

# ***FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH***

***Decatur, Texas***

## STANDARD CHURCH POLICY & PRODCEDURE

DATE: June 2014

TITLE: Wedding Policy

### APPLICABILITY:

This policy and procedures are applicable to all persons, lay and clergy, who desire to plan, schedule, participate, or are involved in any wedding celebrated at Decatur First United Methodist Church ("Church" or "FUMC").

### REFERENCES:

1. *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church.*
2. *The United Methodist Book of Worship.*
3. *The United Methodist Hymnal.*
4. FUMC "Building Use Policy," "Request for Building Use," and ""Building Use Guidelines."
5. FUMC Disbursements Procedure.
6. FUMC "Nursery Policy"
7. FUMC "*MinistrySafe* Policy"

### POLICY:

### **PRELIMINARY INFORMATION**

First United Methodist Church of Decatur, its staff and congregation, wish to extend every possible courtesy to brides, grooms, and their families. In order to assist wedding parties in using our facilities to the best possible advantage for all concerned, the following policies and procedures have been established.

It is the policy of Decatur First United Methodist Church that no alcohol or smoking is allowed inside the building or on church property including the parking lots.

No food or drink, including water, is allowed in the sanctuary or parlor during decorating, the rehearsal, or the ceremony. Food or drink may be placed and consumed in the office lobby or kitchen.

The Staff Coordinator will meet with the bride, groom, and/or parents to review the policy. The wedding reservation form must be signed and deposit must be paid at this meeting in order for the wedding to be scheduled on the Church's calendar. All fees must be paid at least one month prior to the date of the wedding.

A failure to read and abide by ALL policies and procedures included in this Wedding Policy (the "Wedding Booklet") and the Church Building Use Policy will result in the forfeiture of deposit and may cause the immediate cancellation of the event.

## **THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY**

A service of Christian marriage should explicitly and symbolically emphasize the Christian view of marriage. Customarily the traditional wedding service found in *The United Methodist Book of Worship* or "A Service of Christian Marriage" found in *The United Methodist Hymnal* will be followed. Any proposed alteration or addition to the service should express the Christian understanding set forth in those services. The pastor will be happy to work with you in designing an individual service.

The "Service of Christian Marriage" found in *The United Methodist Book of Worship* includes an optional celebration of Holy Communion. If Communion is to be included in the marriage ceremony, its significance should be made clear. Not only the husband and wife but the whole congregation are to be invited to receive Communion. It is our tradition to invite all Christians to the Lord's Table. However, the decision to receive Communion is a personal choice and no pressure should be applied regarding that choice.

## **SCHEDULING OF THE WEDDING**

### **Holidays and Holy Week**

Weddings and rehearsals cannot be scheduled for days when the church is officially closed (i.e.: New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve or Day, etc.), the days of Holy Week (Palm Sunday through Easter), or when regularly scheduled worship services occur (unless the wedding is a planned part of the normal Church worship schedule). The Pastor is authorized to grant exceptions to this part of the policy.

### **Funerals**

The First United Methodist Church must always remain available for church members desiring to hold a funeral at the church. In the event that a funeral must be held on the day of a planned wedding, no changes in the schedule of the actual wedding would be made, but the church staff might require that schedules for decorating the sanctuary be adjusted. The wedding party is expected to work with the church staff to see that both events run smoothly.

## **THE ROLE OF THE STAFF COORDINATOR**

For weddings, the Church identifies a Staff Coordinator (not to be confused with a traditional "Wedding Coordinator" who may be employed by the bride and/or groom to provide coordination with arrangements such as food, flowers, clothing, reception(s), seating of guests, processional and recessional timing/coordination, etc.). The role of the Staff Coordinator is to represent the Church with all the elements and plans for a wedding at First United Methodist Church and to be a liaison with the bridal party and their representatives on the dates and times that the wedding activities occur. NO arrangements

should be made with a florist, caterer, photographer, etc. until the bride, groom, and/or parents have met with the Staff Coordinator.

