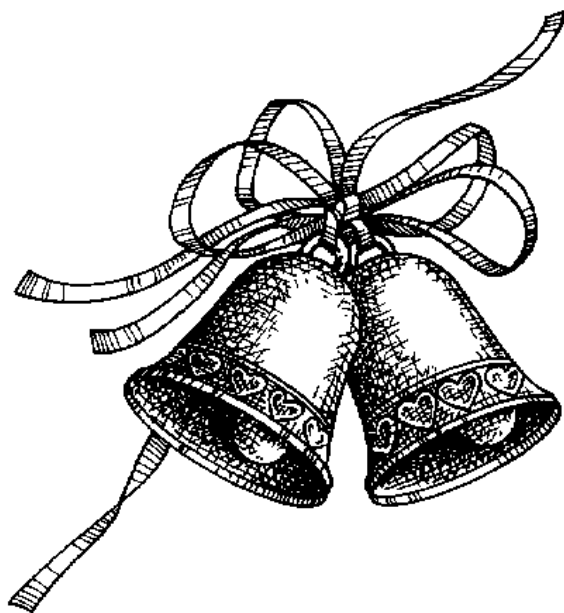


Mt. Summit Christian Church  
Wedding Policy



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Across the ages the church has lifted up marriage as a holy relationship, the basis for establishment of a family. We at Mt. Summit Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) are glad that you have chosen to be married in the church. Here the ceremony is undertaken in the presence of God. Thus, you affirm that God joins you together and that your relationship is to be regulated by His commandments. We want to do all possible to make your wedding a memorable and fulfilling experience of Christian worship.

Mark O'Brien, Minister  
Janice Vaughn, Wedding Coordinator  
Barbara Arford, Sound Technician  
Kaylee Vannatta, Sound Technician

## **The Spiritual Significance of Your Wedding Service**

Though marriage is intensely personal and private, it is never completely so. Society is always involved. The religious wedding service is, in essence, the giving of public approval to the union by the family, the church, and the community. But, the wedding is more than a legal contract. A marriage is a privilege accorded to members of the church, but it is first and foremost a service of worship to God. It is the recognition before God of a lifelong commitment in which each partner pledges to give all of him or herself in a mutually binding covenant of love. It is a covenant grounded in God's own unconditional love for all people through Jesus Christ.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him may not perish but may have eternal life. John 3:16

The root word "wed" means to covenant, promise, pledge, or 'vow' one's faith, fidelity, and truth." The wedding then created a covenant bond of faithfulness and unity in which the bride and groom are joined together so as to become spiritually "one flesh" (Matthew 19:6). This was God's intent from the beginning:

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper as a partner..." and the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man He made into a woman and brought her to the man. The man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called woman, for out of man this one was taken." Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh (Genesis 2:18, 22-24).

## **Minister**

Our minister subscribes to our denomination's Ministerial Code of Ethics. Therefore, he or she will at all times try to be faithful to the calling, both to the Lord and to the members of Mt. Summit Christian Church.

Our minister officiates at all services of worship in the church, including marriages, according to the traditions and customs of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). In desiring a marriage blessed by the church and its ministry, the couple accepts the minister's leadership in the service and will be guided by the principles of the church, and not by other customs. In the absence of our minister, the associate minister may be available to officiate.

Mt. Summit Christian Church expects the minister to oversee and officiate at all church authorized weddings. Under certain circumstances, a guest minister may be invited to perform the ceremony. In such cases, he or she may conduct the ceremony according to the rites of his or her respective church, but this must be coordinated with and have the approval of our minister. Accordingly, we expect our minister to be in control of the arrangements and to have a substantial role in the ceremony. Furthermore, since Mt. Summit Christian Church has ratified the *Henry County Community Marriage Policy* the guest minister is expected to conform to the counseling policy further described in the next section.

## **Your Pre-Marital Conferences with the Minister**

Mt. Summit Christian Church has adopted the *Henry County Community Marriage Policy*. Quoting from the document: "It is the responsibility of pastors and churches to raise the quality of commitment in those we marry. We believe that couples who seriously participate in premarital testing/assessment and counseling/discussions will have a better understanding of what the marriage commitment involves. As agents of God acting on His behalf, we feel it is our responsibility to encourage couples to set aside time for marriage preparation instead of concentrating only on wedding plans. We acknowledge that a wedding is a day; a marriage is for a lifetime."

