

PLANNING YOUR WEDDING

"... and above all these, put love which binds everything together in perfect harmony."

... Colossians 3:14



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This pamphlet is prepared to assist you in planning your wedding. It outlines the expectations of Cottage Grove United Church of Christ concerning your wedding. Please read this information carefully and complete the forms so that we are able to make your wedding day as special for you as possible.

I. Wedding Date Reservations

When you and your fiancé have decided upon the date you would like your wedding, please call the church office at (651) 459-1501. Either the pastor or administrative assistant will be able to tell you if the date and time you wish is available at the church. Then together, you and the pastor can set your special date and time. A deposit would be required at that time. (See fee schedule on back for deposit amount.)

Once the date has been scheduled, the pastor will arrange a time to meet with the bride and groom to help you begin planning for your wedding. The information from the enclosed *Wedding Information Form* will help with that process.

After the initial meeting between the pastor and the couple to begin plans, an appointment will be scheduled with the wedding coordinator to continue planning your wedding.

II. Premarital Consultation/Counseling

Marriage is a great commitment, and for this reason the pastor requires that all couples who desire to be married at Cottage Grove United Church of Christ undergo premarital consultation/counseling. The purpose of this consultation is to help you explore different aspects of your relationship and to learn strategies to help you deal with difficult issues that may arise. Regardless of the length of your relationship, your age, or your personal history, there are always new things you can learn!

Premarital consultation may either be provided by the pastor or by another counselor who has been approved by the pastor. If led by the pastor, premarital consultation is included in the pastor's fee and will take place during several sessions with the pastor. The number and frequency of these sessions will be determined on case-by-case basis. If premarital consultation/counseling is sought outside of Cottage Grove United Church of Christ, scheduling and fees for those services are the responsibility of the bride and groom.

The pastor reserves the right to decline to officiate the marriage of any couple s/he prayerfully discerns is not prepared to enter into the holy covenant of marriage.

III. Planning the Wedding

Church Staff

The pastor, wedding coordinator, and custodian will all be involved in your wedding here at CGUCC. We have other staff who are also available if additional services are requested. Fees for the staff are listed on the fee chart at the end of this booklet.

Church Policies

1. Reduced wedding fees are accorded to church members and regular attendees who have financially supported the church within the current year.
2. No alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs are permitted on the church premises at any time. The only exception would be the use of wine during the Sacrament of Holy Communion.
3. The wedding party and guests may use bubbles to celebrate the couple, but only outside the building. Bird seed, confetti, or rice for throwing at the bride and groom is strictly prohibited.
4. The large fellowship hall and kitchen (downstairs) are the areas available for receptions.
The small kitchen area in the upstairs fellowship lounge will be available to the wedding party for beverages and light snacks on the wedding day.

The Gathering Room kitchenette is not available for weddings.
5. A deposit is required to hold the church and date and that deposit is non-refundable. See the fee schedule for deposit amount.
6. All wedding fees are due two weeks prior to the wedding.

An additional bill will be sent after the wedding if the couple uses facilities or services that were not planned for and prepaid. The damage deposit will be returned within one week after the wedding if the inspection of the facilities reveals no damage. If damages do occur, the couple or family will be contacted immediately following the wedding.

7. No pets are allowed in the church, which includes participating in the wedding ceremony. Licensed service animals are excluded from this policy, and are permitted.

Church Capacity

The sanctuary of Cottage Grove United Church of Christ will comfortably seat 220 people. Please keep that number in mind while planning your guest list.

Wedding Programs

Wedding bulletins or programs will be provided for the couple upon request. The fee for preparing and printing bulletins is listed on the fee chart.

Decorating

Our church has a pair of single candles and two seven-candle candelabras available for your use at the altar. Let the wedding coordinator know if you would like these lit. Additional elements are available for the altar (cross, bible, plant stands, etc.) and can be used as planned with the wedding coordinator.

