

Leland Community United Methodist Church

Some Helpful Information About Getting Married in Our Church

THE MEANING OF A CHURCH WEDDING

We believe that human beings are created for community. It is in relationship with others that we discover our humanity and grow in our ability to love, forgive, and trust. When two people make a loving, mutual, and intentional commitment to each other, they are expressing their God-given nature in a special, life-giving way.

We believe that it is appropriate for a couple to exchange their vows in a place of worship, before a pastor and in the presence of family, friends, and the community of faith. Making your promises in this context reflects your recognition of God's love for you and your need for God's grace in your lives. In the rite of marriage we ask for God's continuing presence with us and in our relationships. We also ask for the prayers, support, and encouragement of the congregation. Your wedding will mean more to you when careful consideration is given to the sacred aspects of this holy occasion. Leland Community United Methodist Church can guide and assist you in making your wedding a truly special and meaningful occasion in your lives.

SCHEDULING YOUR WEDDING

Weddings are part of the public ministry of the congregation. For this reason we ask those who wish to celebrate a wedding at the Leland Community United Methodist Church to meet with the Pastor well in advance of the requested date, to receive counseling and help with planning. A wedding is best scheduled **six months** in advance so that it can be coordinated with other activities and that there will be adequate time for marriage preparation counseling.

Couples requesting marriage at Leland Community United Methodist Church should:

1. Be of legal age and not currently married to another person.
2. Be part of a worshipping community of faith. In the ceremony, God is asked to bless the relationship, and the community is requested to be witnesses and to support the couple. Such vows are empty if they are not lived out in the faith community. Being involved in a worshipping community is important for the blessing support of the couple. It is preferable, but not necessary, that Leland Community United Methodist Church be that worshipping community of faith.
3. Undergo pre-marital counseling. Such counseling is an important step in awareness and intentional work on the relationship. It also helps the couple to be comfortable with outside (church) assistance in their relationship – assistance which may be invaluable in times of stress or division. The tool used at Leland Community United Methodist Church for couples' counseling is "Prepare/Enrich."

If the couple would prefer couples' counseling from another source, they should discuss this request with the Pastor **before** making outside arrangements.

WHO WILL PERFORM THE WEDDING CEREMONY?

The Pastor of Leland Community United Methodist Church will officiate at all weddings. If another clergy member is desired to conduct the ceremony, please provide that person's name and telephone number, as she/he is able to participate by Leland Community United Methodist Church's pastor explicit invitation only.

OTHER IMPORTANT MATTERS TO CONSIDER:

- You have already contacted the church office and learned that the desired date and time are available to you. (6:00 p.m. is the latest time you may schedule a wedding.) To reserve this date, we require a 50% deposit of the total fees (see schedule on page 10). The remaining balance is due one month prior to your wedding day.
- **You have filled** out the wedding application form (available on our website: www.lelandcommunityumc.org) and returned it with your deposit check (made out to Leland CUMC) to the church office.
Please note: Should you decide not to pursue having your wedding at Leland Community United Methodist Church, please call the church office (231-256-9161) and cancel your proposed date as soon as possible so others can reserve that date. The deposit is fully refundable up to one month prior to the wedding date.
- After reading this booklet, arrange an appointment with Pastor Daniel Hofmann so you can get acquainted and determine whether or not Leland Community UMC is the church for your wedding. He will help you determine the exact time of your wedding and rehearsal. You also will begin the early phase of wedding planning.
- A consultation with our Director of Music, Margaret Bell (231-360-1096), is required to both help you plan your wedding music and to review the music selections.
- Pre-organize your ceremony. Think it through. Is there anything out-of-the-ordinary you desire? Do you want to write your own vows or use the standard vows? Write down your decisions ahead of time.
- When you have your meeting with the Pastor, bring your ideas with you. At this time, you will review the details of the rehearsal and the wedding ceremony.
- You will meet with the Pastor to complete the pre-marital inventory which will help you better prepare for a lifelong commitment.

THE PASTOR

The Pastor is a key person in your wedding plans. The Pastor's experience is a major resource for you as you plan your wedding and lay the foundation for a meaningful and enduring marriage. The Pastor has the responsibility to make final decisions about your wedding arrangements.