**The Staff Coordinator will:**

1. Read and interpret the wedding policies and procedures with / for the bridal couple.
2. Provide a tour of facilities.
3. Confirm all arrangements upon receipt of the completed wedding reservation form and upon the receipt of deposits and fees.
4. Place the wedding on the church calendar.
5. Reserve church facilities needed for the wedding.
6. Ensure that the decorating and movement of furniture in the Sanctuary occurs in accordance with this policy.
7. Assist at the rehearsal where possible.
8. Coordinate with the bridal party, other staff, and custodian any needs as they relate to return of the Sanctuary and facilities to their previous condition in a timely manner.
9. Report any damage, losses, concerns, and/or satisfactory completion and clean-up (in order to facilitate a refund of wedding deposit) to appropriate persons or groups.

**THE ROLE OF THE PASTOR**

The Pastor of the First United Methodist Church of Decatur is qualified and available to perform weddings, subject to scheduling limitations. Couples should contact the pastor as a first step in planning their wedding and should not assume that the pastor is available on a given date.

A pastor or minister from a different Christian church may be invited to assist or preside over the wedding ceremony only with the approval of the Pastor of First United Methodist Church of Decatur. The Church Pastor will issue the invitation to the visiting minister after approval is made. In all circumstances the procedures and policies of the Church must be followed. Honorariums for ministers from outside First United Methodist Church of Decatur are not covered by the wedding fee and are the responsibility of the bride, groom, and/or family.

Premarital counseling is a requirement of all couples wishing to be married at First United Methodist Church of Decatur. Counseling usually involves a minimum number of hours (beyond the planning of the ceremony itself) and needs to be scheduled at the pastor's convenience. Couples receiving permission to use the services of ministers outside of First United Methodist Church Decatur must show documentation that the counseling requirement has been satisfactorily fulfilled.

## **MUSIC AND SOUND FOR YOUR WEDDING**

Since the marriage ceremony in the church is a sacred service, only music that is appropriate for a worship service is preferred. Religious or classical music is recommended. Music of a secular nature is usually not appropriate and must be approved by the pastor. The Pastor and the Staff Coordinator may be able to assist in selecting appropriate music, if needed.

Taped music (compact discs) may only be played through the church sound system by a FUMC trained sound technician.

### **Musicians:**

Organist: The staff organist of First United Methodist Church Decatur, may play for a wedding. Special requests may be made for a guest organist but Church approval is required in advance. To be considered, a guest organist must be familiar with FUMC's organ. Fees for a guest organist are the responsibility of the bride, groom and/or family.

Pianist: The staff pianist of FUMC may be scheduled to play for the ceremony. Fees for a guest pianist are the responsibility of the bride, groom and/or family.

Vocalists: Securing a vocalist is the responsibility of the bridal party. Fees for a vocalist(s) are the responsibility of the bride, groom and/or family.

If the church sound system is needed for amplification of voices, instruments, vocalist(s), etc., only an FUMC trained sound technician may operate the Church equipment.

For small weddings not requiring sound or recorded music being played, the use of a sound technician is optional. The use of the staff pianist or organist is also optional following the guidelines above.

## **PHOTOGRAPHY AND TAPING**

As previously mentioned, a wedding is a worship service; therefore, photography during the actual ceremony must be done only from the back of the sanctuary and the balcony using time exposures only. NO FLASH PICTURES ARE ALLOWED DURING THE SERVICE.

Video and audio taping of the service is permitted. Consult with the pastor or Staff Coordinator for details.

The bride and groom are responsible for reviewing the Wedding Policy ("Wedding Booklet") and the Church Building Use Policy with the photographer and with guests.

## **USE OF FUMC FACILITIES**

### **Decorating the Sanctuary**

Arrangements to decorate the Sanctuary and/or other parts of the facilities should be made with the Staff Coordinator.