A stand is available for a Unity Candle, or the Unity Candle can be on the altar. If the altar is used, the candle must be placed in some type of base so no wax is placed directly on the altar.

The church does not provide an aisle or floor runner. If the bride decides she would like a runner, they can be rented from a florist or rental company. Arrangements can be made with the wedding coordinator, as the runner needs to be pinned down in the front of the church to prevent tripping.

We encourage you to decorate as you wish. Please work with the wedding coordinator so she can help you with your plans, as no nails or tacks may be used to hang decorations on the walls, windows or pews.

Music

The wedding coordinator will help you with your arrangements concerning the music and musicians, including the use of the church organ, piano(s), sound system, and other miscellaneous equipment. Music practice may be held prior to the rehearsal ceremony, or by appointment with the wedding coordinator or pastor. If you would like to use the services of the church organist/pianist, those arrangements can be made (see fee chart). Fees for musicians other than the church organist are the responsibility of the bride and groom.

Photography

Please discuss your plans for professional photography before or after the wedding ceremony with the wedding coordinator. The church can be open 2-1/2 hours prior to the wedding ceremony, and 1 to 1-1/2 hour after. Please arrange these times with the wedding coordinator, so the coordinator will be there and the building will be open.

Although your professional photographer may use a flash, please inform your guests in the bulletin not to use flash photography during the wedding ceremony.

Miscellaneous

1. You may make arrangements for flowers through a florist of your choice. Delivery times for flowers should be scheduled with the wedding coordinator.

When the ceremony is held on Saturday, the couple is invited to leave the flowers for use during the Service of Worship on Sunday morning.

2. Audio or video recording of the wedding ceremony is permitted. All operators of recording equipment should consult with the wedding coordinator prior to the ceremony, and should conduct themselves in a manner consistent

with the ceremony.

3. If the couple plans to have a receiving line after the wedding, plans will be made at the rehearsal on where people will stand.

IV. Rehearsal

The rehearsal date and time will be arranged with the pastor and wedding coordinator. The wedding coordinator will be available at the rehearsal to assist you in any way.

V. Wedding Day Information

The church's policy is to open the building 2-1/2 hours prior to the wedding, and to close 1 to 1-1/2 hours afterwards, except when the reception is held at the church. Please arrange with the wedding coordinator and pastor the times that work best for you and your wedding party. If you wish to decorate, a special appointment will be made to come in and decorate the church.

You are invited to dress for your wedding at the church, if you so choose. Dressing rooms are available for the bride and groom and their attendants.

VI. Receptions

Please bring your own disposable items (plates, cups, napkins, flatware, etc) for your wedding party and reception use.

We are so glad you have chosen Cottage Grove UCC as the location for your wedding. We appreciate you for leaving the facilities and all its furnishings in the same condition you found them.

Cottage Grove United Church of Christ Fees for Weddings

Facility Charges	Members & Regular Attendees	Non-members
Includes (Church rental, candles, Pastor, Wedding Coordinator for church, Custodian, and Sound Technician)	\$400 (\$150 deposit to hold the church and the date)	\$850 (\$300 deposit to hold the church and the date)
Fellowship Hall for Receptions		
Full Dinner	\$150	\$200
Cake and Coffee	\$50	\$100
Damage Deposit	No charge	\$100
Professional Services		
Bulletins	\$75	\$75
Organist	\$100 +\$25 if accompanying a soloist	\$100 +\$25 if accompanying a soloist
Soloist	TBD by soloist	TBD by soloist

1. To qualify for Member/Regular Attendee rates, bride or groom must be a giving unit in the past 12 months.
2. A deposit is required to hold the church and date and that deposit is non-refundable. The remaining balance should be made payable to the church office two weeks prior to the wedding.
3. The damage deposit for a Reception in the Fellowship Hall will be returned after inspection of the facilities within one week after the wedding if there are no damages. If damages occur, the couple will be contacted immediately following the wedding.
4. The couple will be billed for facilities or services used that were not pre-planned and prepaid.