

Weddings at First-Plymouth Church

First-Plymouth Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, welcomes any couple desiring to marry. It is a great joy for us to take part in your special day, and to help honor what is a profound commitment — the vows of marriage. This booklet is designed to explain the procedures and guidelines for people being married in First-Plymouth Church.

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We hope that the following pages will be of help to you in your planning. Please read this entire booklet. After reading, if you choose to be married at First-Plymouth Church, please contact Addie at First-Plymouth Church, Monday-Thursdays, 9-4 PM at (402).476.7550.

First, call to see if your date is open. We typically hold that date for about a week, and during that time, arrangements need to be made to come to First-Plymouth Church to sign the wedding contract. At that time, a \$100.00 (non-refundable) deposit is due.



General Information

Ministerial Staff:

It is the church policy that one of our ministers must be present at all weddings at First-Plymouth Church. The couple is required to contact our ministers at least six weeks before the wedding. A minister will be assigned by the staff unless one is requested at the time of application.

All efforts will be made to provide you with the minister and organist you request or are assigned, however, due to emergencies and other unforeseen conflicts, First-Plymouth reserves the right to assign another minister or musician as needed.

Minister of Music and Organist:

All music arrangements are to be made with our Minister of Music and Organist, preferably several weeks prior to the wedding. If he is unable to play for your wedding, he will secure a suitable substitute and put them in contact with you for further consultation. Because not all music is suitable or works well in a wedding ceremony, please do not set your heart on certain music selections before meeting with him. A compact disc of suggestions for the processions in and out is available from the church office. We encourage all elements of the wedding ceremony to be "live". No pre-recorded music may be played during the ceremony.

The organist fee includes 15-20 minutes of pre-service music, up to 5 minutes of music following the recessional. One rehearsal with a soloist or instrumentalist (30 minutes maximum set for the day of the rehearsal or the day of the wedding only) is included in the fee. Scores for the accompaniment of soloists or instrumentalists must be provided for the organist by the soloist or instrumentalist in the key and arrangement to be performed. These will take place an hour prior to the ceremony. Any extra rehearsals with soloists or instrumentalists may be contracted at \$50.00 each (30 minutes maximum set for the day of the rehearsal or the day of the wedding only). Soloists determined by the Minister of Music in consultation with the soloists/instrumentalists. Any additional music may be negotiated with the organist and may require an additional fee.

Wedding Coordinator:

It is the policy of the church that all couples use one of our Wedding Coordinators. The Coordinator will be assigned by the staff. The Coordinator is to work with the bride prior to the wedding. She will coordinate all arrangements such as: time the pictures are to be taken, delivery of flowers and/or cake, time wedding party is to arrive, instruct the custodian on how the church is to be set up, and other details that help make the service run smoothly. The Coordinator will be present at the rehearsal and will assist the minister. She will also arrive the day of the wedding approximately two hours prior to the ceremony. She will put you at ease on your wedding day by taking care of many details. The Coordinator will contact you to arrange an appointment time to visit with you. At the time of this meeting, remaining fees will be discussed. She will be responsible for collecting fees the day of the rehearsal. If you have questions prior to the time the Coordinator contacts you, please feel free to contact the church office and we will gladly answer your questions.

Facilities:

The Church Nave (sanctuary) can seat approximately 650 persons. For smaller weddings, the Chapel is available and will seat approximately 125 persons. Weather permitting, the Courtyard is a lovely setting for an informal wedding and First-Plymouth will supply the first 100 seats, however, additional seating will be provided on your own.

Courtyard Lounge & the Choir Dressing Room are available for the bride and her attendants on the first floor. The groom and his attendants have a lower level dressing room.

First-Plymouth Church is handicapped accessible at the west and east entrances with elevator service to the main worship area. Handicapped parking is on the east side of the building.

Alcohol is prohibited in the building.

Photography :

Flash pictures are prohibited during the service. To avoid obvious intrusion and distraction during the ceremony, inform your photographer that all pictures must be taken from the back of the church. If you are planning to have your pictures before the ceremony, the pictures must start **NO EARLIER THAN TWO HOURS PRIOR** to the start of the wedding ceremony. Please plan accordingly and let your Wedding Coordinator know your plans.

Videotaping is an option you may want to consider. Please read the section on Videotaping in this brochure for further information and restrictions.

Be sure that you discuss these restrictions and instructions with your photographer prior to the wedding.

Decorations:

No nails, tacks or tape can be used on pews, furniture or walls. Delivery times must be made with the Wedding Coordinator to insure that the building will be open. It is suggested that your florist arrive to set up no earlier than two hours before the ceremony. This will assure fresh flowers and if there is a problem there is plenty of time to get it corrected.

