

GUIDELINES FOR WEDDINGS ***Trinity United Methodist Church***

A wedding is a sacred worship service of great importance. Marriage ought to be prepared for in a most serious way. By coming to the church for your wedding you have indicated your desire to receive God's blessing upon your new adventure and to proclaim in a sacred setting the new relationship between the two of you and the founding of your family unit.

The following details are provided for your information and planning.

PRELIMINARY DISCUSSIONS

Your first step is to call the church office and obtain a copy of these guidelines. Once you read and understand these, call and make an appointment with one of the pastors. This should be done at least six months in advance of the proposed wedding date. Please note that the date for the wedding cannot be determined over the phone, but will be scheduled at the appointment with the couple and the pastor. Please note that it **may** take 10-14 days from your initial call before such an appointment can be held.

When an agreement has been reached that the pastor will perform the wedding ceremony, the date of the service and the rehearsal will be finalized. This will be done in conjunction with the church calendar. The wedding may be held in either the main sanctuary (seats 600) or the chapel (seats 75).

At some point prior to the wedding, the pastor will meet with the couple to discuss their impending marriage. This will include details of the wedding service and may include some pre-marital counseling. This is at the discretion of the pastor, or if requested by the couple. If more than one meeting is needed, the pastor will determine the number of meetings required.

WEDDING SERVICE

Wedding ceremonies may vary from church to church. Your service in this church will be determined mutually between the pastor and you. A booklet of suggested worship services will be given to you by the pastor. While you are welcome to make the service as unique as you wish, it must always be seen as an act of worship in the House of God. The couple is invited to offer input and suggestions for their wedding service. This will be discussed with the pastor. Under normal circumstances the wedding party will leave the church less than one hour after we begin; this includes pictures, reception line, etc.

REHEARSAL

A wedding rehearsal conducted by the pastor will be held prior to the service (unless the wedding party is small). This is usually held the night before the wedding, but will be initially agreed upon between pastor and couple. **All** participants in the wedding are required to attend. Normally the rehearsal takes less than one hour. Participants should arrive 15 minutes **before** the rehearsal is scheduled to begin. While children are welcome in the wedding party, the couple should note that children under three years of age may not be fully cooperative and may require extra attention. We recommend children under three not be in the formal wedding party.

OTHER DETAILS

Marriage License: The license is valid for 30 days; it must be secured at least three days in advance. The license must be secured in the home town of the bride, if a resident of New Jersey. If the bride is not a resident of New Jersey, the license is obtained at the New Jersey home town of the groom. If neither are residents of New Jersey, they must secure the license in the town where the marriage is performed (Hackettstown Town Hall, Stiger Street, 852-3130). An adult friend must accompany the couple to the registrar's office as a witness. You **must** bring your valid marriage license to the **rehearsal**. A completed copy of the license will be mailed to the couple within one week of the wedding. A certified copy (with the raised seal from the town in which the ceremony was performed) must be obtained separately by the couple in order to change drivers' licenses, social security cards, etc.

Photography: Photographers should be instructed carefully that **no pictures may be taken during the actual ceremony**. Pictures may be taken during the processional and recessional. This is strictly enforced. All others will be posed after the service. We feel that this will enhance the dignity and reverence of your ceremony. Please inform your guests of this policy. If posed pictures are to be taken after the ceremony, please plan for those with the clergy to be taken first. Video cameras may be used, but must be stationary in the balcony or the rear of the sanctuary during the service. Also, if the photographer is planning to go to the bride's home prior to the service, please plan plenty of time for pictures so you are not delayed in coming to the church.

Music: Our church organist has the first right of refusal to play at church weddings. He will be happy to play selections of your choice or traditional wedding music. Special requests are honored, but the couple must provide the music. There is an extra charge of \$25 if the organist needs to rehearse with a soloist.

Flowers: Flowers should be brought to the church about two hours before the service. Flowers to be worn by ushers, etc. should be delivered to the home.

Candelabras: Persons wishing to use candelabras will arrange for them through their florist; all candelabras must have a floor covering beneath them to protect the carpet. Florists are asked to pick up the candelabras on Monday between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

Pew Decorations: These may be used, but must only be tied, not taped, to the ends of the pews. If you want these items saved, as well as guest books, wedding candles, etc., please make arrangements with a family member to remove them immediately following the service. Otherwise, they will be removed by the sexton and the church cannot be responsible for them.

Birdseed: Birdseed must be distributed outside the church building and is permitted to be thrown only out of doors by the front of the building. Rice is not permitted. Please distribute birdseed or other such items to the guests **after** the service.

Parking: For special parking arrangements on Main Street contact the Hackettstown Police Department (852-3300). Ample parking for guests is available behind the church, using our Moore Street entrance.

Witnesses: Two witnesses, at least 18 years of age, must sign the marriage license after the service. These are typically the honor attendants.

Soloist: Special music can be provided by a soloist, on request. An honorarium of at least \$100 is suggested.

Time: Please urge all participants to be on time for both the rehearsal and the wedding. The groom and male attendants should arrive thirty minutes before the start of the wedding. The bride and female attendants should arrive ten minutes before the wedding starts.

Miscellaneous: Other questions to be addressed regarding the service include:

- a) What names will you use during the service?
- b) Do you wish to be introduced as husband and wife after the service; if so, how? John and Mary Smith, Mr. & Mrs. John Smith, etc.
- c) In cases of prior divorce, a copy of the page with the docket number and judge's signature must be kept in our files.
- d) Do you wish combined or segregated seating for family and guests?

Off Site Weddings: Weddings in locations away from the church may be considered after discussion with the clergy. Appropriate adjustments to the suggested honorarium below will be discussed.

Finances: There are many details to be addressed when a wedding is held in the church, and numerous hours spent in preparation and implementation. Therefore the following financial details prevail.

Honoraria: The following minimum amounts are suggested.

Pastor	\$200.00 (members); \$300.00 (non-members)
Organist	\$195.00 (Rehearsal and wedding)
Soloist	\$100
Sexton	\$ 50

Building Use: No charge is made for the use of the church by a family holding membership in the church. There is a fee of \$400 for use of our facility if **neither** family has an immediate family member in current church membership.

These amounts should be put in separate envelopes and given to the pastor at the rehearsal. Cash or checks made out to the individual are acceptable. Church checks should be made out to Trinity United Methodist Church.