PREPARING FOR YOUR MARRIAGE, NOT JUST THE WEDDING

When you meet with the Pastor at the first appointment, he will explain the *Prepare/Enrich* program. It is a helpful resource that will enable the couple to examine marriage expectations, communication, parenting, spiritual beliefs, etc. The couple will fill out a pre-marital inventory, generally online. It will be sent out and computed into graphs to enable the couple and the Pastor to look at the couple's relationship. **This is not a test.** It is an attempt to help the couple understand each other better.

The inventory fee (\$70) is to be paid at the time the couple meets with the Pastor. This fee is **in addition** to the Pastor's regular service fee.

THE WEDDING SERVICE

A wedding ceremony in the church is a worship service. It is a beautiful moment in your lives when you stand in the presence of God and make your most solemn vows to one another. For this reason, the service must be carefully planned to prevent anything from detracting from the Christian emphasis to be placed on the service.

The couple makes specific decisions about the wedding service with the Pastor, but here are some general statements about the ceremony planning:

- The rehearsal and wedding will begin at the appointed time, and you must conclude all wedding-related activities and leave the church property at the end of your scheduled time as another wedding party may be scheduled.
- Unless other arrangements have been made with the Pastor, the traditional United Methodist Service for Marriage will be used. Sometimes couples want to have a part in writing their own vows or much of the service, which is welcomed by the Pastor. However, the service must be approved by the Pastor and must be both dignified and distinctively Christian. The Pastor will help you if you want to write your own vows or service, but the Pastor reserves the right to give final approval.
- Our sanctuary can accommodate 225 persons.

THE REHEARSAL

A rehearsal is required unless it is a very small wedding. The rehearsal will take about one hour. The best time for the rehearsal is the night before the wedding. If you are planning a rehearsal dinner, it should follow the rehearsal so that you won't feel rushed through the meal. The rehearsal is not the time to discuss the ceremony. Most of the decisions will have already been made between the bride and groom with the Pastor.

The Pastor needs to be given the marriage license no later than the time of the rehearsal. This license is typically obtained from the County Clerk's office where you reside.

OTHER HELP YOU MIGHT NEED

If you choose to have a formal wedding, you will need the help of relatives and friends. First, you will want to choose a wedding party. You need a minimum of a best man and a maid or matron of honor. If you choose to have others stand up with you, it is fine, but the wedding party should not be larger than ten persons, including the bride and groom.

If there are children among your family or friends, you may want a ring bearer or flower girl. This can be a beautiful part of the ceremony, and this decision is up to you. One word of caution: small children are unpredictable, and the wedding day always brings stress that is hard on small children. If you think that this might upset anyone in the wedding, caution is advisable.

You will need at least two ushers. One of the ushers should be familiar with the groom's family and the other with the bride's family. The ushers must be at the rehearsal to learn their responsibilities.

You will probably have a guest book in the lobby of the church. Please have someone attend the guest book and see that everyone signs.

If you are having your reception at the church, you will find that some people will bring their gifts with them before the wedding. You should have a person available to "run" the gifts to the Hall so that they will be out of the way. At the reception you may choose to open the gifts yourself, or have someone else open them for you. In either case, you should have a responsible person to make a list of who gave what so that you will be able to send thank you cards.

THE RECEPTION

If you plan a reception in the Church Fellowship Hall following the wedding, this must be scheduled through the church office when the wedding date is confirmed. Receptions can only last until 10:00 p.m. The office can tell you the specific rules about the kitchen use. Please leave the kitchen clean. It is essential that you contact the office one week prior to your wedding to provide them with a diagram of the table arrangement for the custodians.

It is up to you to provide whatever food you wish at the reception. It is customary to offer cake, ice cream, nuts, mints, candies, and such. Help people understand that alcoholic beverages and smoking are not allowed anywhere in or on the church premises. You will need two or three persons to serve the guests at the reception.

