

St. John's United Church of Christ

Wedding Guidelines

Congratulations! You are about to embark on the most exciting journey any two people can go on together, and we are pleased that you are choosing to start this journey here at St. John's United Church of Christ. We hope this short guide to our guidelines will answer most of your questions. We are pleased to say that we believe in marriage equality, and will celebrate and bless weddings for any two people who wish to have a church ceremony, and can be legally married here in Illinois.

1. Philosophy

Weddings at St. John's are first and foremost Christian services of worship. Therefore, the liturgy, music, and attire (for both men and women), and the service itself are to be respectful of the religious nature of the service.

2. First Steps

You've taken the first step in visiting our website for this information. Your primary point of contact is to be the Pastor; please direct questions to him first, and then he will direct you to others involved in your celebration.

Your next step is to set up an initial appointment with the Pastor to meet you. The Pastor reserves the right to decline to perform any wedding at St. John's. Outside clergy are only permitted to co-celebrate with the Pastor. Once the Pastor has agreed to perform your ceremony, you are to set up a second meeting to finalize your liturgy. If more preparation is needed, the Pastor will discuss this with you. The Pastor also reserves the right to decline to do Weddings on certain dates, as outlined below.

After meeting with the Pastor, you are then to contact the Director of Music to choose the music for your ceremony, per the guidelines below.

3. Legalities

The Marriage Certificate must be obtained from the Illinois County in which you reside. The nearest Lake County office to St. John's UCC is located at 18 N. County St, Waukegan, IL. Your best bet is to start at their website. Licenses are valid for 60 days from issue.

Signing the contract at the end of this packet and paying a non-refundable deposit of \$100 constitutes a legal agreement on your part to fulfill and abide by all of the rules and regulations contained herein, and signifies that you agree to hold harmless St. John's UCC for any cancellation or disruption in your plans. You also agree to treat the facility with respect and care, and you agree to pay for any damages beyond normal wear and tear on the building. St. John's is not responsible for breakage or theft of your personal items.

There is no smoking anywhere inside of St. John's. You may smoke outside.

Illegal substances and firearms are strictly prohibited, and will result in immediate forfeiture of all paid fees and immediate expulsion of the individual possessing such from the property, may result in cancellation of your ceremony or reception and may result in police involvement.

4. Scheduling Exceptions and Fees

All fees must be fully paid no later than the date of your rehearsal. Individual checks are to be written to the Pastor, the Organist or Music Director, and to others as directed. All other fees will be included into a final check made out to St. John's UCC.

Additional outside musicians may be used, in consultation with the Music Director. It is your responsibility to find and compensate them.

No weddings may be scheduled on Palm Sunday, during Holy Week or Easter Weekend, or on Christmas Eve or Day.

Weddings may be scheduled at the discretion of both the Pastor (and Music Director, if applicable) on Martin Luther King Day weekend, Valentine's Day/weekend, Memorial Day weekend, Fourth of July weekend, Labor Day weekend, Thanksgiving Day/weekend, and the week between Christmas and New Year's Day, but an additional fee of \$300 will be charged if scheduled for any of the above dates. There may be other instances when events at the church preclude scheduling your wedding.

The Member rate is granted only to those who have been members in good standing of St. John's for at least one calendar year prior to the ceremony. The Member rate may apply to immediate family members of those members in good standing.

The Use of Church fee includes full use of the church facility for the rehearsal and ceremony. You are allotted one hour for your rehearsal, and three hours on the day of your ceremony. You are expected to arrive on time for your rehearsal, and on time for your ceremony.

An additional fee of \$50 will be charged for rehearsal with your soloist, if you have one. It is your responsibility to pay the soloist in addition to this fee for the church.

5. Guest Clergy and Wedding Coordinator Guidelines.

Guest clergy may co-officiate or assist with Weddings, with the consent of the Pastor. Guest clergy may not be used in place of the Pastor.

Outside Wedding Coordinators are not really necessary. Our Pastor and our internal Wedding Coordinator will take care of all your needs here at St. John's. The only thing an

outside Wedding Coordinator may help with on the day of the ceremony is dressing, hair and make-up if you choose to do all of that here at the church.