The church has candelabra and aisle candle holders. These are fueled by oil and can be reserved for a charge of \$50.00. Aisle candles provided by a florist are prohibited. The church prohibits the use of an aisle cloth. The church does not have a kneeling bench. If one is desired, you must provide it.

The church is not responsible for loss or damage of any items brought in by the wedding party, florist or rental agencies. We strongly encourage you to lock up any valuable items that you may have.

Wedding Reception:

Wedding receptions, if desired, are held in Pilgrim Hall on the main level of the church. A Reception Coordinator will be in attendance at all receptions held at the church. The reception fee includes this service. Please be in contact with the Reception Coordinator at least one month prior to the wedding day.

The Reception Coordinator will be responsible for the following: setting up the tables, making the punch, filling the trays and clean up. The bride will furnish all food, coffee, ice and punch ingredients as well as any table arrangements she may desire. The bride must furnish six persons to help with serving punch, coffee and cake. The Reception Coordinator will inform you of the silver service, dishes and tablecloths available at the church.

A Gift Table and Guestbook Table are included for your convenience. Several tables are arranged nicely and chairs are available for guests. Because of limited space, a wedding party table is not available. All furniture will remain as set up by the church custodian.

Food served at the reception will consist **ONLY** of punch, coffee, mints, nuts and cake. **NO** other food will be allowed due to limited kitchen space. Again, alcohol is prohibited in the building.

Marriage Ceremony:

A sample marriage ceremony is enclosed in this booklet. Please take the time to review it. Changes to the ceremony can be discussed with the minister during your scheduled appointment.

Wedding Programs:

Wedding programs are acceptable for the wedding ceremony. The church office is not responsible for providing these programs, however if you have questions regarding the programs, please contact your Wedding Coordinator.

Telephone Numbers

The church office is open Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM-4:30 PM. The church phone number is 476-7565 and the following individuals may be reached at that number.

Jim Keck, Senior Minister
 Nancy Erickson, Associate Minister
 Barbara Smisek, Associate Minister
 Renae Koehler, Associate Minister
 Jeremy Bankson, Associate for Music
 Kathie Johnson, Carillonneur
 Tammy Alvis, Videographer
 Addie Vortherms, Wedding Assistant

Premarital Workshop Requirement

It is the church policy that every couple that is to be married at First-Plymouth, **must attend one** of the premarital workshops that the church offers throughout the year, unless both/or one person of the couple lives out of the area or has made arrangements with the Senior Minister. The workshop will cover issues such as: Active Listening; Love and Separateness; and Assertive Communication. Each premarital workshop will be led by a licensed clinical psychologist. The cost of the workshop is \$25.00 (which is included on the wedding contract). Pre-registration required for each workshop, to register call Addie at 476-7550 or email addie@firstplymouth.org.

Videotaping

First-Plymouth Church has an optional videotaping service to offer couples being married in the church. You will receive a professional three-camera production, complete with dissolves and special effects. Your video production will be supervised by Tammy Alvis, Media Director at First-Plymouth. This service is an option available as outlined on the Wedding Costs sheet in this brochure.

Please book this service with Ms. Alvis as soon as you decide your wedding date. You must book at least eight (8) weeks in advance or you will be charged a \$25.00 late fee. You may videotape activities prior to the marriage service and after the service, but not during the service to maintain the integrity of the ceremony.

This is an exclusive service. **NO** other videotaping services will be permitted at First-Plymouth Church.

Carillon Music

First-Plymouth Church has an optional Carillon Music (Bell Tower) service to offer couples being married in the church. Carillon music is unique to First-Plymouth and adds to the celebration of the wedding. The Carillon Music service will consist of thirty (30) minutes of music, played by our Carillonneur, Kathie Johnson. This service is an option available as outlined on the Wedding Costs sheet in this brochure. We encourage booking the carillon music as soon as you decide your wedding date or when you meet with the wedding coordinator.

Late Fees: A \$25.00 late fee will be incurred if the bells are requested two weeks prior to the wedding. If carillon music is requested one week prior to the wedding, \$50.00 will be added to the original base fee. Carillon Music requested late are subject to availability of the carillonist.

The Plymouth Brass and Summit Strings Quartet

If you would like to have The Plymouth Brass perform at your wedding, contact Tom Kelly at 421-2452 or email tk34333@alltel.net. If you would like to have The Summit Strings Quartet perform at your wedding, contact Kim Salistean at 421-2481 or visit their website at www.summistringsquartet.com. The Plymouth Brass & Summit Strings Quartet have their own rate cards and separate contracts.