MUSIC FOR YOUR WEDDING

Because a wedding in the church is a worship service, the music must be appropriate. Sometimes there is strong sentiment to have a certain secular tune played or sung at the wedding because it is special to the couple in courtship. It may be advisable to use such music during your reception rather than the wedding service. If you have any questions concerning the appropriateness of the music, the Pastor is available for consultation and will have final determination as to whether or not the selections are appropriate.

If you want an organist or pianist for your wedding, our Director of Music, Margaret Bell (231-360-1096), can assist you in securing the services of such a person. If you would like to obtain your own organist or pianist, please clear such a request with our Director of Music beforehand.

If you desire a soloist for your wedding, it is up to you to make these arrangements. If you are using a soloist, let the Pastor know who it is and what he or she will be singing. The Director of Music can also provide names of qualified soloists, if desired. The church musician(s) must also be contacted immediately if the soloist needs accompaniment.

All persons providing special music should attend the wedding rehearsal if at all possible to ensure that everything will work out smoothly when the big day arrives.

MUSIC POLICY

The basic music services cover the following:

1. One consultation, initiated by the wedding party, with the Director of Music at least one month prior to the wedding in person or by phone.
2. One rehearsal with a soloist or other special music people.
3. Playing instrumental music for the wedding, including at least 15 minutes of prelude and 15 minutes of postlude music.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEO

You will probably want to engage a professional photographer for your wedding. It is advisable to discuss with the photographer what pictures you want. There must be no flash pictures during the wedding since the flash would disrupt the service and distract from the spirit of the worship. Professionals will already know this, but it will be the responsibility of the ushers to advise wedding guests with cameras. The photographer should seek guidance from the Pastor regarding wedding picture policy.

The wedding in the Sanctuary is a worship service. We are honoring God and we are seeking God's blessing on the marriage. Everything possible should be done to help all persons attending, to focus on God and the service of worship.

Videotaping of the marriage service usually detracts from the worship atmosphere when it is not well planned. The desire to create the best possible video recording often tempts people to seriously compromise the sacred beauty and the religious nature of the marriage worship service. In order to protect the carefully prepared worship atmosphere and promote proper worship, we do not permit a video camera operator in the chancel area during the wedding service. Video camera personnel are not allowed to roam or move around during the wedding. This detracts from the beauty of the wedding. A video operator can tape the service from the balcony at all times during the service. The video taping of the rehearsal can provide enjoyable moments of viewing in the years ahead.

FLOWERS, CANDLES AND DECORATIONS

If you want to use flowers in the church, you should consult with a florist. You may want to buy flowers for the wedding party, the parents, for grandparents, and perhaps others. Do not buy flowers for the Pastor or the church musician(s).

You should choose flowers which will tastefully go with the colors in the Sanctuary and will not detract from its beauty. The florist may deliver flowers during regular business hours. It is up to you to make sure the right people are wearing the flowers.

The church has a kneeling bench available, so you don't have to rent one from the florist. You may use an aisle runner. If you rent one, order 60 feet.

It is expected that the family will remove all decorations and materials from the church, left by the florist prior to vacating the church premises.

Please note: Absolutely no church furnishings/furniture is to be moved or removed without prior permission by the Pastor of Leland Community UMC. Furthermore, no decorations and flowers are permitted on the kneeling rails or the piano or organ.

BIRDSEED, RICE AND BALLOONS

Birdseed is "weed" seed and creates problems in our lawn and flowerbeds. Rice swells when eaten by birds and can be fatal. Balloons threaten wildlife and the environment. Therefore, we do not allow the use of any of these items. Other items may be considered for approval.

*TRADITIONAL ORDER OF SERVICE
FOR A WEDDING CEREMONY*

PRE-SERVICE GATHERING
Wedding Guests are being seated

PROCESSIONAL
Bridesmaids
Bridal Processional

WELCOME

DECLARATION OF INTENT BY BRIDE AND GROOM

RESPONSE OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS

PRAYER

SCRIPTURE READING

WEDDING MEDITATION

EXCHANGE OF WEDDING VOWS

BLESSING AND EXCHANGE OF RINGS

DECLARATION AND BLESSING OF THE MARRIAGE

RECESSIONAL
Husband & Wife
Best Man & Maid of Honor
Groomsmen & Bridesmaids
Ring Bearer & Flower Girl
Pastor

THE MARRIAGE CHECKLIST

Choosing our spouse is one of the most significant decisions we will make. The person you chose to wake up next to each morning has the power to determine the quality of your life. As eHarmony.com founder Dr. Neil Clark Warren puts it, “So important is that one decision that a lifetime of trying to force the relationship to work with the wrong person is usually extremely difficult.”

