



First United Methodist Church  
29 East Walnut Street  
Lancaster PA 17602-4936  
717-394-7231  
[www.engagegodfirst.org](http://www.engagegodfirst.org)

# Wedding Guidelines

## *Our Ministry*

In celebration with you, First Church treasures the service of Christian marriage as one in which a man and woman pledge their commitment to each other before God and the Community of Faith. We want to bless you as a bride and groom as you bind yourselves to each other and commit your marriage to Jesus Christ. Your marriage service is a Christian worship service. It is a service of celebration and a reminder to all your guest of our relationship with God in Christ. We want your wedding to be one in which you and your guests experience the wonder of this incomparable commitment and the importance of a marriage based upon a solid relationship with God in Jesus Christ. We pledge to work with you to make your wedding a powerful and memorable event for you and your guest.

Weddings at First Church are part of the whole ministry and mission of this congregation.

Our mission as a congregation is to connect to:

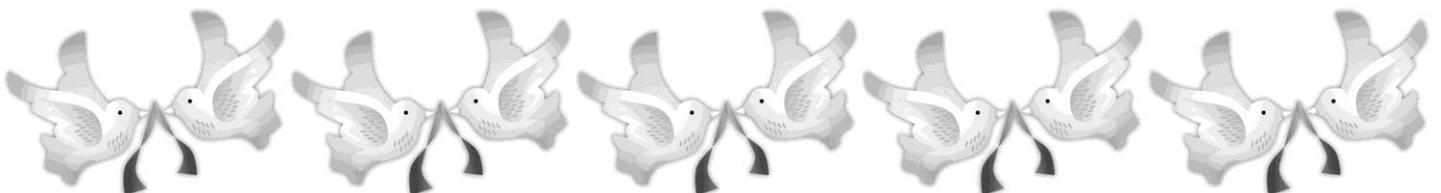
- Connect people to Jesus Christ
- Grow disciples
- Relieve suffering

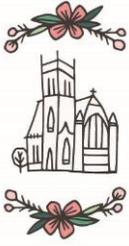
Our intention is that your wedding fulfills our mission as a congregation, honors God, and helps you and your guests experience the joy of God's love as we see it in Jesus Christ.

Congratulations! This momentous occasion marks the start of your life together. May the journey be a happy one filled with peace and harmony, joy and laughter, and romance and passion. May your enduring love be the crown jewel that ties together all the rest. Best Wishes!

Sincerely,

The Staff at First United Methodist Church





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## *Requirements for Marriage*

As bride and groom, you do not need to be members of First Church to be married here. However, if neither the bride nor groom is a member of this congregation, one of you should be active and attending another Christian congregation. If neither bride nor groom is actively attending another church, we invite you to attend First Church before being married here. Since weddings at First Church are always services of Christian worship, we hope couples who are not actively involved in a congregation will choose to explore Christian faith and involvement in a Christian community as you prepare for your wedding. Pastor(s) will have an introductory conversation with you before deciding whether or not to conduct your wedding.

If you wish to use First Church and you currently attend another church, we welcome the chance to assist you. However, we do not “rent” or otherwise provide our facilities directly to you as a couple. Instead, you make arrangements with First Church by calling or emailing the events manager. You may schedule a time to meet with the event manager to view the space and discuss details. To secure your wedding date and move forward with planning, we require a deposit of half of the wedding package you choose.

## *Scheduling*

Weddings are scheduled on a first-come, first-serve basis. Two weddings may be scheduled on the same day, but they must be not closer than four (4) hours apart. The wedding party and guests for the first wedding must be finished in the sanctuary at least two (2) hours before the second wedding begins, if you wish, the Pastor(s) will help introduce you to the other couple being married on the same day as your wedding. You may find it possible to plan some cooperative arrangements.

## *The Pastors*

In most weddings, one of the pastors of First Church will be in charge of your wedding, the rehearsal, and preparatory sessions. First Church pastors consider it a privilege to celebrate your wedding with another pastor that you may choose. We want you to talk with the officiating pastor at First Church before you invite another pastor to share in your wedding.