6. Music Guidelines

It is up to you to arrange music for your wedding. The Music Director/Organist are available for your rehearsal and ceremony, and you are to contact the Music Director yourself. You may make other arrangements for music, in consultation with the Pastor.

Pre-recorded music is generally not suggested for Weddings in our sanctuary. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Pastor.

The Music Director will receive additional fee of \$50 for rehearsal with your soloist, if you have one, and it is your responsibility to pay the soloist.

7. Photography and Videography Guidelines

Remember that your ceremony is primarily a service of Christian worship. Photographers and videographers are welcome to record your event for posterity, under the following guidelines.

Flash photography is permitted before and after the ceremony, and during the Processional and Recessional. Flash photography is not permitted during the ceremony itself.

Photographers are not permitted up the center aisle, in front of the pews, or up on the sanctuary/chancel behind the clergy. No additional lighting for videography is permitted. No video cameras are permitted behind the clergy or couple up on the platform. Photographers and videographers are not to disturb guests, attendants, clergy, the Organist/Music Director or the couple for any reason. The Pastor will stay following the ceremony to re-stage any missed shots, if necessary. Failure on the part of the photographer or videographer to adhere to these guidelines may result in immediate expulsion from the church.

8. Ceremonial Matters

All persons participating in the ceremony (bridesmaids, groomsmen, attendants, ring bearers, parents, readers, couple, and any musicians) are to be present at the rehearsal.

Couples are generally discouraged from writing their own vows; the Wedding liturgy is provided to you in a separate booklet.

White aisle runners from florists are **not permitted** for safety and liability reasons.

A Unity Candle may be used during the ceremony, but it is the responsibility of the couple to provide it.

Only silk floral petals may be scattered on the carpet inside the church. These may be obtained from your florist, or from any good craft supply shop.

Rice, glitter, balloons or sparklers are not permitted at any time on the property inside or out. You may use bubbles or flower petals outside. **Extra Custodial Fees will be levied if this rule is not followed.**

Bows, ribbons or floral arrangements may be attached to the pew ends using only rubber bands or floral clips with a protecting cloth. Floral arrangements are to have their own stands, which the florist can provide. The Communion Table or other furniture may not be moved.

You may prepare your own service bulletin (containing an outline of the ceremony, and the names of participants, etc.). We will print it, if you wish, on paper that you provide for an additional fee of \$50, paid to the Church Secretary.

St. John's United Church of Christ

Wedding Information and Contract

Name A		
Address	City	State&Zip
Phone Number	Email	
Birthplace	Occupation	
Previous Marriage/Union Y/N	Number	Disposition
Father's Name	Mother's Name	

Name B		
Address	City	State&Zip
Phone Number	Email	
Birthplace	Occupation	
Previous Marriage/Union Y/N	Number	Disposition
Father's Name	Mother's Name	

Rehearsal Date and Time	Ceremony Date and Time
No. of Attendants	Unity Candle Y/N
Additional Musicians/Soloists Y/N	
County License No.	

FEE WORKSHEET

	Non-Member	Member
Use of the Church (includes basic sound)	500	no charge
* Fellowship Hall (Upper or Lower)	250	no charge
Pastor	500	300
MD/Organist (if no soloist or special music)	250	250
MD/Organist (if soloist)	300	300
* Sound Technician (if necessary)	50	no charge
* Church Secretary (if bulletin prepared)	50	50
Wedding Coordinator	50	50
* Soloist Rehearsal fee	50	50
Custodial	100	100

* Optional.

Use of Church _____

Fellowship Hall _____

Pastor (paid directly) _____

Music Director/Organist (paid directly) _____

Sound Technician (paid directly) _____

Church Secretary (paid directly) _____

Soloist Rehearsal fee (paid directly to MD) _____

Custodial _____

Less Deposit (due now) (100)

Total Due no later than rehearsal _____

SIGNATURES

We, the undersigned agree to abide by the Wedding Guidelines of St. John's United Church of Christ as described above, and to pay the agreed upon fees before our ceremony will take place.