## **Wedding Coordinator**

The wedding coordinator will assist you with arrangements for your rehearsal, wedding and reception (if held at the church). The coordinator will begin assisting you as soon as you have confirmed your dates for the rehearsal and wedding with the church office and the minister. The coordinator will answer your questions regarding items such as attendants, clothes, dressing areas, flowers, candelabras, pictures, and decorations. Access to the building and use of church property will be arranged by the wedding coordinator. A coordinator is required for all weddings. An outside coordinator may be used, but our wedding coordinator must approve all plans and be present at the rehearsal and wedding. Fees still apply.

## **Photographs**

Since the wedding service is also worship, photographs may be taken during the processional or recessional but not during the ceremony. The wedding coordinator will discuss arrangements with professional photographers and notify guests when they may take photographs. No flash photography is permitted.

Where lighting is not required, video equipment may be used to record the ceremony from the back of the sanctuary only (no moving around during the ceremony).

Photographers must be approved by the minister and wedding coordinator.

## **Receptions**

If outside caterers are used, they must use their own equipment.

## **The Rehearsal**

The rehearsal is usually scheduled the evening before the wedding itself. It is important that all the participants be present and on time. This includes the musicians, parents, and all members of the wedding party. The ring bearer and flower girl should be mature enough to take instruction well and not distract from the dignity and reverence of the wedding as a service of worship.

## **Music and Video**

Music used with the ceremony should be in keeping with the sacredness and dignity of the wedding as a service of worship. The selection of music will, therefore, be discussed with the minister and wedding coordinator who then reserve the right to exclude music they deem inappropriate – including guest musicians. **All music must be approved at least three weeks prior to the wedding.** When the church sound and video system is to be utilized, it may be operated only by or under the supervision of the church's sound technician or the wedding coordinator.

When the church's organ is to be used, it will be played by the church organist, unless a request for a guest organist is made through the wedding coordinator. If a guest organist is to participate, arrangements will need to be made with the wedding coordinator, guest organist, and church organist.

## **Use of Sanctuary and Facilities**

Our sanctuary seats 180 and the fellowship hall seats 150.

Since the wedding is taking place in the church where the symbols of the Christian faith surround the ceremony, furnishings such as the pulpit, communion table, lectern, organ, piano, etc., will remain in their respective positions. The church candelabra may be used without cost, except for the candles (see fee schedule). A special communion set (plate and cup) will be provided for the use of the bride and groom.

The florist will supply and prepare floral arrangements, kneeling bench, aisle runner, pew items, and unity candle when these are required. Fasteners and materials used in decoration must be approved by the wedding coordinator.

The wedding coordinator will direct the wedding party in the use of church property, setting and removing tables and chairs, and will arrange for placement of the manifold walls. Dressing rooms for the wedding party will be designated by the wedding coordinator.

Birdseed and rice are not permitted.

**Use of alcohol and tobacco are strictly prohibited on church grounds, and will result in the loss of the damage deposit.**

## Fees

The fee schedule distinguishes between members and non-members. “Member” fees apply only to members/ regular participants of the church and their immediate families. All fees should be paid ahead of time to the wedding coordinator. All deposits and fees are due two weeks before the use of the church.

Deposits will be refunded, where applicable, within two weeks after the wedding if there has been no damage to church property and if no unusual cleaning is required.

Where a hardship is incurred, the wedding coordinator may make appropriate waivers and/or adjustments as approved by the minister.

	Members	Non-Members
Sanctuary Use	No Charge	\$100
Fellowship Hall	No Charge	\$100
Family Center	\$60	\$200
Custodian:		
Sanctuary	\$25	\$50
Fellowship Hall	\$25	\$50
Family Center	\$25	\$50
Organist/Pianist	\$25	\$50
Pastor	Discretion	\$200
Sound Engineer	\$25	\$75
Wedding Coordinator	\$100	\$200
Candles	\$15	\$15
Deposit	\$100	\$100

The above are minimal prices. It is customary to add a gratuity to the payment for exceptional service.