



Guidelines and Policies for Weddings

Salem United Methodist Church of Cedar Rapids

(319) 362-6178 office@salemchurchcr.com

Guidelines and Policies

Salem United Methodist Church of Cedar Rapids has been providing ministry in the name of Jesus Christ for over 100 years in our community. An important part of the ministry has been the celebration of weddings. We celebrate with you on your upcoming occasion and pray for God's blessings on your new marriage. Our building is very special to us because it provides our congregation a place for worship and growing together in our faith. We hope you will respect our church, and we ask that you follow our guidelines and policies.

We are eager to help make the occasion of your wedding beautiful and meaningful. The wedding is a service of Christian Worship and as such, our Christian faith and traditions must be respected. It is not necessary for a wedding to be elaborate in order to be beautiful. The true beauty lies in the spirit and attitude of those who share in your special day.

The church and the staff want to do everything possible to help your wedding be such an experience. There are, however, certain guidelines and policies that have been designed to preserve the dignity of worship, to protect church property, and to insure the integrity of our heritage as United Methodists in Cedar Rapids.

All services held in our church must be officiated by the pastors appointed to serve our congregation unless a guest pastor has been approved by our pastors. All weddings must be between two consenting adults who have received pre-marital counseling. **We are a loving and open congregation.** The wedding service must meet with the approval of our pastors and follow within the guidelines of our Wedding Policies and traditions of the United Methodist Church.

Minister

We expect our pastors to meet with an inquiring couple for the minimum of 3 times prior to the wedding for premarital counseling. All wedding services will be developed by the pastor in consultation with the couple. All elements of the service must meet with the approval of the pastor.

The pastor's wedding fee is \$300. This should be made payable directly to the pastor and received no later than the Rehearsal.

Arrangements

A tentative date for a wedding may be reserved by calling the church office at (319) 362-6178. The tentative date will not be officially reserved until the officiating pastor has been consulted and has given their approval (after confirming the date is available on their calendar). We ask that all wedding date reservations be made 3 months in advance, at minimum. This allows ample time for premarital counseling and further coordination. It is recommended that a premarital appointment be made with the officiating pastor within one to two weeks after the date is reserved.

Again, before announcing any date for a wedding, please clear the date with the pastor. We recommend that you clear this date as far in advance as possible. Be advised that seeing that the date on the church calendar is open does not automatically mean you have the date reserved for your wedding.

The Church is **not** available for weddings on the following days:

New Year's Eve and New Year's Day

Holy Week

Thanksgiving Day and day after

December 24, 25 and 26.

Please note :

- Christmas decorations will be in the sanctuary beginning the first Sunday in Advent (end of November) through 12 days after Christmas.
- There is an extra fee for scheduling weddings after 6:00 PM.

Facilities Available

The Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall are available for weddings. The Sanctuary can accommodate approximately 200. The Fellowship Hall may be used as an option for a small wedding. The Fellowship Hall can accommodate approximately 100. Our building is not for rent.

Receptions and rehearsal dinners may be held in the Fellowship Hall.

The Parlor or Nursery are available for the Bride's Room. The Groom's Room options are either the Choir Room or the Youth Room. The church recommends taking all precautions in bringing personal items to the church. The church will not be responsible for personal items brought to the church for use in the wedding, nor shall the church be liable for such items if lost, stolen or damaged. Please consider assigning a designated person to be responsible for all belongings.

Music

All music must be submitted at least one month prior to the wedding and meet with the approval of the officiating pastor. Because the wedding ceremony is a service of Christian worship, we believe that the wedding music should be consistent with such a spirit. The significance of the service should be reflected in the music.

If you choose to utilize the organ for your service, our organist will play for weddings at our church. Our organist will gladly meet with you to plan music for the service. If our organist is unavailable for the date of your wedding, Salem UMC will offer a preferred list of substitutes. The standard organist fee is an honorarium of \$125 and made payable directly to the organist.