First Church pastors often provide six (6) to eight (8) hours of premarital preparation after the introductory meeting. This may be with any pastor from First Church, a counselor approved by a First Church pastor, or an approved pre-marital seminar. Scheduling your wedding means allowing adequate time for that pre-marital preparation.

Various studies show the value of post-marital check-ins with the pastor. Therefore, the pastors are also willing to meet with the married couple during the first year of their marriage.

## *The Wedding Service*

The wedding service is a service of Christian worship and celebration. A copy of the wedding service is available from the pastors. It is also printed on pages 864-869 in the United Methodist Hymnal. While the pastors will work with couples to make their wedding day a special one for them, the pastors have the final say on all things regarding the wedding ceremony.



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Couples are responsible for printing their own bulletins. The pastor for the wedding is a ready resource to help you plan the copy and review the bulletin before it is printed. The Sacrament of Holy Communion is always appropriate for weddings and rehearsals.

## *Wedding Coordinator*

First Church provides a trained Wedding Coordinator to help you plan the details of your wedding.

Those details include:

- Hospitality from First Church
- Decorations
- Use of the Gathering Place, Celebration Center or other spaces as needed
- Assisting the bridal party in all details before the processional
- Lining up and guiding the persons in the processional
- Lining up and guiding the receiving line
- Aiding the photographer, videographer, and florist
- Setting the opening and closing times for the church building
- Coordinating with another wedding on the same day
- Working with your own wedding coordinator
- She will work with you on all details for the day. The Wedding coordinator will contact you once your deposit is received and a date is selected.

Please Note: even if you are working with your own wedding coordinator, we require that you use one of the First Church coordinators. The wedding coordinator does not discuss matters of liturgy or music with the couple. That role is entirely reserved for the pastors.

## *Wedding Music*

The music presented in a wedding should glorify God both in content and intent. If the music is appropriate for Sunday worship, it will likely be appropriate for the wedding. Some music may be best used at the reception. The church organist will review all music with the bride and groom. If there is a question, the decision of the officiating pastor is final. The First Church organist is the organist for weddings at First Church. If the church organist is unable to play, or if you want to use an alternate organist, the alternate organist must be a member of the American Guild of Organists. The couple is responsible to contact the officiating organist and supply music at least two weeks before the wedding. The soloist and organist will usually rehearse music at the time of the wedding rehearsal.

Note: First Church observes copyright laws very carefully. Couples must inform the soloist that photocopies of music that are copyrighted are not permitted by law. On the wedding day, the officiating organist will not accompany a soloist who uses photocopies of copyrighted music unless written permission is on hand or the soloist can show music is in the public domain.



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## *Marriage License*

You must apply for a marriage license at the Clerk of Orphans Court, 560 N. Duke Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Lancaster PA 17602. The office hours are 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number is 295-3522. Both the bride and groom must be present to apply. After a three (3) day waiting period, anyone can pick up your license. The cost of the marriage license is \$40 and must be cash only. Checks or credit cards are not accepted.

- If either of you have been divorced or had a marriage annulled, they must bring their final divorce decree or annulment document with their application.
- Women who have resumed their maiden name must bring the resumption document.
- If either of you have been married before and your spouse has died, the date of death is needed.
- Persons age 16-17 must have one parent present at the time of applying for the license. A birth certificate is required and an additional \$5 is charged. An attorney is needed to petition the Judge of Orphans Court division for permission to marry if one person is under the age of 16 years old.
- Your marriage license is good for 60 days. You should bring your license to the pastor or the church office at least one week before the wedding. Since the court may change requirements, always check with the Clerk for the latest fees and requirements.

## *Photography/Videography*

Photos may be posed before or after the wedding. Before the Processional, the photographer may take photos only without flash and from the rear of the sanctuary. During the Processional, the photographer may use flash and stand at the halfway point of the center aisle, the #8 pew, for photos of the bridal party. After the Processional, no flash pictures are permitted until the service is concluded. The photographer may use available light from the rear room or balcony during the service. Please inform the pastor if you want him to be in the photo with you. Photographers are accustomed to posing the photo(s) with your and the pastor(s) first.

