

**Planning For Your Wedding**  
**At**  
**St. John's United Church of Christ**



**515 E. Third Street**  
**Dayton, Ohio 45402**  
**937-224-1747**

**[www.stjohnsuccdayton.org](http://www.stjohnsuccdayton.org)**

Congratulations on your upcoming marriage! We honor and celebrate those who wish to have their marriages blessed in our beautiful sanctuary before God, family, and friends. We welcome all couples desiring to enter into the covenant of marriage, including same-gender and interfaith couples.

Couples are asked to actively take part in the planning of their wedding ceremony and, thereby, add personal touches that allow the service to be unique and more memorable for both they and their families. Church Weddings require careful preparation and planning.

This planning book will guide you as to the wedding services provided by St. John's United Church of Christ. Inside this guide, you will find all of our policies and procedures.

### **Setting the Date and Time**

Before Setting the date and time, please call the church office at 937-224-1747 to inquire about the availability of our facility, minister, and organist for your wedding and rehearsal. The date for reservation of the building will only be secured with the acceptance of the initial deposit. Any changes to the date and time listed on your wedding application MUST be approved at least ONE MONTH prior by the St. John's office.

We recommend that couples attend at least one of our Sunday worship services prior to the contacting the church office to become acquainted with both church and minister.

### **Securing the Services of our Minister or other Ministers Outside St. John's**

Services of marriage are typically performed by our minister. When a couple wishes to invite another clergy person outside St. John's United Church of Christ to participate in the ceremony, the couple should discuss this with our minister prior to extending the invitation. St. John's minister must approve the outside clergy before they are permitted to officiate at the wedding.

### **Pre-Marital Counseling**

A church wedding is something special! A religious dimension is added to an otherwise civil ceremony. Preparation for a church wedding thus requires

some special attention. Exploring the many facets of a healthy and lasting relationship with a marital counselor is essential. Couples married at St. John's United Church of Christ, by our resident minister, are asked to meet with the minister to discuss how/if faith will be a part of their marriage. We also ask that all couples consider pre-marital counseling with a licensed professional counselor. Any meeting with St. John's minister is covered in the minister's fees for the wedding.

### **Including church leaders in the rehearsal dinner or reception**

If you would like the minister, musicians and other worship leaders as well as their spouses / partners to attend the rehearsal dinner and or reception, please feel free to invite them, but please do not assume their attendance. Without an invitation, they won't plan on attending.

### **Invitations**

When ordering your invitations, the suggested form for the address of the church is:

St. John's United Church of Christ  
515 E. Third Street  
Dayton, Ohio 45402

Caution: There are two St. John's located downtown. It is important to confirm the above address with attendees to prevent confusion.

### **License**

A Marriage License must be delivered to the Minister officiating at your service before the wedding ceremony can begin. Please bring the license with you to the rehearsal. If there is no rehearsal, please present it to the minister prior to the wedding day. Couples can obtain a marriage license through Montgomery County or any other Ohio county, and the laws of the State of Ohio will be applicable. Allow at least four weeks to obtain your license.

### **The order of Worship**

Couples are reminded that the wedding ceremony is first and foremost a service of worship and celebration. Our minister will be happy to work with you in designing a service that is uniquely yours.

Traditionally, music is incorporated in the following ways:

1. As a Prelude while guests are being seated
2. As a processional
3. As a Hymn
4. As a recessional
5. As a postlude as guests are escorted from the sanctuary

A typical Wedding Processional and Recessional are:

Typical Wedding Processional:

1. The groom, best man and Minister enter by using a side door. They all stand facing the guests.
2. An usher escorts the grandmother (s) of the bride to their seats.
3. An usher escorts the grandmother (s) of the groom to their seats.
4. An usher escorts the mother of the groom to her seat.
5. An usher escorts the mother of the bride to her seat.
6. The ushers walk down the aisle (or escort the bridesmaids) and stand next to the groom and best man and then face the guests.
7. The bridesmaids walk down the aisle (unless they have been escorted by the ushers).
8. The maid of honor (or matron of honor) walks down aisle.
9. The ring bearer walks down the aisle.
10. The flower girl walks down the aisle. (The flower girl and ring bearer can walk together.)
11. The father of the bride escorts the bride down the aisle.

