

## **A SERVICE OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE**

Liberty United Methodist Church  
9587 Liberty Church Road  
Brentwood, Tennessee 37027  
615.776.2822  
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### **Introduction**

Christian marriage is a life-long covenant between a man and a woman. At the center of the covenant is Jesus Christ. Christ's love for his church is the same love that a husband and wife are to have for each other. Covenant, in contrast to contract, involves the giving of oneself unreservedly in love to the other. The service of Christian Marriage is an act of serving God and proclaiming the lordship of Jesus Christ for the new family in the household of faith.

The Service of Christian Marriage is a service of worship before God. This is the reason weddings are conducted in church sanctuaries. Thus, reverence is expected on the part of all present. The officiating pastor will direct the service with the assistance a Wedding Coordinator if one is involved in the planning.

Since the Service of Christian Marriage is a service of Christian marriage, it presupposes that one of both of the parties involved is Christian. There will be couples for whom this service is inappropriate.

### **Officiating and Premarital Counseling**

The Liberty UMC pastor will participate in every wedding. Outside pastors are welcome to join the LUMC pastor in officiating.

Wedding ceremonies will follow the basic form of "A Service of Christian Marriage." It may be found in The United Methodist Hymnal, (pp. 864-869).

All persons marrying at Liberty UMC will be required to participate in premarital counseling with the Church's pastor unless otherwise designated. Appointments should be scheduled by calling the church (615.776.2822).

## **SERVICE POLICIES**

### **Music**

Because the Service of Christian Marriage is a worship service, God is the central focus. Music, instrumental or vocals, should be reverent. Music written especially for the church is encouraged.

The couple may bring in a pianist, instrumental soloist or ensembles.

The Pastor at Liberty UMC will help you select and approve appropriate music for a reverent ceremony. It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to make an appointment with the pastor to discuss service music.

Taped or recorded music will be allowed if approved by the pastor.

### **The Sanctuary and Chapel**

The sanctuary is designed for worship and incorporates symbols of the Christian faith and tradition. They shall not be removed or moved from their normal location.

1. Flowers, decorations, and other appointments should not be unduly elaborate. Excessive expense and ostentation should be avoided.
2. One flower arrangement for the altar/communion table is permitted. It shall be one vase or container.
3. Families must leave wedding altar flowers for use in worship on the Sunday following a Saturday wedding in the sanctuary.
4. There may be a small amount of greenery in the windows. No flowers are permitted in the windows.
5. Floral arrangements are permitted in the narthex only on the guest book table or stand.
6. No candelabra, hurricane lanterns, flowers, greenery or bows maybe attached to the pews in anyway that defaces the historic pews.
7. The use of rented candlesticks or other equipment is not allowed.
8. Protective cloths must be placed under all plants containing moisture.
9. No candles or arrangements are to be placed on the piano, pulpit, or communion table.
10. Aisle runners are not allowed.
11. The following are prohibited inside or outside the building (including parking lot):
  - rice

- flower petals
- fireworks
- alcoholic beverages
- Cracker/confetti

12. Time for decorating the church must be arranged with the Pastor at least 2 weeks in advance. The building can be opened no sooner than three hours prior to the wedding. The entire church facility must be vacated by 9:00 PM.

### **Photography and Videos**

1. Photography in the sanctuary is prohibited after the music starts. Time exposure photographs may be taken in the narthex. No photographs may be taken during the ceremony.
2. Following the wedding, photographs in the sanctuary may commence after the last member of the wedding party has recessed.
3. A photograph of the bride may be taken in the narthex prior to her entrance. One of the bride and groom may be taken as they enter the narthex following the ceremony.
4. All photography must be completed within one hour following the ceremony.
5. All photography equipment must be removed at that time. No equipment may remain in the building overnight.
6. Video cameras must be set up behind the last seated guest.
7. A small remote video camera may be used on the side isle if it is hidden from view. The pastor will direct placement of the equipment near the piano.
8. At no time during the ceremony shall any photographer, videographer, or assistant be in the chancel.
9. No extra lighting shall be used by the photographer or videographer from the time the music starts prior to the ceremony until the last member of the wedding party leaves the sanctuary after the service.
10. These policies apply to all guests as well as those invited or hired by the wedding party.

### **Other Considerations**

1. The Pastor and Wedding Coordinator will be responsible for directing the wedding rehearsal. If the wedding party is punctual, a rehearsal will usually last about 45 minutes.

2. Reservations for weddings are scheduled in the order requests are made. Call the church at 615.776.2822 to check the availability of the church.
3. The church building may be reserved for a wedding only after approval by the minister.
4. Weddings will not be scheduled on the following:
  - Sunday
  - The month of December (unless approved by pastor and staff)
  - The week of Christmas Eve through New Year's Day.
  - Holy Week
  - Easter
  - The week of Thanksgiving
5. All weddings for both members and non-members must be approved by the pastor before it can be officially added to the church calendar.
6. The church assumes no responsibility for personal property and encourages the wedding party to make arrangements for someone to stay in fellowship hall during the ceremony to safeguard personal property left there.
7. Fees: Members: \$0                  Non-members: \$500.00
  - The sanctuary, fellowship hall, maybe cleaned by a cleaning crew for an additional \$100.00 or the bride and groom may arrange for members of the family to stay and clean the areas used immediately after the service.
  - All instrumental services will be the responsibility of the Bride and Groom.
  - All fees must be paid to the church 30 days prior to the wedding.

The Minister(s) considers weddings to be a ministry of the church. A monetary offering to him or her comparative to their time spent with the arrangements is appropriate to extend.

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