To assist the Custodian in cleanup following the wedding, the photographer must be finished with post-wedding photos within one (1) hour after the last guest is greeted in the receiving line or if not receiving line is used, within one (1) hour after the close of the wedding.

Videotaping, professional or amateur, is welcomed. Amateur videographers are encouraged to attend the rehearsal to see how the wedding service occurs.

## *Financial responsibilities and fees*

First Church requires a deposit to book your wedding on the calendar. The deposit is fully refundable if cancellation is received 90 days or more before the wedding minus a \$25 processing fee. The deposit is refundable at 50% of the total deposit if notice of cancellation is received within 90 days of the wedding minus a \$25 processing fee. The balance of the fee must be paid 7 days before your wedding. The fee schedule is written at the end of this document.

## *Facilities Responsibilities and Description*

- The church property is smoke-free and alcohol-free environment. No smoking is permitted in the church building or at the entrances. The use of alcoholic beverages is prohibited.
- We do not schedule weddings to begin later than 7:00 p.m. on Saturdays, or 12:00 p.m. (noon) if your reception is in the church building.



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- The sanctuary aisle length is 65' on the main floor, from the rear doors to the chancel rail.
- We do not permit the throwing of rice or releasing helium balloons. Couples have creatively used birdseed, bubbles and small bells. Seed should always be in packets and used outside the building. All these elements of celebration should be given to the guest after the service is completed.
- There are very few limitations on the use of flowers and decorations.
- Parking
  - The Church parking lot is available and provides about 90 spaces on weekends and 70 spaces on weekdays. On-street parking is available. The meters have a 2 hour limit from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Parking meters are currently not ticketed on Sundays.
  - There is free weekend parking for First Church activities at Atlee Hall Attorney at Law located at 415 North Duke Street, Lancaster PA 17602.
  - There is a parking garage within walking distance of the church. The North Queen Street Parking Garage is located at 424 North Queen Street, Lancaster PA 17603. Cost is \$2 per hour for the first two hours, then \$1 per hour every hour after. \$5 after 5pm – Friday through Sunday.
  - You may secure parking meter covers from the Lancaster Parking Authority, 111 N. Prince Street, Lancaster PA 17602, Phone 717-299-0907. These may be used to reserve spaces for cars near the Walnut Street entry. The Parking Authority charges \$15.00 per bag, per day. For Saturday weddings, couple must leave a deposit of \$15, for up to 4 bags, when they pick up the bags. Use of more than 4 bags requires a deposit of \$20.
- Seating Capacities for weddings are as follows
  - \* 450 people in the Sanctuary
  - \* 50 people in the Chapel
  - \* 300 people in the Celebration Center
- Seating Capacity for the reception in the Celebration Center is 225 people.

## *Things We Have Learned*

- Avoid evening weddings. You will be awake all day, under stress and your reception will end late.
- Minimize the amount of time your guest must wait between wedding service and the reception.
- Photos taken after the service usually require at least 45 minutes. When you interview prospective photographers, ask how much time they will require. Occasionally couples choose to complete all their personal and family photos before the wedding service.
- A receiving line at the church typically will have parents, bride and groom, the best man, and the maid of honor. Other wedding party members can be greeted individually. Plan on 45 minutes to greet 150 guests.
- When the bride and groom greet their guest by dismissing them pew-by-pew, from the center isle, you may save a few minutes. However it may results in parents greeting guests separately or not at all.
- Plan your reception site within a short drive from the church.
- We can provide a candlelight wedding at no additional cost. We have found that candlelight is workable at any hour.

First Church people and staff love helping you get ready for your wedding. We work towards making your wedding a spectacular occasion for you, for the people in your lives and for God. We hope your day is filled with happiness!



