**Chelsea First United Methodist Church of Chelsea
Wedding Planning and Requirements**

The service of Christian marriage is a sacred service in The United Methodist Church; it is provided for couples who wish to bless their marriage in a service of Christian worship. This document has been prepared to guide and assist you in planning a meaningful ceremony.

Non-member weddings are permitted at First UMC, but the calendar is reserved for members until one year ahead of the date. You are encouraged to attend worship prior to your wedding, so you are familiar with our ministries and leaders.

One of our pastors participates in all weddings at First UMC; at their invitation, a guest minister may co-officiate in the ceremony. Likewise, our organist will play for all weddings.

# Preparing for Your Wedding

1. Couples interested in getting married at First UMC are to meet with one of the pastors. Together you will discuss preparation for the wedding, review the wedding requirements, and scheduling of the wedding ceremony and rehearsal.
2. If you choose to confirm your wedding ceremony at First UMC, the date on the calendar will be guaranteed upon receipt of your deposit. The deposit applies toward your total fees.
3. Couples are required to participate in premarital counseling; this service is provided by a person who specializes in marriage and family counseling. Premarital counseling costs are **not** included in the wedding fees paid to the church. You will pay these expenses directly to the provider.
4. You are to contact the director of music ministries at least eight weeks prior to your wedding to discuss all aspects of your wedding music. Your wedding is a sacred event and the music should reflect this; the director will help you with musical selections as you wish, and has the final word about appropriateness of musical selections.

If the director is to accompany a soloist (vocal or instrumental) there will be an additional $50.00 fee per soloist. Soloists’ music must be presented in the correct key.

1. The wedding coordinator will be available to you for detailed questions in preparation for the wedding. The wedding coordinator will be at the rehearsal and wedding to assist the pastor and wedding participants. If you enlist an outside wedding planner, that person must work under the direction of and may assist our wedding coordinator.
2. Pictures and Videos: The designated photographer is allowed to take pictures during the service, and must remain behind the guests at all times. No flash pictures will be taken during the ceremony. Use of video equipment must be discussed with and approved by the wedding coordinator.
3. Smoking is not allowed in the building or courtyard. Alcoholic beverages and illegal substances are never allowed on church property. The pastor reserves the right to postpone or cancel the ceremony upon violation of this requirement.
4. Flowers and Decorations: Flowers may be placed on the altar. Seasonal decorations in and around the church building are not to be removed or adjusted by the church staff or the wedding party/guests.

Items not permitted: aisle runners; hand-held candles; pew decorations;
 real flower petals in the aisle; confetti, rice or birdseed.
5. The sanctuary seats approximately 250 people.
6. The building will be open and available for your use two hours prior to the start time of the ceremony. Please confirm your arrival time with the wedding coordinator. Rooms will be set aside for preparation of the bride and groom and wedding party members. Other rooms are not available for use unless pre-arranged with the church staff.
7. Marriage License: You apply for and pick up your marriage license at any MI County Clerk’s Office. Please bring your marriage license with you to the rehearsal and give to the wedding coordinator.
8. Wedding Fees paid to the church will be $1,250, which includes building use and fees for services provided. Remember: premarital counseling is paid separately; approximately $200. A $100 deposit is due to confirm your date on the church calendar. The balance is due ten (10) business days prior to the wedding date. Failure to remit the balance on time may result in cancellation of the ceremony. Please make one check payable to “First United Methodist Church” and note “wedding fees” on the memo line.
9. Additional Important Notes
The church maintains the right to schedule other activities in the church building, before, during, and after the rehearsal or wedding.

Wedding rehearsals and ceremonies must begin on time. Rehearsals are best scheduled one or two days prior to the ceremony, at 5 p.m. or 6 p.m.; plan for one hour for the rehearsal.

Please designate someone to be responsible for all of the wedding party’s personal belongings. The church is not responsible for items left unattended.

Vehicle parking is available on city streets and in municipal lots only; the church does not own off-street parking.

*Chelsea First United Methodist Church*

*Approved by Board of Trustees May 2016*