Typical Wedding Recessional:

1. Bride and Groom exit.
2. Flower girl and ring bearer exit.
3. Maid of honor (or matron of honor) and best man exit.
4. Bridesmaids (each accompanied by an usher) exit.
5. Bride's parents exit.
6. Groom's parents exit.
7. Bride's grandparents exit.

8. Groom's grandparents exit.
9. Wedding guests exit.

## **Music**

Music is an important part of your wedding and at St. John's United Church of Christ we strive for high quality music(ians) to make your wedding day a most memorable experience. Below are some guidelines to help you with music on this special day.

Our historic pipe organ and digital grand piano are instruments that require special care and consideration. If you wish to use the organ and/or piano as part of your wedding ceremony, you must use one of our accepted wedding organists. These musicians are specially trained in the care and consideration of our instruments and are also intimately familiar with the acoustics of our sanctuary. It is incumbent upon you to contact the organist and secure their services on the date/time of your wedding. You must contact the organist no less than 30 days prior to your wedding to discuss final plans. Again, it is your responsibility to contact and contract with the organist. The organist will then work with you to select pieces which: are feasible for our instruments, will sound good in the sanctuary, and will be memorable for your service. We can provide you with a worksheet of typical wedding pieces to help spur selections. The organist, in consultation with the minister, must give final approval to the musical selections.

If you are planning to not use the organ/piano and instead employ a different music group (string/brass quartet, etc.) we ask you to contact our minister as soon as possible. It is imperative that we make sure these musicians are a good match/fit for our sanctuary and/or can be supported by our A/V systems.

Additional fees may apply for rehearsals, soloists, accompanists and if our musicians will be required to learn new music. The organist will work with you on the fee depending on your needs.

## **Use of Audio Equipment**

St. John's United Church of Christ has audio equipment available for use during your wedding ceremony. This could include the use of microphones as

well as the playing of CD's and accompaniment soundtracks that may be used by a soloist. If you plan on using any of this type of equipment, it is required you notify us in advance.

### **Photographs and Video Tapes**

Photography is permitted during the wedding as long as it does not distract from the sacredness of the occasion. The wedding photographer can move around and take pictures with and without flash during the processional, recessional before and after the wedding. During the wedding ceremony we ask that the photographer stays in the back of the sanctuary and not use a flash. After the ceremony, you may re-pose your wedding as you wish.

The minister will be happy to re-enact any part of the service that you would like recorded in pictures. Please arrange to have all pictures with the Minister taken as soon after the ceremony as possible.

### **Decorating the Church**

The church, by itself, is a very decorative and "wedding appropriate" venue. Many couples find that they need little to no decoration added. We are more than happy to place pew candles (owned by the church) to add ambience in the sanctuary. All other decorations **MUST** be approved by the St. John's office at least ONE month in advance. Please note that it is not permissible to use nails, tacks, or tape for decorations as it may damage the antique woodwork in the sanctuary. The following are forbidden under all circumstances:

- \*real flower petals in the aisles
- \*sand, snow, or glitter of any type
- \*live/open flame of any type (aside from the church owned pew candles and/or altar and unity candles)
- \*decorating of any area outside the sanctuary
- \*any decoration that might interfere with the work and worship of St. John's UCC.

The church will provide:

\*two alter candles.

\*Pew candles are available, but must be purchased through the church prior to the service.

Local florists may be contacted and will be able to suggest various decorations for your consideration.

If you wish to leave the floral decorations for the Sunday morning worship service, please inform the wedding coordinator of your plans in advance.

Those wishing to use an aisle runner must obtain it individually. The aisle length is about 75 feet.