Only fabric-wrapped floral wire, clear fishing line, pipe cleaners, or poster putty may be used to attach decorations. No tacks, nails, pins, or tape may be used to attach items to any surface.

Decorations may not be attached to the brass railings in balcony.

No streamers or steam irons are allowed anywhere in the building. Fabric decorations and clothing should be pressed and assembled before arriving at the church.

The church has a wedding banner that is available for use if desired.

### **Candles in the Sanctuary**

Mechanical candles are the only candles that may be used in the sanctuary. Dripless candles are not allowed. The Church does not supply mechanical candles, but they may be rented from outside vendors for use in the ceremony.

Unity candles are to be provided by the family.

No sand is allowed in the sanctuary.

Large wrought iron candelabras may not be used in the sanctuary.

### **Flowers for Flower Girl**

Only loose silk flower petals may be dropped by flower girls. Dropped petals must be removed from the sanctuary immediately following the ceremony by someone from the bridal party. Real flowers may be attached to flower girl's basket but may not be dropped.

## **REHEARSAL AND WEDDING**

Two (2) hours will be reserved for rehearsal in the sanctuary; therefore, the wedding rehearsal needs to begin promptly at the scheduled time. If the rehearsal extends beyond the scheduled two-hour time, the Staff Coordinator and/or Custodian will be compensated by the bridal party at the rate reflected on the "Reservation Form."

The wedding rehearsal is an integral part of the preparation for a wedding and should proceed in a reverent manner.

The Staff Coordinator will be on site to represent the Church and to help to see that the Church's policy is observed during decorating, rehearsal, and ceremony.

Three (3) hours will be reserved for the wedding ceremony. It is expected that the first two hours will include the arrival of the guests as well as the ceremony. The third hour, or balance of remaining time, allows for cleanup and return of the church facilities to their previous condition so they are ready for the next event.

Neither the church staff nor the Staff Coordinator can accept delivery of bridal or attendants dresses nor be responsible for personal items such as wedding or other dresses, purses, or silver brought to the church.

For safety and also for the appearance of church facilities rice, bird seed, confetti, or flower petals may not be thrown. Any item thrown which requires sweeping or cleaning will require and additional \$50.00 custodial fee.

The State of Texas requires a marriage license for a couple planning to marry. The Pastor must have this license in his/her possession prior to performing the ceremony.

Use of the Church Nursery is only permitted in accordance with the Church “Nursery Policy” and “*MinistrySafe* Policy.” The Nursery may only be staffed by trained and screened personnel as recognized by the Church. The Nursery is only available with prior approval. The Staff Coordinator will be useful in obtaining necessary approval for the rehearsal and/or wedding.

Cooperation of the bridal party in observing these policies as well as understanding the need to protect and preserve this beautiful, historic church is expected and appreciated.

### **FOLLOWING THE CEREMONY**

The Staff Coordinator and/or Custodian will be present following the ceremony to supervise the return of church furniture (i.e. pulpit, altar table, etc.) to normal worship status. The bride and groom (husband and wife) must have sufficient persons present to lift and move the furniture back to their respective places for worship. All other items, including flowers and flower arrangements brought into the sanctuary or other parts of the building, need to be removed by the bridal party immediately following the ceremony. Prior approval to leave altar flowers for use in Sunday services may be obtained from the Staff Coordinator.

### **CHURCH CONTACT INFORMATION**

Church Office	940-627-3362
Church Fax	940-627-3485

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF WEDDING POLICY BOOKLET**

I have read, understand and agree to abide by all policies and procedures of the Wedding Policy and Building Use Policy for First United Methodist Church of Decatur.

I understand that if I have questions, at any time, regarding these policies, I will consult the Staff Coordinator or Pastor.

Please read the Wedding Policy and Building Use Policy carefully to ensure that you understand the policy before signing this document.

Bride's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Bride's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Groom's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Groom's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_