

Scheduling

Weddings are scheduled based on the availability of the clergy, wedding coordinator and the church calendar. Members may reserve a wedding date up to 18 months and non-members 12 months from the date of making the reservation and paying the fee. The date will not be confirmed until the fee is paid.

Weddings are not scheduled on holiday weekends to include, **but not limited to**, Gasparilla weekend, the Saturday before Palm Sunday, Holy Week, Thanksgiving, the week before and after Christmas, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day or Sundays. Other dates may not be available based on church events.

The marriage license must be received in the church office two weeks before the wedding date.

Our Pastors

The pastors of our church will work with you to help make your wedding a meaningful expression of your commitment to each other and to Christ, and to help you prepare for a lifelong covenant of growth and love.

One of our pastors will officiate at your wedding. Other clergy are welcome to assist. Exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Senior Pastor.

The pastor is responsible for everything that happens on the church property. When the pastor is not present, that responsibility is delegated to the Wedding Coordinator provided by the Church.

The United Methodist Church requires its pastors to counsel with the couple regarding the meaning of Christian marriage, preparation for a healthy marriage, and other concerns raised by the couple. The number and length of the sessions will be negotiated between the couple and the pastor.

The church continues to be interested in your marriage after the wedding. The pastors are available for personal counseling at any point throughout your marriage.

Wedding Coordinators - Kathy DiRaimo/ Lisa Leonard

To insure that every detail of your wedding is properly planned and carried out in accordance with our church policies, we provide the ministry of a Wedding Coordinator. You will need to make an appointment with her **at least two months prior to your wedding** (but not more than six months) to review plans, clarify policies, discuss options and resolve any questions you may have about the wedding and rehearsal.

At the rehearsal, the Wedding Coordinator will lead the participants through every detail of the wedding and insure that each person understands what is to happen on the day of the wedding.

At the wedding, the Wedding Coordinator will see that everything runs smoothly from the time you arrive until after the wedding when you are ready to take pictures.

Every wedding which includes music and invited guests, whether in the chapel or in the sanctuary, must include the services of our Wedding Coordinator.

If a personal wedding coordinator is to assist the bride and her attendants, that person will work under the supervision of our Wedding Coordinator

The Wedding Service

The wedding is a service of worship in which we celebrate God's gift of human love and affirm the covenant between a man and woman in holy matrimony. Our pastors will use the United Methodist Order of Worship for the Service of Christian Marriage. Changes or additions to the service must be made in consultation with the pastor and must be consistent with the theology and tradition of the church. Decisions you will need to make regarding the service include:

- Do you want one or more congregational hymns?
- Do you want a family member or friend to read a scripture lesson?
- Will you have solos or special music?
- Will you light a unity candle?

Children are welcomed as members of the wedding party but they must be mature enough to participate effectively in the service. To be in the wedding procession, the children should be **at least six years old**.

Decorations

Since our church is already furnished as a place of dignity and beauty, few decorations are needed and these should be carefully planned.

It is the responsibility of the bride's family to arrange with a florist for decorations. In the placing of flowers, palms or other decorations, care must be taken to insure that the floors, carpets, walls, and furnishings not be damaged.

Furniture on the Chancel and on the floor may not be removed or rearranged. Decorations will not be hung or suspended from fixtures or furnishings. Ribbon or simple arrangements of flowers may mark reserved pews. Except for these markers, no other decorations will be attached to the furniture. No nails, screws, wires or Scotch tape will be used in decorating.

The altar is central to the service. Plants and flowers may not block the view of the cross or access to the altar. We recommend one central arrangement in the sanctuary or two small arrangements in the chapel.

In selecting the color scheme of your wedding, you should first consider the colors in the existing facilities. If your wedding is scheduled during a church seasonal celebration such as Easter or Christmas, it must be planned around existing decorations, such as red poinsettias at Christmas.

The building will be open for flowers to be delivered 1-1/2 hours before the wedding. The florist, family or whoever decorates must remove all decorations no later than one hour following the wedding and will be responsible for any damage incurred. Flowers may be left for the Sunday worship service and an announcement of your marriage will be in the church bulletin. Please talk with the wedding coordinator or church administrator about this.

If you would like to use a unity candle or candelabra, the church will provide these for your use.

Church Policy for Florists — Please Give this Information to Your Florist

1. The building will be open for flowers to be delivered 1-1/2 hours before the wedding.
2. All decorations must be removed no later than ONE HOUR following the ceremony. If the bride is leaving the flower arrangements in the church, our maintenance person will move them to the proper place.
3. Bows and flowers may be used on the pews, but attached with ribbon ONLY. NO tape, tacks, staples, plastic, wire, or nails may be used to secure decorations in the church.
4. Upon request, a unity candle and/or a candelabra will be furnished by the church. No bows, ribbons, or flowers may be placed on or around the candelabra.
5. No flower petals are to be dropped by flower girls.
6. Due to safety concerns, we do not permit the use of an aisle runner.
7. Construction of unique or artificial settings is not permitted.
8. There will be NO SMOKING nor alcoholic beverages on the church property.
9. Adequate precautions must be taken to protect the carpet, woodwork and furnishings. The commercial supplier is responsible for damage.
10. Delivery vehicles are not permitted on the brick Courtyard.

Music

Music is a vital part of this sacred service. Its purpose is to maintain and help create a spirit of Christian worship. All instrumental and vocal music should be chosen in consultation with our music director/organist. She will suggest appropriate music for your service in consultation with the soloist and pastor. Music must be appropriate for worship and reflect Biblical themes and Christian perspective. Secular music, such as show tunes, are not appropriate. The Pastor and Music Director have final authority regarding music selections. Due to the nature of the service, taped accompaniment is not recommended.

