

Weddings at First United Methodist Church

203 Wisconsin Ave., Madison, WI 53703

Updated and revised – October 2017

Congratulations on your upcoming wedding! We look forward to working with you on planning your wedding.

How do we reserve First UMC for our wedding? The church office and the FUMC clergy must approve your proposed date. Please contact our Coordinator of Congregational Engagement Kathy Carpenter at kcarpenter@fumc.org or 608-256-9061 ext. 10 or Lead Pastor, Rev. Dr. Mark A. Fowler. You are welcome to use outside clergy to officiate at your wedding.

After the date is approved and officiating clergy confirmed, a reservation form must be completed and received at the church office at least four months before your wedding. A non-refundable \$100 deposit is required if neither spouse is a church member at the time the reservation is made. No deposit is required from church members. When we receive your reservation form and deposit, we will provide a written response to your request.

Who will officiate? First Church members may request a particular clergyperson. However, personal and church calendars will determine which clergyperson will be working with you. Because of busy schedules, non-First Church members are encouraged to find an outside clergy to officiate. If needed, we do have adjunct clergy related to the church who may be available to officiate at your wedding.

How do we arrange for an organist? Unless you are not using the organ for your wedding, you will need to contact our organist, Ross Cowing (608-836-7351). If he is unable to serve as your organist, he will provide names of other organists for you to call. Any guest organist (of your choosing) would need to be approved by Ross. If you need help in arranging for special music, please contact Ross. He will be happy to offer suggestions.

Will someone help us select wedding music? At least one month before your wedding date, schedule an appointment with the organist, who will let you hear a variety of possible selections for processional and recessional, and talk with you about other music you may want in your wedding.

When should we meet with the presiding clergyperson? At least three months before your wedding, call your officiating clergyperson to schedule an appointment. You will meet approximately three to five times. During those sessions, a major focus will be placed on planning the wedding service, but getting acquainted with the minister is important, too. You may be asked to complete a pre-marriage inventory that will become the focus of at least one session. It will be taken online for a fee of \$35. A certified marriage and family counselor may also be invited to conduct this feedback session. In that event, the counselor will determine his/her fee for this session.

What is the seating capacity in the sanctuary? Our sanctuary will seat approximately 450 people in the present configuration. Our new Chapel may be used for smaller, more intimate weddings and will seat approximately 75 people.

How many pews are on the main aisle? There are 14 on the right, and 13 on the left.

Can we reserve parking in front of the church? If you go to the Madison City/County Building about a week before your wedding, the Traffic Engineering Department will give you parking meter bags for the six meters in front of our church. There is no charge for these “Reserved Parking” bags. Please be aware that we are a downtown church with very limited parking. Most of your guests will need to use nearby public parking.

What do we need to do in the last weeks before our wedding? No later than eight weeks before your wedding (earlier if possible), return the Wedding Information Sheet that can be downloaded from our website or received from our office. One week before your wedding, all facility and personnel fees should be paid in full to the church office. An invoice of appropriate fees will be invoiced to you. Failure to submit fees will cancel the reservation.

Don’t forget to get your marriage license! Please bring it to the minister at your rehearsal.

Use of the Building and Parking

- Wedding rehearsals usually take about one hour. The doors will be opened approximately 15 minutes before your scheduled rehearsal. Make every effort to arrive on time.
- Please do not alter or move any furnishings in the sanctuary for your wedding service without permission. Church seasonal decorations as well as the choir risers and chairs will be left in place for weddings.
- The Music Room on the lower level may be set aside for the bridal party. Dresses may be brought to the church on the night of the rehearsal to be locked in the room. A full-length mirror is available.
- Another room for attendants can be set aside prior to the wedding service, if requested in advance of the wedding day.
- There is limited church parking available. Please talk with the pastor about parking possibilities. Public ramps are within two blocks of the church.
- No smoking or alcoholic beverages are allowed in the church building or on church grounds.
- The building will be opened for flower delivery, wedding party arrival, dressing, and etc. within the 5 hour limit according to the times you have requested. **The church is available for a total of 5 hours.** Changes in this schedule will need to be negotiated with the FUMC minister or custodian.
- Weddings will not be scheduled after 6:00 p.m.

Flowers

Flowers for your wedding may be placed on the worship table and/or on flower stands. The church has several flower stands of varying heights.

Photographs and Video Recordings

We encourage you to consider taking formal wedding photographs before the wedding. You are likely to look your very best then, and you will be glad to have that task completed when the wedding is over and the time to celebrate has come. It is also a courtesy to your guests if they don’t have to wait before you arrive at the reception. If you prefer to take your wedding photographs after the wedding, however, work with your photographer to keep that process to an hour or less.

Please share these guidelines with your photographer:

- Because the wedding is a worship service, we request that no flash photographs be taken during the service. After the processional, photographers may take photos without flash from the rear of the sanctuary. The rear balcony will be open as well.

- See the officiating clergy about video taping.
- Please do not move sanctuary furniture – including candelabras – for photography purposes without prior approval of the officiating clergy or custodian.

Audio Capabilities

We have a quality sound system that requires a trained technician to operate during the wedding. A fee is required for his/her services. Microphones are provided to readers and musicians, as needed. The sound tech is not needed for the rehearsal and is not available. The sound tech will be at the church one hour prior to the ceremony and will rehearse with musicians at that time.

Candles

Two communion table candles are provided for the ceremony. If desired, the church can also provide a set of brass candelabras (\$50 for non-members). Each candelabrum holds seven liquid paraffin candles, which are provided by the church. Any flowers or other decorations to be mounted on the brass candelabra must be attached with *padded* wire. The open width of each candelabrum is 26”.

Pew or aisle candles can be rented from area florists or rental agencies. The florist or wedding party is responsible for placing and removing these on the day of the wedding.

Rice, Bird Seed, Live Flower Petals, Glitter...

Please do not use any of these either inside the building or on the church grounds. They are hard to clean up inside, and are dangerous for pedestrians on the sidewalk.

Aisle Runner

Your florist can provide an aisle runner if one is desired. The length of the center aisle is 56’. If you wish to have artificial flower petals scattered on the aisle runner, please designate someone to be responsible for picking them up following the wedding.

Services and Fees

	For Members* (Who have been full members for at least six months prior to the wedding date.)	For Non-Members
For use of the Church (Sanctuary, common areas and dressing room.)	No Charge	\$1200
Facilities Manager (An additional \$50/hour will be charged if building is needed beyond the five hours.)	\$250	\$300
Sound Technician	\$75	\$100
Organist (If additional meetings or rehearsals are required there will be a charge of \$35.00 a time.) Organist’s fee can be made payable to Ross Cowing.	\$175	\$175

Officiating Minister (if a First Church clergy is presiding.)	\$150 Honorarium is suggested.	\$300
Pre-Marital Inventory – Payable to Prepare/Enrich	Online	Online
Session with a certified Marriage & Family Therapist – Payable to the counselor.	Determined by therapist	Determined by therapist

Fees are established at the time the reservation form has been accepted. All fees should be paid, in full, one week before the wedding with a check made payable to First United Methodist Church.

Any other musicians or clergy involved in your wedding should be paid directly by you, preferably before the wedding.

The officiating clergy at his/her discretion may adjust fees.

Contact Information

Lead Pastor: Rev. Dr. Mark A. Fowler, Phone: 608-234-5189

Senior Associate Pastor: Rev. Tina Lang, tlang@fumc.org

Music Director and Organist: Ross Cowing, 608-836-7351 (home), rcowing@fumc.org

Facilities Supervisor: Dennis Anderson, danderson@fumc.org