Here are seven tips Dr. Warren suggests marriage-bound couples consider before making a life-long commitment.

1. Make Sure the Decision Is Your Own:

First and foremost, the heaviest responsibility by far for the selection of a great marriage partner rests with the two people who are considering one another. Only the two persons directly involved will have to live daily with the consequences of this choice, and only they are in a position to make a FULLY informed decision about the rightness of their relationship.

2. Verify Your Partner’s Emotional Health:

If either partner has ANY concern about the personality or behavior of the other, they never should expect that this concern will simply dissolve over time. When you choose to marry, you are implicitly stating you are willing to live happily with the other person for as long as you both shall live—IF NOTHING ABOUT THE OTHER PERSON EVER IMPROVES EVEN A SMIDGEN.

3. Consider the Advice of Friends and Family:

If anyone who knows you well, whether they are a family member, friend, minister or even a well-meaning acquaintance, has real concerns about your match with a particular person, listen to these concerns with extreme care. Sometimes we have blind spots that can only be seen by others. When another person knows us well, they often can bring a new and meaningful perspective about us and our relationships; this perspective is frequently more accurate than we at first may think it to be.

4. Don’t Rush to the Altar:

Do not be overly eager to get married. We all know how exciting it is to find a person we believe to be our soul mate, and when we think it has finally happened for us we want to rush immediately toward the full expression of our love. But I counsel couples to take their time, and I tell them that a bad mistake is a thousand times more devastating than the loss of a few weeks together. If you can avoid this “bad mistake” by moving slowly, you will thank yourself thousands of times for your patience and reflection.

5. Watch for Changes in Enthusiasm:

In making your final decision about marriage, watch especially for signs of internal qualities in yourself or the other person that tend to become obvious when the initial excitement has worn

off a little. For instance, after you get to know the other person, do you find them listening less and talking more, being more selfish about money and items instead of generous and giving, or beginning to try to take more control over the development of your relationship? These are crucial signs that need to be carefully heeded.

6. Get Professional Counseling:

Seek pre-engagement counseling. Talk through every area of your future relationship and, striving to be as objective as possible, ask your counselor for his or her full appraisal of the “rightness” of your relationship.

7. Be Completely Honest with Yourself:

Be willing to search for the TRUTH about your relationship. Remember that the truth is always friendlier than anything less than the truth. Take a step back from the relationship and consider it objectively. Do you “shine” when you’re together? One of the best ways to be honest with yourself is through prayer.

Divorced singles often share that deep inside they knew their marriage wouldn’t work, even before the wedding day. You may want desperately to get married, but you need to assess the likely success of your relationship in the long term.

FEES AND ADDITIONAL IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The organist/pianist fee is for Leland Community UMC's musicians. If another organist plays, the fee may be more. The fee for the Pre-Marital Counseling Materials conducted by Pastor Hofmann is \$70.00.

Full Service wedding for LCUMC members

1. Organist or Pianist	\$200.00
2. Custodial Service	\$200.00
3. Officiating Pastor	\$400.00
4. Use of Sanctuary	<u>No Charge</u>

Total \$800.00

Full Service wedding – Non-members

1. Organist or Pianist	\$200.00
2. Custodial Service	\$200.00
3. Officiating Pastor	\$400.00
4. Use of Sanctuary	<u>\$200.00</u>

Total \$1,000.00

If another pastor will conduct the ceremony (upon Leland Community UMC Pastor's approval), the "officiating pastor" fee will be determined by the visiting pastor.

We will not schedule two weddings closer than three hours and if there are two weddings on the same day, we would ask that both parties be sensitive to the needs of the other.