



Planning Your Wedding

Jackson United Methodist Church

Congratulations! We are so pleased that you are considering Jackson United Methodist Church for your big day. We pray that God will bless the two of you during this time of dreaming, planning, and celebrating.

In this packet you will find information that will help all of us to plan for the day of the wedding and the wedding ceremony itself. This includes information about the order of a wedding, possible scripture readings and vows, and other elements that you may choose to include in your ceremony. There are also pages you will need to fill out sharing your biographical information and decisions about timing, people involved, and so on. Please review all the information in the packet. Complete any information that you know already. Use what is here to start making decisions about what needs to be done before your wedding day. Below please find a suggested timeline for wedding preparation. Between 3-18 months prior to wedding date: participate in initial meeting with the pastor and confirm date on the church calendar. Bring the Reservation Fee Deposit to confirm the date. At this point you should have an idea of time of day for the wedding and possibly the rehearsal. These may be adjusted later after informing both the pastor and the church office.

The Director of Music should be contacted immediately to assure scheduling works and to begin planning your music. About 2 to 3 months prior to the wedding, set up your pre-marital counseling with the pastor. Before the counseling meeting the couple will be asked to complete a set of questions about marriage and come prepared to discuss them at the meeting.

In the last month before the wedding, you may need to schedule one additional meeting with the pastor to finalize wedding and rehearsal plans. During this time, get a marriage license and make arrangements to bring remaining fees to the wedding rehearsal. Purchase decorations and candles and bring these to the rehearsal as well. In the week before the wedding plan to have your bulletins or programs printed. At all times, feel free to ask questions by phone, e-mail, or in person. Please inform us as decisions or changes are made. We will be praying for you during this exciting time!

Order of the Service

Music before the service

Seating of the mothers

Processional

Greeting and Introduction

Declarations of Intent
(giving away the bride)

Blessing of Family and Friends
(readings or solo)

Scripture Reading(s)

Wedding Vows

Ring Vows
(music, flowers, unity candle)

Prayer of Blessing

Declaration of Marriage and Introduction

Dismissal

Music after the service

Suggested Scriptures

Genesis 1:26-28, 31a	The creation of man and woman
Ruth 1:16b-17	Where you go, I will go
Song of Solomon 2:10-14, 16a; 8:6-7	Love is strong as death
Isaiah 43:1-7	You are precious in God's eyes
Isaiah 55:10-13	You shall go out in joy
Isaiah 61:10-62:3	Rejoice in the Lord
Isaiah 63:7-9	The steadfast love of the Lord
Romans 12:1-2, 9-18	The life of a Christian
1 Corinthians 13	The greatest of these is love
2 Corinthians 5:14-17	In Christ we are a new creation
Ephesians 2:4-10	God's love for us
Ephesians 4:1-6	Called to the one hope
Ephesians 4:25-5:2	Members one of another
Philippians 2:1-2	The Christ-like spirit
Philippians 4:4-9	Rejoice in the Lord
Colossians 3:12-17	Live in love and thanksgiving
1 John 3:18-24	Love one another
1 John 4:7-16	God is love
Revelation 19:1, 5-9a	The wedding feast of the Lamb
Matthew 5:1-10	The Beatitudes
Matthew 7:21, 24-27	A house built upon a rock
Mark 2:18-22	Joy in Christ as at a wedding
Mark 10:42-45	True greatness

Other Elements

In addition to the traditional elements, you may add other ceremonies to your service that have meaning for you in terms of your faith or your family.

Homily—A brief personal message of encouragement from the pastor, sometimes based on a scripture reading.

Other Readings—Poetry, a reading about marriage or love, something that the couples have written for each other. . . . please arrange to let the pastor see the materials before including them in the service.

A Unity Candle—A symbolic ritual reminding the couple that in marriage “two become one.”

Another Unity Gesture—There are some other things that can be done such as pouring two colors of sand into one container, to symbolize the joining of your lives.

Special Music—You may want to have music playing during a ceremony such as the Unity Candle, or you may choose to have a solo during the service. Review what you are planning with both the pastor and music director. Prerecorded music cannot be used.

Signing of the Marriage Certificate—A moment for the Best Man and Maid of Honor to witness to the marriage by signing a church certificate, which the couple will keep.

Family flowers—Flowers given to parents and sometimes grandparents as a gesture of love and gratitude.

A moment for children in a blended family—if the bride or groom or both have children, we may incorporate a special moment of promise and love for them in the ceremony.

Wedding Vows

Below you will find the traditional language of the vows and promises made at a wedding. There are also some alternatives. You may write your own vows (please let the pastor review them), or make alterations and adjustments to these.

I, Name, take you, Name, to be my wife/husband,
To have and to hold
From this day forward,
For better, for worse,
For richer, for poorer,
In sickness and in health,
To love and to cherish,
Until we are parted by death.
This is my solemn vow.

Or

I take you, Name, to be my wife/husband,
And I promise before God and all who are present here
To be your loving and faithful husband/wife
As long as we both shall live.
I will serve you with love and respect,
And encourage you to develop God's gifts in you.

Or

Name, in the name of God,
I take you to be my wife/husband
From this time onward,
To join with you and to share all that is to come,
To give and to receive,
To speak and to listen,
To inspire and to respond,
And in all our life together
To be loyal to you with my whole being,
As long as we both shall live.

Other

Building and Sanctuary

The sanctuary seats 225 and our entire building is climate controlled.

The bride and other women of the wedding party can use the nursery and toddler rooms before the ceremony for dressing or final preparations. Those rooms have their own restroom. They are also convenient to the sanctuary. Please try to keep the toys tidy as those rooms will be used the next morning during worship.

No smoking or alcoholic beverages are permitted on the premises. We ask that you do not bring in your own sound systems. A receiving line can be arranged in the Narthex.

Decorations

In general, the church's light colors make it an ideal setting for a wedding, and minimal decorations are needed to set the tone. If you are providing your own row decorations (there are 16-20 rows) and candles, plan to bring them to the rehearsal and put them up that evening. You need to provide your own clips for row decorations, or you may choose to tie them on with a ribbon around the top of the chairs. No tape, tacks, or nails.

Unity Candle

If you want to have a unity candle ceremony, you will need to provide the candles. You will need a pillar candle (5" base) and two tapers at least 10" long.

Isle Runner

This is to be provided by the bride and groom or through the florist, and should be about 60 feet in length.

Flower Pedals, Bubbles, Bird Seed

Inside the building during the ceremony, please do not use real flower petals in the church, as they easily get trampled and tracked. Silk petals may be used, but we do ask that you pick them up after the service. This can easily be done while pictures are being taken after the ceremony.

Please do not use rice or confetti, even outside. Real flower petals, bubbles, or bird seed can be used outside to greet the bride and groom.

Additional Charges

Extra clean up that requires additional time by the custodian or damage to the facilities may result in additional charges.

Photography and Video

Plan to have all photography completed by two hours after the scheduled wedding start time. The custodian will arrive at that time to begin cleaning. The wedding photographer or videographer may take pictures during the ceremony but not be in the chancel area.

Fee

The donation/honorarium for the wedding is \$1000. This includes building use, administrative support for bulletins, a sexton/custodian, a musician, and the pastor.

If just building is used the donation is \$400.



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