

# Congress Street United Methodist Church Wedding Information

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Reverend Clarinda Crawford, Pastor

## **INTRODUCTION**

Thank you for considering Congress Street United Methodist Church as the setting for your wedding. The marriage ceremony is a sacred rite of the church, in which two persons invoke the blessing of God and pledge themselves to each other before family and friends. Therefore, we would like your wedding to be a memorable event, beautiful and meaningful. Please read the following material carefully regarding the things to be done to ensure your special day will be one you never forget.

## **FIRST STEPS FOR WEDDING ARRANGEMENTS**

- Make reservations no more than one calendar year in advance.
  - a. Pastor
  - b. Church
  - c. Organist
  - d. Reception
- Bride and Groom schedule conference with Pastor.
- 25% non-refundable deposit is required to secure a date on the Church Calendar. This deposit is deducted from the total wedding fee.
- All wedding fees must be paid in full one month before wedding date.

## **MAKING THE RESERVATIONS**

Setting the date of the ceremony on the calendar is the first concern. As early as possible, the date and hour of the wedding must be determined with the Pastor of the Church. A reservation will be confirmed when the Pastor of the Church has agreed to officiate at the wedding. Formal sanctuary weddings and/or receptions on Saturday should be no later than 6:30 p.m.

Tentative dates may be cleared by telephone or e-mail and the Administrative Assistant; however, it is necessary that the Engaged Couple and/or Parent confer with the pastor directly to confirm the date and time.

Unless either the Bride or Groom, Parents or Guardian, are active members of Congress Street UMC at the time the wedding is scheduled, the wedding is regarded as one of non-members. In cases of conflicting dates, members will be given priority. A 25% non-refundable deposit must be made when placing the date on the calendar.

## **PHOTOGRAPHS**

At NO time and under NO circumstances shall wedding guests be allowed to take photographs while the sacred service is in progress. At NO time and under NO circumstances shall the paid photographer take any flash photography while the sacred service is in progress. This is understood to be from the time the Pastor starts the ceremony until the ceremony is completed. Pictures are permitted during the Processional and the Recessional.

The Photographer may take pictures before and/or after the ceremony in any part of the building.

The Bridal Party may reassemble in the Sanctuary after the ceremony to pose for any part of the ceremony or take any other wedding pictures desired. The Photographer should use due care to avoid damage to furniture while placing equipment or taking pictures.

Video cameras may be used by the paid photographer/videographer to tape the wedding service if desired. The camera(s) placement(s) must be discussed and approved by the Pastor at the time of the rehearsal.

## **OTHER INFORMATION**

1. Dressing rooms for the Bridal Party will be assigned by the Wedding Coordinator.
2. Bride and Groom are asked to request that their family and friends:
  - a. NOT throw rice, birdseed, confetti, or any other materials on Church property.
  - b. NOT take pictures during the ceremony.
3. The officiating Pastor and Church Office must be consulted before any changes are made in arrangements.
4. The officiating Pastor will see that the marriage certificate, court records, and church records are properly filed and recorded.
5. If you wish to leave flowers for use on Sunday morning, please advise the Pastor or Administrative Assistant when making your plans.
6. Please fill out and return the enclosed information sheet to the Administrative Assistant with your deposit as soon as possible.

## RECEPTION

Receptions may be held in the Church. Consult with the Administrative Assistant in the Congress Street UMC Office if you need more information.

## FLOWERS & DECORATIONS

A beautiful Sanctuary or Chapel requires little decoration. No decorations shall be used which hides from clear view the worship symbols in the Chancel Area.

The following is a list of detailed regulations which the Church feels it may suggest with the expectations of receiving full cooperation:

1. Care should be exercised in placing decorations so woodwork, walls, etc., are not damaged in any way. **NO TAPE OR CLING MAY BE USED ON THE FURNITURE, RAILS OR WALLS.**
2. No furnishings should be moved without obtaining prior permission. No church decoration for the given liturgical season will be changed. The paraments and general Sanctuary decorations for the given Liturgical Season shall remain (examples: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter)
3. The Church furnishes all candles EXCEPT the Unity Candle used on the Altar. Should additional candles be used, they should be dripless, and adequate covering should be used under the Candelabra to protect carpet and furniture.
4. The Florist is expected to remove all decorations and equipment following the ceremony. Church properties must be left in the same condition as they were found. All items must be removed on the day of the wedding.
5. If an aisle runner is used, it should be fastened with tape or pinned to the carpeting. Aisle runners are not available from the Church, but can be obtained from local florists. (92' long)
6. The Florist should call the Church Office in advance to schedule a time for decorating.
7. We discourage silk flowers from being used on the Altar.

