

Crown Heights United Methodist Church

Wedding Policy



The Christian Service of Marriage

When two persons enter into a Christian marriage they not only pledge faith to each other, but they also enter into covenant with God. Therefore, a wedding ceremony is a service of worship. In choosing our church for your wedding, you are affirming that you want it to have a special religious significance; all aspects of the wedding must reflect this orientation.

Subject to the traditions and worship style of our congregation, members and nonmembers can plan to have their wedding at CHUMC. This includes rehearsal time the evening before and a three-and-one-half-hour block of time on the day of the wedding ceremony itself. While there are fees involved, the church building is never just “rented out,” and participants are expected to observe the church’s traditions. It is our prayer that you will feel strengthened in your commitment to each other and inspired by the beauty of this sacred place as you make your wedding preparations.

If you are not familiar with our church, we recommend that you visit one of our worship services on Sundays at 8:30 or 11:00 a.m. This will give you an understanding of our style of worship and the way our sanctuary supports this function.

Making the Reservation

Contact our Church Event Coordinator, through the Church office at 405-524-8428 to schedule a time to view our Sanctuary, to discuss available dates, or if you have any other questions.

Before reserving a date for a service, the wedding party must first schedule and attend a formal review of the wedding policy with the church staff and then pay the appropriate deposit.

All dates are subject to the availability of the Pastor and/or the church.

The Facilities

Our sanctuary has a seating capacity of 225 on the floor and 75 in the balcony. Although not technically ADA-compliant, with assistance most disabled persons can access the sanctuary through the main door on the southwest corner of the building, at NW 37th and

Western. Those using wheelchairs will find notched pews at the back of the south side of the room and space in the transept on the north side near the front.

Unfortunately, we have no handicap-accessible restrooms. A dressing room for the bride and her attendants will be provided. A room is also available for the groom and groomsmen.

Presiding Minister

The Pastor of Crown Heights United Methodist Church typically officiates and is in charge of all wedding ceremonies. That said, we also permit other United Methodist ministers to officiate at CHUMC wedding ceremonies. Should you have another minister you wish to officiate or assist at the ceremony, please consult with our Church Event Coordinator. Visiting clergy will need to contact our minister at least two months before the wedding. The order of worship of the United Methodist Church is used at all weddings.

The bride and groom are responsible to contact the Pastor as early as possible before the wedding for a counseling appointment. An explanation of the ceremony and discussion of the responsibility of the sacred vows will be included in the counseling period. Four hours of pre-marital counseling is required. These may be done by the Crown Heights' pastor or the visiting clergy.

Music

Music in the ceremony is to be appropriate for our worship setting. All music must be approved by the organist and the Pastor. Should you wish to have other musicians, such as a string quartet, in addition to or in place of our organist, please discuss this with our Church Event Coordinator.

No taped or pre-recorded music may be played for the service. The microphones and other sound equipment are preset according to the needs of the church and are not to be changed.

After booking the wedding date, you may contact our organist to discuss arrangements for both vocal and organ or piano music. This must be done at least four weeks prior to the ceremony. Please note the policy of our organist/pianist:

1. Services included in the fee:
 - a. Presence at the wedding rehearsal for a maximum of one hour from the scheduled starting time.
 - b. Playing of all service music at the wedding ceremony.
 - c. Unlimited email consultation regarding selection of music.
 - d. One 30-minute on-site consultation on music selection, if necessary.

2. If there is a soloist involved, any rehearsal outside of the scheduled wedding rehearsal will be billed at the organist/pianist's usual rate (\$30/hr).
3. A list of suggested music will be provided by the organist/pianist. Music not on this list will be considered with due notice (at least one month before the wedding) and is subject to approval by our Church Event Coordinator.
4. All musical selections are to be decided upon no later than one month prior to the wedding date.

The Church Event Coordinator

The Church Event Coordinator assists you with your questions concerning the wedding ceremony and policies, and is the person in charge of the rehearsal and the activities at the church the day of the wedding. If an outside Wedding Coordinator has been employed, his or her involvement is to support the Church Event Coordinator.

Photographs and Video

No flash pictures may be taken during the ceremony. Non-flash photos taken during the ceremony must be from the back of the sanctuary.

Photographs in the sanctuary must be completed 30 minutes before the service time and no more than 45 minutes after the service concludes.

Photos may be taken as the bridal party enters the sanctuary and during the recessional as long as the photographer is situated unobtrusively toward the back of the aisle. No furnishings of the church may be moved for the purpose of taking pictures.

Please inform your guests that the taking of pictures is not permitted during the ceremony but may be taken during the recessional.

Video cameras may be used from a stationary position in the rear or side balconies out of view of the congregation. No extra lighting equipment may be used.