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## *Fee Schedule*

### Sanctuary Package

For Members	\$800 (Deposit of \$400)
For Non-Members	\$1,600 (Deposit of \$800)
By Pastor of another church	\$2,500 (Deposit of \$1,750)
➤ Sanctuary	
➤ Brides room	
➤ Grooms room	
➤ Gathering Place	
➤ Includes custodian, organist, wedding coordinator, sound technician	
➤ Includes Brides room for 24 hours of storage – May store dress and supplies over night	
➤ Rehearsal time in sanctuary day before wedding – 1 hour	

#### Add-ons:

- \* Can add use of Celebration Center and kitchen for rehearsal dinner for three (3) hours - \$300
- \* Can add use of Fellowship Hall and kitchen for rehearsal dinner for three (3) hours - \$200
- \* Can add use of 214/215 and kitchen for rehearsal dinner for three (3) hours - \$150
- \* Deposit of one-half (1/2) due for rehearsal dinner at time of reservation.
- \* We will provide set up and tear down of chairs and tables for rehearsal dinner. Custodian will be present. You must provide your own food and decorations.

### Appenzeller Chapel Package

For Members	\$500 (Deposit of \$250)
For Non-Members	\$1,300 (Deposit of \$650)
By Pastor of another church	\$2,000 (Deposit of \$1,000)
➤ Chapel	
➤ Brides room	
➤ Grooms room	
➤ Includes custodian, organist, wedding coordinator, sound technician	
➤ Includes Brides room for 24 hours of storage – May store dress and supplies over night	
➤ Rehearsal time in Chapel day before wedding – 1 hour	

#### Add-ons:

- \* Can add use of Celebration Center and kitchen for rehearsal dinner for three (3) hours - \$300
- \* Can add use of Fellowship Hall and kitchen for rehearsal dinner for three (3) hours - \$200
- \* Can add use of 214/215 and kitchen for rehearsal dinner for three (3) hours - \$150
- \* Deposit of one-half (1/2) due for rehearsal dinner at time of reservation.
- \* We will provide set up and tear down of chairs and tables for rehearsal dinner. Custodian will be present. You must provide your own food and decorations.



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### Celebration Center Package

For Members	\$800 (Deposit of \$400)
For Non-Members	\$1,600 (Deposit of \$800)
By Pastor of another church	\$2,500 (Deposit of \$1,700)
➤ Celebration Center	
➤ Brides room	
➤ Grooms room	
➤ Café area	
➤ Includes custodian, wedding coordinator, sound technician	
➤ Includes Brides room for 24 hours of storage – May store dress and supplies over night	
➤ Rehearsal time Celebration Center day before wedding – 1 hour	

#### Add-ons:

- \* Can add use of Fellowship Hall and kitchen for rehearsal dinner for three (3) hours - \$200
- \* Can add use of 214/215 and kitchen for rehearsal dinner for three (3) hours - \$150
- \* Deposit of one-half (1/2) due for rehearsal dinner at time of reservation.
- \* We will provide set up and tear down of chairs and tables for rehearsal dinner. Custodian will be present. You must provide your own food and decorations.

### Reception Package

- Celebration Center and kitchen
  - \* Seating capacity for up to 225 guests.
  - \* Includes custodian to set-up/tear down and be present during the event.
  - \* Includes round tables for guests, chairs, rectangle tables for food staging and use of kitchen for approved caterer.
  - \* Use of plates, cups, and utensils.
  - \* Caterer must be approved and have Safe Serve Certification.
  - \* Dishwasher is available - \$25 per hour.
  - \* DVD/TV available to play slideshow of pictures.
  - \* 4 hour event
  - \* \$50 for each additional hour.

For Members	\$450	(Deposit of \$225)
For Non-Members	\$800	(Deposit of \$400)



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A deposit is required to reserve wedding and/or reception. Make checks out to “FUMC”.

Forward the check and the last sheet of the Wedding Guidelines to the Events Manger.

Questions: Events Manager / Laura Meisl / 717-394-7231 / [lmeisl@engagegodfirst.org](mailto:lmeisl@engagegodfirst.org)

I accept responsibility for fulfilling the Wedding Guidelines.

Package chosen:		
Rehearsal dinner:		
Reception package:		
Deposit of	\$	Is due with this form.
Balance of	\$	Is due 7 days before wedding.
Wedding Date:		

Name of Bride and Groom:	
Address:	
Phone:	
Email:	

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_