Soloists and/or instrumentalists can be included in wedding ceremonies. If you have a family member or friend that wishes to offer gifts of music unto the Lord, this is a welcomed addition to a marriage ceremony. Printed music for the church accompanist is required as well as contacting the church musician to schedule a time in advance to rehearse. While it is acceptable to have a friend or relative provide such music, they should have the musical abilities necessary and the emotional strength to sing or play during the ceremony. Special music can certainly enhance the service of worship, but it is optional and you should not feel obligated to arrange for it. If a soloist and/or instrumentalist is included, the organist fee is an honorarium of \$150 and made payable directly to the organist.

Salem UMC's Sanctuary instruments include an organ and Clavinova (stage piano); these should only be used at the discretion of the organist and/or lead pastor. Salem can share a list of referrals/contacts, and also offer a brief orientation for outside musicians to familiarize them with Salem's musical equipment. Any musical instruments present may not be moved without prior consent and should be discussed with the lead pastor. Praise Band instruments are not available for use.

Prelude/Postlude - the organist/pianist will provide 10-20 minutes of pre and post-service selections from either traditional or contemporary sacred literature.

Sound and Video System

Our church has a sophisticated sound and video system that can only be operated by our technician. We ask that members of the wedding party and professional videographers not adjust, operate, or plug into our audio or video systems.

If you are utilizing a Wedding Planner, please have them communicate with our Salem UMC Tech office early in their planning process for a full understanding of our audio/visual capabilities. Our technician can be contacted at techdirector@salemchurchcr.com or calling the church office at (319) 362-6178.

What requires a technician?

A technician is required if the in-house audio/video system is to be used to play recorded music or video during the event. A technician is required if live performers require real-time audio mixing and to operate the live-feed or recording cameras of the video system. Any additional microphones beyond the pastor requires an audio/visual technician.

The basic facility fee includes setting up and activating microphones. Microphone requests must be received by the Salem UMC Tech office seven days prior to the event.

Basic facility fee does not include operations which require an audio/video technician to be present at rehearsal or ceremony. Playing recorded music, live audio mixing, displaying media/video content, and recording the ceremony are all items which require an A/V technician to be present. A/V technician fees are an honorarium of \$75 and made payable directly to the technician.

Recorded music, media, and videos to be used in the event are due in the Salem UMC Tech office at least a week prior to the ceremony.

Wedding parties are welcome to have 3rd party audio/video production crews present to record the day; however, they must provide and utilize their own equipment. Again, we ask that members of the wedding party or professional videographers not to adjust, operate, or plug into audio/video systems.

Photography and Video

Since your wedding is a worship experience, we ask all family and guests to respect the ceremony and service. Flash photography nor roaming photography are not permitted during the ceremony.

Wedding Photographer

Your photographer is the only one permitted to use time exposure with no flash during the ceremony. This is a worship service and nothing is to distract from the ceremony. It is very important that the photographer remains inconspicuous during the service. Please remind the photographer that you need time between taking pictures and the ceremony; this is so you have time to prepare for the service and you open the Sanctuary for guests to be seated.

Church Wedding Coordinator

To insure the integrity and responsibility of the church and its property, Salem UMC requires the use of our appointed Wedding Coordinator. This person is an assistant to the pastor. The Wedding Coordinator attends your rehearsal and is present for pictures before/after the wedding ceremony. The Coordinator works with the Pastor and couple to see that your wedding is a special celebration. The Coordinator will assist the wedding party whenever possible. They also serve as a host on behalf of the church to be available in case you need assistance and to help as you prepare for the wedding.

Wedding Coordinator duties include :

- To serve as a timekeeper, to let the wedding party know when to prepare to move from their rooms to line up for the processional
- To help with decorations and flowers
- Assisting direction from the back of the church during rehearsal and the wedding. This includes organizing the wedding party to process in order,

seating grandparents and parents in proper order, giving instructions to the ushers in their duties

- Sees that candles are lit prior to ceremony time
- Organizes the receiving line.

