

Orchard Ridge **United Church of Christ**

Wedding Policy and Guidelines

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1501 Gilbert Road
Madison, WI 53711
(608) 271-7212
(608) 271-7265 (fax)
Email office@orucc.org

Your Wedding at Orchard Ridge United Church of Christ

The church rejoices with you as you look forward to your special day. With all the activities that are part of this experience, the church stands at the center. Here is the place where the actual ceremony will take place, and we want it to be done in a manner that will honor God, and be a hallowed and cherished memory for you for the rest of your lives.

Always remember that this is a worship service. No less than any of the regular Sunday morning services, it is an occasion when the church and its pastors have the obligation to see that all things are done reverently and in order. As with any service, the church and the pastors are the ones in charge. You will find them concerned, however, to work with you in the fashioning of a wedding service that will try to honor your individual wishes and style.

Because of this, and because of the sacred nature of marriage itself, you should make an appointment with the pastor well in advance of the planned ceremony. It will be important to clear and fix the date on the church calendar. It will be important also to make two appointments for consultations with the pastor at which both members of the couple shall be present. At that time, the whole subject of marriage from a Christian perspective, as well as some of the individual mechanics of the service will be discussed. If more than two- pre-marriage consultations are desired, the pastors will be pleased to set up additional sessions. Prior to these consultations, here are some fixed points to consider.

FOR WHOM DO WE PERFORM MARRIAGE?

We feel a special obligation to care for and aid the members of this church. When space and time permits - we are happy to do services for non-members.

We are an Open and Affirming congregation which means we will perform weddings for persons of all sexual orientations.

FIRST STEPS IN PREPARATION FOR MARRIAGE

As soon as the couple have decided to be married and have selected a date, it is appropriate to call the church office to check the availability of that date and time on the church calendar. If a rehearsal is required, that time should also be noted. Although the office manager can set this date tentatively, it must be confirmed by the minister. After the pastors have consulted with each other, the church office will confirm the date and which pastor will perform the ceremony.

No services will be scheduled on Good Friday, Holy Saturday, Easter Weekend, Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

PRE-MARITAL COUNSELING

In addition to meeting with a pastor 2-3 times to plan the wedding, we will require couples to do premarital counseling with a marriage therapist we have selected to work with us. We have agreements with specific therapists who provide faith based assistance. This can be arranged through the pastors at the first session.

FEES AND CHARGES

You will find that the most important part of your wedding, the church, will be the least expensive part of its cost. However, to avoid embarrassment and to give guidance, it is important to consider these minimal charges. Fees for use of the building and other people are listed below.

FEES

Use of Sanctuary	\$300.00 (\$75 nonrefundable deposit secures the date)
Use of Friendship Hall	\$ 200.00
Minister (discretionary for members*)	\$250.00
Organist/Pianist	\$200.00
Soloist	Arrange with soloist
Custodial Fees	\$50.00 (\$75 with reception)

* Fees for minister and musicians should be made directly to these people. The minister or office manager can provide names. Custodial and building fees should be made payable to Orchard Ridge UCC by the time of the rehearsal.

MUSIC

It is the responsibility of the couple to secure an organist or musician for their wedding. The pastor can give a list of possible names. The couple must set a time to meet with the musician at which time selections will be discussed and selections made so as to enhance the setting for worship. A suggested fee for these services is shown above. This should be paid directly to the musician.

Musicians and clergy are at your wedding for their professional services only. If you wish them as guests at your wedding, reception, and/or rehearsal dinner, be sure that they receive invitations in advance as any other wedding guest would.

WEDDING DETAILS

Flower Stand: The florist can provide stands for flowers, or the church may provide stands at no charge.

Candlelight Services: Two seven-branch candelabra can be provided by the church. You will need to provide the candles.

Candles for Unity Candles: The unity candle and stand is to be supplied by the wedding couple.

Aisle runners: Should aisle runners be desired, arrangements must be made by you at a florist or paper goods store.

Ushers: Ushers are to be selected by the couple. They must be present for the rehearsal; on the day of the wedding, ushers must be present at least 45 minutes before the service begins. Among the other duties, we ask that your ushers clean up paper and other articles left by your guests in the Sanctuary.

Wedding Consultants: Many bridal shops and department stores include the services of a wedding consultant at the time of the rehearsal and/or the ceremony. It should be made quite clear to such consultants that while they are welcome to assist, the rehearsal and ceremony are under the complete direction of the clergy person, and such consultants should take care to check specifically concerning local arrangements and procedures with the officiating clergy. All suggestions should be cleared with the pastor prior to speaking with the wedding party. It is the responsibility of the couple to make this known to their consultant.

Bulletins: Bulletins are optional. You are responsible for purchasing and printing.

Rehearsal: The rehearsal is the time for sharing with the wedding party and families the plans and procedures the couple and presiding pastor have established for the wedding service. Any concerns or suggestions from the families should be communicated to the presiding pastor through the couple prior to the rehearsal.

It is important that everyone arrive promptly so the rehearsal can begin as scheduled; everyone in the wedding party (attendants, ushers, candle lighter, etc.) and escort(s) must be present for the rehearsal.

Birdseed: May be thrown only outside the building. It must be distributed at the outside doors as the guests are leaving the building. If it is wrapped in little bags of net or plastic wrap, it will be your responsibility to see that someone is charged with the task of cleaning up the premises. No rice or confetti is to be thrown.

Licensing: There are certain legal formalities which must be met in the State of Wisconsin before you may be married. The couple to be married has the responsibility to meet with the Clerk of Dane County to make sure all these requirements are completed. Please bring the license to the rehearsal.

Receptions at the Church: You are responsible to cater any reception at the church. You are also responsible to return the Friendship Hall and other used facilities to the condition in which you found it. Smoking and alcoholic beverages are prohibited.

Dressing Rooms for Wedding Party: If you choose to dress at the church we'll open up rooms for your use. Please leave them as you found them.

Time: All those participating in the wedding service should be present at least one-half hour before the ceremony.

FEW BASIC RULES

Flash Photography: Marriage is an act of worship and so flash photography can feel intrusive and informal. Flash photography is permitted only during the processional and recessional as it does not affect the worship service itself.

Wedding Photos: If the couple and attendants return to the sanctuary to take the desired pictures following the ceremony, guests should be advised of this procedure to avoid confusion by the families of the couple. Plan on one hour for pictures. (Pictures may be taken either before or after the service; if before the service - 1 ½ hours should be allowed.)

Videotaping: Please talk with the pastor.

Smoking: Is prohibited in the church building.

Alcoholic Beverages Are Not Permitted: in any part of the church building. Wedding parties should be informed of this.

The Ministers: Have the right to refuse to perform marriage services either when initially requested, or any time during the pre-marital process.

Damage to Property: You are responsible for all expenses and for any undue damage that may occur to the properties by any guest or attendant at the service or reception.

Should any of these matters not be clearly understood, or if there are other questions about anything pertaining to the wedding policy or arrangements, please feel free to call the church office and speak with the pastor. It is a joy and honor to share such a glorious experience with the wedding couple and their families and friends.