### **Wedding Coordinator and Custodian**

When a wedding is scheduled to take place in the church, a wedding coordinator and custodian are REQUIRED to prepare the church for the service and to clean up following the service. The cost for these services are included in the sanctuary rental cost. The wedding coordinator will help you with preparations and details pertaining to the use of the church. The wedding coordinator will contact you approximately one month prior to your wedding. The coordinator will make arrangements for the use of our facility for rehearsal and the ceremony. The wedding coordinator will be present at the rehearsal and the ceremony to give assistance to the wedding party and guests. He or she understands our procedures and will advise you on any questions that may arise. The wedding coordinator is not the same as a professional wedding coordinator and should not be understood as such. Instead, this person serves to work as a liaison between the church and the wedding party.

The custodian will clean the church and prepare the building for use before and after any rehearsal and ceremony and reception. The custodian will be

available to meet the florist within the two hours before ceremony. Our custodian is trained on and will also operate the sound system.

### **Programs**

Many couples provide their guests with a program for the wedding. Most religious bookstores carry a variety of bulletin covers or you may design your own. It is the responsibility of the couple to purchase, type and reproduce these programs if desired. Prior to having them printed, it is a good idea to have the minister review the bulletin.

### **The Rehearsal**

When scheduling the wedding, it is recommended you schedule the rehearsal. The rehearsal can be up to two hours long and the minister, coordinator, and custodial participation are covered in the fees. All participants who have any involvement in the wedding are expected to be in attendance. It is important that everyone be prompt.

It is important to remember your marriage license and provide it to the minister during the rehearsal. As a reminder, the officiating minister must have the marriage license before the wedding can proceed.

### **The Day of the wedding**

The entire wedding party is encouraged to be at the church no later than one hour prior to the ceremony. This will allow time for last minute details. The church will provide changing spaces for the wedding party as needed.

The reservation for the ceremony on the wedding day is for four hours. This includes photography. If additional time is needed, it must be pre-arranged and may include additional fees, including and up to the forfeiture of deposit, if staff must be present longer hours.

### **Parking**

There is adequate parking in the church's parking lots for your wedding and guests. There is additional parking behind the building.



## **Use of Alcohol**

With the exception of wine served for communion, alcoholic beverages are absolutely prohibited inside the church and on its surrounding land. Consumption of alcohol on St. John's premises will result in an automatic forfeiture of wedding deposit. Any indication to staff/minister of over consumption of alcohol resulting in disruptive or destructive behavior will result in dismissal from the church property, including possible police action.

## **No Rice**

The church prohibits the use of rice or any other substance that might be harmful to people, property or nature. Bird seed and bubbles are permissible but are only permitted on the outside of the building.

## **Smoking Locations**

There is no smoking in the church. This includes E-cigarettes. Smoking is permitted in the parking lot. Please dispose of cigarette butts in ashtrays.

## **Damages**

All damages caused to St. John's United Church of Christ building or equipment as a direct result of your rehearsal, ceremony or reception are the responsibility of the couple getting married. Damages will be assessed by a contractor of St. John's choosing and will be deducted from the wedding deposit. Should the wedding deposit be insufficient for coverage of damages, St. John's reserves the right to present a bill of fees and/or take legal action for the remainder of any costs.

## **Wedding Expenses and Fees**

Members of St. John's will not have to pay for the use of the sanctuary. Other services, however, and personnel will have fees.

A deposit is required in order to have your wedding placed on the church calendar. The deposit is not counted toward the total costs of your wedding. After your wedding, a check will be mailed reimbursing you for the deposit, less any applicable fees. Please notify us who this deposit is to be mailed to.

The remaining balance of all fees is to be paid in full two week prior to the wedding day. Failure to pay the fees on time may result in forfeiture of

services. Please make checks payable to St. John's United Church of Christ. If the wedding is cancelled within 60 days of the wedding date, the fees will be reimbursed minus the deposit to cover administrative fees.

# St. John's United Church of Christ

## Wedding Checklist

- Meet with the Minister
- Complete Wedding Application
- Schedule a wedding date with the church office
- Contact the organist (if applicable)
- Deposit
- Obtain a marriage license
- Communication to photographer
- Communication to wedding party about rehearsal, wedding service, reception
- Full payment – two weeks prior
- Coordination with the florist