled. The following wedding policies are in addition to the general policies for use of this facility:

1. The use of greenery, flowers, and candelabra is at the discretion of the bride, florist, wedding director and/or pastor, provided floor, walls, and church furnishings are protected from wax, scars, marks, or other damage.
2. No nails, screws, staples, tacks, sticking tape, or glue may be used in any part of the CAC to fasten any decorations to the furniture or building, nor can any carpentry work or temporary construction be erected.
3. The florist shall be responsible for removing the decorations promptly. Dead flowers, paper, or greenery are not to be left in the building or on the church property.
4. It is the responsibility of the caterer or volunteers to leave the kitchen area as it was found. The caterer is responsible for any damage done by their crew.

XI. ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS

1. Smoking is not permitted in Church Buildings.
2. No rice may be thrown on the church property and grounds.
3. Birdseed and bubbles are only to be used outside of the buildings.
4. The use of alcoholic beverages on church property or grounds is prohibited.
5. No one is to come to the rehearsal, wedding, or reception under the influence of alcohol.

XII. USE BY NON-MEMBERS

1. For persons who are not members of Central United Methodist Church, rental fees shall be charged for the use of facilities in addition to all previously mentioned fees. (*see Wedding Application*)
2. After six months of employment employees of Central United Methodist Church have the same rights as members for purposes of this policy.
3. Non-member fees apply to:

- i. Anyone who is not currently a member of the church and who has not been a member for at least six months prior to the wedding date.
 - ii. Children and grandchildren of those who are not current members of at least six months standing prior to the wedding date.
 - iii. Employees of the church of less than six months standing prior to the wedding date.
4. Requests from area churches for a wedding reception to be held in the CAC may only be submitted by the minister from that church. Approval for the request will be at the discretion of the Trustees of Central United Methodist Church following a recommendation from the minister of Central Methodist. Since Central United Methodist Church functions have priority, requests for the use of the CAC by non-members will not be considered more than 180 days prior to the date of the reception.
 5. A wedding director from Central United Methodist Church must be used. *(as soon as one has been appointed to develop this area)*
 6. Members of Central United Methodist Church have priority in selection of wedding dates, however, once a request is approved for non-members by the Trustees, that party shall not lose its reservation of said facilities.

XIII. REVISIONS

This wedding policy will be reviewed annually by the Trustees and Wedding Director of Central United Methodist Church. It may be revised at any time as circumstances arise following the recommendation of the Trustees and the approval of the Administrative Council.

Adopted May 5, 2003
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