As your wedding date approaches, a Church Wedding Coordinator will be assigned to you. The pastor will give you the name, phone number and email address of the Coordinator.

Wedding Hosts/Greeters/Guestbook Attendants

Wedding Hosts and/or Greeters need to be recruited by you (many wedding parties utilize their reception hosts, if applicable). These individuals will greet your guests as they arrive (this helps assure your guests they are at the right church), and are available to direct guests to the Sanctuary, bathrooms, receive cards, etc..

The Rehearsal

Members of the wedding party need to be reminded that throughout the wedding rehearsal they are in a holy place dedicated to the worship of God and should act accordingly. The officiating pastor is in charge of rehearsal and wedding. All rehearsals will begin promptly at the scheduled time, and all members of the wedding party are expected to be present. The marriage certificate should be delivered to the pastor on the night of rehearsal. Rehearsal usually lasts for one hour.

Wedding Decoration Guidelines

In decorating for the wedding celebration, it is important that all symbols of the church be respected. Such significant church symbols such as the cross cannot be moved or covered with decorations. Arrangements for decorating the church need to be made with the church office or your assigned Church Wedding Coordinator.

- Nails, tacks, staples, pins, tape or anything which will mark the wood work, chairs, or walls cannot be used.
- Wrapped wire or ribbon that will not mark the surface maybe used on the ends of the pews to fasten bows. Do not use tape.
- Aisle Runners are not recommended for safety reasons.

- All decorations and equipment must be removed immediately following the ceremony. The church will not be responsible for decorations left after the wedding. The church must be left in the same condition in which it was found.
- Glitter, rice, birdseed, balloons, and confetti are not permitted (inside and outside).
- In case of damages, you will be held responsible for the charges necessary for repairs.

Items available for use :

Candelabras

White altar clothes

Guest book table

Kneeling Benches

Memorial candle display (you must provide tealights)

Circular, gold arch

Wedding Bulletins

Printed bulletins containing the order of worship and names of the participants can be used. You are responsible for providing bulletins.

Wedding Receptions

The Fellowship Hall is available for wedding receptions. Our United Women in Faith are willing to help serve, the church office will provide contact information if requested.

Other Policies

- Alcoholic beverages may not be served anywhere on church property either prior or following the wedding.
- Smoking/Vaping is not permitted on church property.
- Rice, confetti, bird seed, bubbles, balloons, glitter, etc. may not be used inside any part of the building. Bubbles are permitted outside of the Salem UMC building, it is recommended that bubbles be passed out following the ceremony. The wedding party is responsible for any personal injuries due to the use of these items.
- To preserve the beauty of the Sanctuary beverages and food are not allowed. Food and beverages are allowed in the dressing rooms. Please make your wedding party aware of this policy.

Rehearsal Dinner

Those whom you want to attend the rehearsal dinner should be intentionally invited at least one week before the wedding. Examples : pastor, organist (accompanist, vocalist), wedding coordinator, and their spouses.

Wedding License

Please note that the Marriage License must be given to the officiating pastor on the day of rehearsal. The Marriage License can be obtained from any Court House in Iowa at the County Clerk's Office. There is a 3 day waiting period between the time of application and the issuing of the license, and may be used anytime within 6 months after it is obtained.

Wedding Fees

The wedding fees are to help cover the utility costs of maintaining our building. If you are not a member and you wish to become one, you must go through the current new member class. The rates for Wedding Form are listed below. If your wedding plans change (postponed or cancelled) please be sure to notify the church office and/or pastor at once.

To :	Amount :	Due :
Salem UMC	\$300	\$100 once reservation confirmed \$200 due one week prior
Pastor	\$300	Rehearsal
Organist	\$125	Prior to ceremony
A/V Tech	\$75	Prior to ceremony
Coordinator	\$100	Rehearsal

Address to use on your Invitation

Salem United Methodist Church
3715 33rd Avenue SW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404