



*Your Wedding at  
First United Methodist Church*

72 Lake Morton Dr , Lakeland, Florida  
863-686-3163x219 [LSangster@firstumc.org](mailto:LSangster@firstumc.org)

All weddings at our church are performed by a United Methodist pastor using a United Methodist service. The United Methodist Church ordains men and women called by God to serve as ministers. Your wedding will be performed by whichever pastor is available at the time you requested. We do not exclude women in worship, including weddings, funerals, baptisms and all other worship settings. If your tradition does not include women, you may want to choose a different venue for your wedding.

### **DATES TO REMEMBER**

*[You may want to write the appropriate dates in the blanks.]*

\_\_\_\_\_ **10-60 days in advance:** Get the marriage license from the County Clerk's office (call 863-603-6412 for Polk County instructions).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Two months in advance:** Call organist Matthew Corl to set meeting to plan music, 863-687-9856 x274.

\_\_\_\_\_ **One month in advance:** Balance of wedding fees due (72 Lk Morton Dr, Lakeland FL 33801, Attn: Lynn).

\_\_\_\_\_ **Three weeks in advance:** Call wedding coordinator Emily Corl to go over details of wedding, 863-647-4624.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Day before the wedding:** Take marriage license to wedding rehearsal. By law, the pastor cannot perform a marriage unless the license is in his or her possession — no exceptions.

## **CHURCH WEDDING STAFF**

### **PASTORS' ASSISTANT**

Lynn Sangster schedules weddings and will be your contact person as plans progress. Call Lynn weekdays 8:30am-4:30pm (863-686-3163 x219), or email [LSangster@firstumc.org](mailto:LSangster@firstumc.org). (No question is "trivial" -- don't be afraid to ask!)

### **PASTOR**

All weddings are performed by a United Methodist pastor using a Methodist service. The United Methodist Church ordains both men and women, and pastors' schedules determine who does each wedding. The pastor for your wedding will meet with both of you before the service to talk about Christian marriage and details of the ceremony. We also encourage you to have premarital counseling; the County Clerk's office has a listing of registered counselors. *Please call two months before the wedding to schedule your meeting with the pastor.*

### **ORGANIST**

Matthew Corl will help you plan your wedding music. *Please call him two months before the wedding to make an appointment (687-9856 x274).* If you have a special request, please bring the music to your meeting so Matthew can determine whether it is appropriate for a wedding ceremony at our church.

### **CUSTODIAN**

A member of our service staff will open and close the facilities, set up and take down church equipment and do normal cleanup after the wedding. Fees for extra cleaning or taking down and storing rental or personal equipment remaining after the wedding party has left the premises will be deducted from your wedding deposit.

### **CHURCH WEDDING COORDINATOR**

A church wedding coordinator will be at the rehearsal and wedding to assist with last-minute needs, help family and attendants start down the aisle, and keep things running smoothly. *Please call Emily Corl three weeks before the wedding to talk about the details of the wedding service (647-4624).*

## **FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS**

**CHURCH EQUIPMENT:** Available at no extra charge: one pair brass 7-tier candelabra (church provides candles); unity candle holder (you provide candles); kneeler; brass vases (your florist provides plastic liners); two wooden display easels. No church equipment may be removed from the premises.

**FLOWERS:** You may use fresh or artificial flowers, including rose petals in the aisle. Flowers or greenery may be attached to the candelabra using plastic or ribbon -- no tape or tacks. Florists using our brass vases must provide a water-proof liner. All plants must be in waterproof containers.

**DECORATIONS:** All decorations should blend in with the dignity and beauty of the sanctuary. No arches, columns or other artificial settings are allowed. The cross, candles and white altar cloth may not be handled, moved or removed. Nothing may be taped or tacked onto walls or furnishings, and pew-end clips must be plastic or plastic-coated. Candles must be spring-loaded or oil -- no wax except unity candles. No glitter or other small pieces that are difficult to vacuum. Aisle runners are not allowed.

**CHURCH AVAILABILITY FOR DELIVERIES AND DECORATING:** The church facilities are opened two hours before the wedding. If decorators would like to come earlier, we will attempt to accommodate them, provided there are no other events at the church that day (call Lynn two days before wedding to check, 863-686-3163). Florists can use the Sacristy for finishing touches; it is air conditioned and has running water. Supplies in drawers and cabinets belong to the church and may not be used.

**CLEANUP AND REMOVAL OF EQUIPMENT:** Our custodian does routine cleanup after weddings. Costs for extra cleaning or removal and storage of rental or personal equipment left on the premises when the wedding is over will be deducted from the wedding deposit.

*If you have any questions, please call Lynn Sangster at 863-686-3163 x219 (weekdays 8:30am-4:30pm) or e-mail [LSangster@firstumc.org](mailto:LSangster@firstumc.org).*

## **PHOTOGRAPHY AND/OR VIDEOGRAPHY**

**PURPOSE OF THESE GUIDELINES:** A wedding ceremony is a worship service. These guidelines were created to keep the focus of the ceremony on the sacredness of the vows the bride and groom are making. Therefore we must ask photographers and guests to honor our rules.

**ARRIVALS:** The facilities and dressing rooms are opened 2 hours prior to the wedding, unless the bride has paid extra for 3 hours. For most weddings the women dress in the Parlor (across the courtyard from the north side of the Sanctuary) and men are in the pastors' robe room (off the hall on the northeast side of the Sanctuary).

**BEFORE THE CEREMONY:** The photographer/videographer may stand five rows from the back of the chapel and take shots with artificial lighting as the family, bridesmaids and bride enter the sanctuary. After that, no artificial lighting is permitted until the bride & groom start down the aisle at the completion of the ceremony.

**DURING THE CEREMONY:** Photos and videos may be taken ONLY from the back of the chapel. [*One exception:* Remote video cameras (no attendant) may be set up inconspicuously in the front to run continuously during the service.] Following the ceremony, the pastor will be glad to return to the altar to recreate any parts of the ceremony for flash pictures or video.

*If you have any questions, please contact Lynn Sangster 863-686-3163x219 (weekdays 8:30am-4:30pm) or e-mail [LSangster@firstumc.org](mailto:LSangster@firstumc.org).*



## **BRIDAL CONSULTANT**

If you hire a bridal consultant in addition to the church wedding coordinator, please advise your consultant that she is welcome to help, but the pastor is in charge of the rehearsal and wedding and will guide the ceremony according to our procedures.

## **FAMILY & FRIENDS**

**ATTENDANTS:** We do not limit the number of attendants but alternate dressing rooms may be used depending on the size of the wedding party.

**FLOWER GIRLS AND RING BEARERS:** We recommend (but don't require) that children participating in the service be at least four years old.

**FAMILIES AND BLENDED FAMILIES:** We want everyone involved in your wedding to feel welcome and comfortable. If you have concerns about seating arrangements or other potential sources of friction, please discuss these with the pastor. If you have children from a previous marriage, the pastor can discuss options for including them in the service in a special way.

**NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES ARE ALLOWED ANYWHERE ON CHURCH PREMISES AT ANY TIME.** Persons violating this rule (including members of the wedding party) may be asked to leave the property immediately.

## **THE REHEARSAL**

All participants in the wedding must be present. Give your marriage license to the pastor at the rehearsal, as by law the pastors cannot perform a wedding ceremony without the license in hand.

## **LOST ITEMS**

As wedding days are hectic, it is not unusual for things to be left behind. Our church cannot be responsible for lost items, so please ask a friend or family member who is not in the wedding party to check the dressing rooms after the wedding party leaves.