It will be **your responsibility** to contact the church organist as soon as possible to discuss the date, time and music. Arrangements for a vocal soloist should be handled privately, although our Music Director will be glad to suggest the names of qualified and experienced singers. It is the responsibility of the bride to see that the soloist contacts the organist to arrange for a rehearsal. This rehearsal should be scheduled for a time **other** than the wedding rehearsal.

The cost of the organist is included in the wedding fee. Soloist's fees should be negotiated and paid separately.

The bride and groom will need to schedule a time to consult the organist/music director to choose music for the wedding. In addition to processional and recessional music, we suggest the following places during the ceremony where music could enhance the service. Choose the spots carefully as it is possible to use too much music in the service.

At the seating of the mothers.

A hymn may be sung by all in attendance prior to the processional music.

During the lighting of the unity candle (choose a song where the words relate directly to this act.)

While the couple is kneeling during the prayers.

If music is chosen requiring additional rehearsal/practice time, an additional fee may be required. Approval for a guest organist will be made only by the music director. Michael Dougherty, Director of Traditional Music, may be reached at the church, [email](#) or phone, 813. 253.5388 ext. 237.

Photographs

Pictures are a cherished part of weddings. Because a wedding is a sacred occasion, certain procedures must be followed and it is the responsibility of the bride to inform the photographer of the policies of this church.

Flash pictures may be taken in the foyer before the processional and after the recessional. **No photographs may be taken by guests during the ceremony.** A time exposure of the ceremony may be taken unobtrusively from the rear of the church by the professional photographer. It is the ushers' responsibility to ensure that no photography occurs during the service.

If a picture of the bride's processional is desired, the photographer must stay behind the congregation and may not enter the Chancel at any time.

If the service is to be videotaped, the camera must be stationary and use natural light. The photographer may not move around the building or stand in the aisle. The camera may be located in the Sanctuary alcove, choir loft, or in the rear of the sanctuary.

Photographs and videotaping must be completed within 45 minutes of the completion of the wedding. After 45 minutes, the custodian has been instructed to begin turning off the lights and securing the building.

Sanctuary Sound

A sound technician will be required for sanctuary weddings. The fee for this includes the cost of the sound system and one CD of the service.

Church Policy for Wedding Photographers

A copy must be signed by the bride/groom and the photographer and returned to the church office. Please make another copy for the photographer to keep for reference. A copy of this document has been rendered in a .pdf format for your convenience. Click on the link below to return to the Wedding page and then scroll to the bottom of the page.

Because a wedding is a worship service of joy and dedication, we expect photographers and video operators to treat the wedding service with respect and dignity. The following are the policies of our church:

1. Pictures may be taken of the bridal party in the Narthex preceding the wedding processional.
2. The photographer may not come down the aisle beyond the back row of the congregation.
3. Pictures may be taken (WITHOUT FLASH) from the rear of the church during the ceremony.
4. Pictures may be taken (FLASH) from the rear of the church during the recession.
5. A video camera may be set up in the choir loft, sanctuary alcove or in the rear of the sanctuary. There can be NO MOVEMENT from one location to another during the ceremony, and no use of artificial light.
6. Formal wedding pictures may be taken prior to or following the ceremony.
7. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on the church property at anytime.
8. It is suggested that photographers arrive one and a half (1-1/2) hours before the wedding so they can get their equipment in place before guests arrive.
9. Pictures must be completed within 45 minutes of the completion of the wedding. After 45 minutes, the custodian has been instructed to begin turning off the lights and securing the building.

Bride or Groom _____ Date _____

Photographer _____ Date _____

The Wedding Party

We expect members of the wedding party to conduct themselves at all times in a manner befitting the atmosphere of a place of worship.

Immediately prior to both rehearsal and wedding, we ask that members of the wedding party refrain from the use of alcoholic beverages. No member of the wedding party who is under the influence of alcohol will be permitted to participate in the wedding. No alcoholic beverages may be served on the church premises at any time.

Smoking is not permitted anywhere on the church property at any time.

Confetti or rice may not be thrown in the buildings or on the grounds. Bird seed may be thrown outside of the buildings.

The bride and groom must ensure that these policies are made known to and followed by all members of the wedding party.

Dressing Rooms

The Bride's Room is available for the bride and her attendants to dress at the church. The same courtesy will be extended to the groom and his attendants upon request.

The bride and groom, or someone designated by them, will arrange for the security of personal property before, during and after the wedding. Since the church cannot be responsible for personal belongings, we request that you remove everything from these rooms immediately following the wedding.

Fees

We consider weddings a ministry at Hyde Park United Methodist. However, there are certain necessary charges to cover the cost of building maintenance and utilities, as well as the time and skills invested in your wedding by our staff. Effective with weddings confirmed after July 11, 2016, the fee for a wedding is \$1,300 for members and \$2,300 for non-members.

Your wedding date will be confirmed on our calendar when the fee is received. In case of a conflict in date and time, the party whose fee is received by the church office first will have first choice. Payment may be made in cash or check made payable to Hyde Park United Methodist.

It is possible to have a simple wedding, without music, guests, flowers, or a coordinator in the Chapel at no charge except a donation to the church of \$100 for maintenance and utilities. This arrangement must be approved by the pastor. An honorarium for the pastor is up to the couple.

The custodian fee includes opening and preparation of facilities 1-1/2 hours before the wedding, being available to assist the wedding party and guests, cleaning, and closing. Other arrangements may be made by special request and at additional cost.

The Church Office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number is 253.5388. Our fax number is 251.3145.