Video screens are not permitted in the sanctuary.

Flowers and Decorations

Our beautiful church requires very little decoration and does not lend itself to elaborate floral arrangements. Flowers and candles should enhance the beauty of the sanctuary rather than obscure it. The church has developed this policy to guide the family and florist in making plans.

The symbols of the Christian faith in the sanctuary should be included in wedding decoration arrangements and may not be hidden from plain view. All furniture in the sanctuary is to remain in place at all times.

There will be no alteration of the physical appearance of the sanctuary (such as the construction of a trellis or floral arch).

A kneeling rail is available from the church so that the couple may kneel during the blessing of the marriage prayer.

No tacks, pins, nails, tape, glue, or any sticky material is to be used to fasten any decorations to the furniture or the building. Only floral tape, wrapped wire, or ribbon that will not mar the pew ends should be used to fasten bows or flowers.

All candles used must be drip-less and protective coverings must be placed on the floors and furniture beneath them. For safety purposes, all candles must be in the chancel area and may not be carried by the wedding party.

Flower petals strewn in the aisle must be artificial and picked up at the conclusion of the service.

All decorations and equipment must be removed immediately following the wedding.

The church is decorated with specific items during certain festival seasons of the church year (such as poinsettias during Advent and Christmas). Weddings planned during these seasons must include these decorations.

No rice, confetti, or crepe paper is allowed on the premises. **Bird seed is to be used outside only.** All ribbons, net, and other containers for bird seed must be picked up by the wedding party as well as cleared from the sidewalks and steps. This is not the responsibility of the custodian. Any use of bubbles must also be outside the building.

The church is available for decorating two hours before the start of the service and decorating must be completed at least one hour before the ceremony begins. Please contact the church office to discuss the possibility of additional times for decorating. These arrangements must be submitted in writing, accepted, and signed by the Church Event Coordinator.

Although not required, some couples choose to provide their guests with a program of the service. The draft of this program must be approved by the Pastor. A sample program is available showing what should be included in such a document.

The Rehearsal

Rehearsals are usually scheduled for the evening before the wedding. They are strictly limited to one hour in length so it is essential that everyone arrive promptly. The Church Event Coordinator will direct the rehearsal. All members of the wedding party should be

present. This includes parents, grandparents, ushers, attendants, and musicians. The marriage license must be given to the Church Event Coordinator at the rehearsal.

The Wedding Day

The church is open two hours before the wedding time and the wedding party is expected to be out of the building no later than one hour after the conclusion of the ceremony. Any other arrangements must be submitted in writing and accepted and signed by the Church Event Coordinator.

Someone should be appointed to check the dressing rooms to be sure that no personal possessions have been left behind when the wedding party departs. All items left at the church will be deemed expendable and disposed of by the custodian. The church will not be responsible for any personal items brought to the church for use in the wedding or the reception so great care should be given not to leave items unattended.

All tobacco products, e-cigarettes, vaporizers, and alcoholic beverages (including champagne) are not permitted inside the church. It is the responsibility of the persons making arrangements for the wedding to inform the wedding party and guests of this policy. Any person under the influence of alcohol or drugs, in the opinion of the pastor or staff of the church, will be asked to leave.

Food and drink are not permitted in the sanctuary at any time.

Fees

Church Wedding Use Fees only cover the services provided by our church staff. If you choose to use your own minister or any musicians employed directly by the wedding party, payment for their services is the sole responsibility of the wedding party.

The ceremony date will be reserved upon receipt of the deposit. Receipt of the balance of the Wedding Use Fee is due no later than three weeks prior to the service. Failure to meet this deadline may result in the cancellation of the service.

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Non-Member Wedding Fees

The fees below only cover the services provided by our church staff. If you chose to use your own minister or any musicians employed directly by the wedding party, payment for their services is the sole responsibility of the wedding party.

Church Wedding Use Fee <i>(includes Church Event Coordinator and Custodial Fees)</i>	\$1,500
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Optional:

Pastor Honorarium <i>(includes 4 counseling sessions)</i>	\$350 *
Pre-marital Counseling only <i>(ceremony officiated by visiting clergy)</i>	\$200 *
Organist/Pianist	\$200 *

* These fees apply when the pastor and/or organist are arranged through this church. If an outside pastor and/or musician are used, the wedding party is responsible for their engagement and payment.

The date will be reserved upon receipt of a **\$750 deposit**.

Receipt of the balance of the total Wedding Use Fee (depending on options) is due no later than three weeks prior to the service. Failure to meet this deadline may result in the cancellation of the service.

Should the reservation for the agreed date be cancelled by the wedding party more than three weeks before the scheduled service, \$300 will be refunded. Less than three weeks before the ceremony, no refund will be issued.