## FACILITIES AVAILABLE

The Sanctuary or Chapel at Congress Street UMC is the area where weddings are normally held. However, after consultation with the pastor, other locations may be appropriate (such as an outdoor wedding).

The seating capacity of the Sanctuary is 600.

The Chapel may be used for smaller weddings when the anticipated guest number is estimated to be 25 or less.

## FEES

A schedule of fees is listed below. These are based on a comprehensive plan.

### Members Package:

Chapel Wedding \$235 (\$58.75 deposit)  
Sanctuary Wedding \$710 (\$177.50 deposit)

### Non-Members Package:

Chapel Wedding \$485 (\$121.25 deposit)  
Sanctuary Wedding \$1310 (\$327.50 deposit)

**Chapel Package Includes:** Use of Facilities, Candles, Pastor, Pianist & Custodian;

**Sanctuary Package Includes:** Use of Facilities, Candles, Pastor, Organist, Wedding Coordinator, Sound Technician, Custodian, Nursery Attendants

The pastor will review each wedding on a case-by-case basis to determine if there are additional discounts available for each wedding request. Regardless of any additional discounts, **a 25% non-refundable deposit needs to be paid at the time of date confirmation. The balance is due one month prior to the wedding date.**

## NURSERY ATTENDANTS

Nursery care can be available upon request. Please give at least two weeks notice. Two attendants for two hours are included in the fee package.

## REHEARSAL

The Pastor representing the Church is always in complete charge. Wedding services, bridal consultants and other persons of similar positions must confer with the Pastor regarding all plans.

The rehearsal will begin promptly at the scheduled time. The Bride and Groom should request all members of the wedding party be as prompt for the rehearsal as for the wedding.

### Strict Observance of the Following Rules is Required:

- Smoking is NOT permitted anywhere within the Church building.
- No alcoholic beverages are allowed anywhere on Church property.
- No rehearsal or wedding will be conducted when ANY MEMBER of the wedding party is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- NO RICE, BIRDSEED, CONFETTI OR OTHER MATERIAL MAY BE THROWN ANYWHERE IN OR ON CHURCH PROPERTY.
- An aisle runner must be used if any fresh or artificial flowers are being used.

The following suggestions will guide you as you prepare for the wedding rehearsal:

- The Pastor will schedule the time of the Rehearsal. Usually, Rehearsals are scheduled on the day before the wedding, requiring at least one full hour.
- All members of the wedding party need to be present at the Rehearsal.
- The Marriage License should be delivered to the Pastor at the Rehearsal.
- If a child is to be included in the wedding ceremony, it is suggested that he/she be at least 5 years of age. If a younger child is being considered, it should be discussed with the Pastor.
- If used, Runners should be 92' long.

## PRE-WEDDING CONFERENCE

The Pastor will perform the wedding ceremony only after a conference with the Bride and the Groom. All couples are urged to set up an appointment at least two months before the wedding.

The Pastor may expect a wedding couple to participate in a series of pre-marital counseling sessions to be arranged at the pre-wedding conference.

## GUEST PASTORS

If a Pastor from another Church is being considered to officiate in the wedding ceremony, you must discuss your request with the Pastor of Congress Street UMC.

## MUSIC

One of the approved Organists of Congress Street UMC will be the Organist for this wedding. Exceptions may be possible at the discretion of the Organist and Pastor.

Questions are often asked about music. Remember that a church wedding is a time of worship. Music used should be something acceptable for a worship service.

The organist will select most of the pieces to be played during the wedding. Should you wish to request music used during the ceremony, please contact the Organist.

Vocal music selections shall be reviewed by the Pastor and the Organist before inclusion in the worship service.

## SOUND SYSTEM

For all Sanctuary weddings, it is necessary to use a Congress Street UMC Sound Technician. The Pastor will be amplified, as well as any vocalists, readers or CDs that may be used.

## BRIDAL ATTIRE & PERSONAL BELONGINGS

If clothing is to be delivered to the Church, it is the responsibility of the Bride to notify the Church Office of the time of delivery. The Church's responsibility is limited to receiving the clothing and providing a dressing room where it may be left.

The Church is not responsible for personal items such as clothing, wraps, purses, silver and glassware brought to the church for use in the wedding or reception. The Church is not responsible for such items if lost, stolen, or damaged. However, every reasonable effort will be made to assist the wedding party in protecting such property.

It is suggested that a friend of the family be assigned to be responsible for these valuables during the wedding service and the reception.

The Wedding Coordinator can put valuables in a locked room if necessary.