Checklist for the Wedding

1. Make an appointment with the Minister SIX (6) weeks prior to the wedding.
2. Make an appointment with the Minister of Music/Organist no later than SIX (6) weeks prior to the wedding.
3. Be in contact with the Wedding Coordinator approximately TWO (2) months before the wedding.
4. Register for ONE (1) of the upcoming Premarital Workshops prior to the wedding.
5. Bring the marriage license to the wedding rehearsal and give it to the Wedding Coordinator or the Minister.
6. Be sure that your soloist has been in contact with the Minister of Music/Organist prior to the rehearsal.
7. If a reception is desired, contact the Reception Coordinator to confirm details.
8. Inform your photographer the times available to you at the church for pictures and of First-Plymouth Church policies.
9. Inform your florists of the restrictions and delivery times. Give this information to your Wedding Coordinator.

Important Guidelines

1. No alcohol or smoking is allowed in the church building or church grounds.
2. No rice, birdseed, flower petals, confetti or balloons (released into the air) on church grounds or in building.
3. All church furnishings will remain in the original positions.
4. No buffets can be served at receptions.
5. Space and furnishings prohibit wedding dances at First-Plymouth.
6. If more than 100 chairs are needed for a Courtyard wedding, the couple will be responsible for obtaining additional chairs, set-up and removal immediately following ceremony.
7. Do not bring tuxedos, dresses, or any items to the church prior to the day of the wedding.
8. Gifts may not be opened in the church building.
9. The church is NOT responsible for lost or stolen property while you are in the the church building. Please lock up your purses and other valuables or do not bring them with you to the church.
10. Use of an aisle cloth is not permitted.
11. The married couple may not usher their guests out row by row following the ceremony, however, a receiving line may be formed at the back of the church or courtyard.

SAMPLE WEDDING CONTRACT
First-Plymouth Congregational Church, UCC

Bride _____ Groom _____
Wedding Date _____ Time _____ N _____ C _____ CY _____
Rehearsal Date _____ Time _____ Size _____ Reception _____
Minister _____ Organist Yes _____ No _____
Bride's Address: _____
Home Phone: _____ Other: _____

Will your pictures be: Before _____ After _____ Time pictures will begin: _____

(The Church allows for TWO hours for photographs before a wedding; an additional 30 Minutes is allowed for dressing at the Church. Therefore, if your pictures are prior to our ceremony, you will have a total of 2 1/2 hours before your scheduled wedding time. Confirm your photography times with your Wedding Coordinator in advance.)

TIME YOU MAY ARRIVE AT THE CHURCH ON YOUR WEDDING DAY: _____

A non-refundable deposit of \$100 is due at the time the contract is completed. The deposit will be applied to the total cost of the church fee. All church fees are subject to change. The balance of the church fees must be paid in full no later than rehearsal day.

The following restrictions apply to all weddings held at First-Plymouth Church:

- * Use of rice, birdseed, confetti, flower petals (real or artificial) or any other "throwables" in or on the church grounds is forbidden and will be confiscated by the custodian and not returned.
- * No Alcoholic beverages are allowed in or on the church grounds. The Minister has the authority to not perform the ceremony if alcohol is found.
- * Florists may not tape flowers or other materials on pews; flower petals (real or artificial) are prohibited.
- * Use of an aisle cloth is not permitted.
- * The married couple may not usher their guests out row by row following the ceremony, however a receiving line may be formed at the back of the church or courtyard.

All weddings require a Wedding Coordinator which will be assigned by the Church Staff. The Church is NOT responsible for lost or stolen gifts and/or property brought into the church building during the rehearsal or the day of the wedding.

Bride/Groom Church Staff
Date of Deposit: _____ Check #: _____ Cash: _____ Amount: _____
Reception Coordinator _____ Wedding Coordinator _____



Wedding Costs

	<u>Non-Member</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>Your Charge</u>
Building Fee	\$300.00	-0-	_____
Staff Fees: Minister Organist Custodian Consultant	\$800.00	\$800.00	_____
Premarital Workshop <i>*Required to attend.</i>	\$25.00	\$25.00	_____
Aisle Candles/Candelabra*	\$50.00	\$50.00	_____
Carillon <i>*Late fee of \$25 if not booked 2 wks in advance. \$50 one week prior.</i>	\$100.00	\$100.00	_____
Video Taping <i>*Late fee of \$25 if not booked 8 wks in advance.</i>	\$475.00	\$375.00	_____
Reception	\$750.00	\$200.00 Suggested Donation	_____
Additional rehearsal with Organist for soloist or Instrumentalist. <i>* See pg. 4 for details.</i>	\$50.00	\$50.00	_____
		Total:	(_____)
		Deposit:	_____
		TOTAL DUE TO THE CHURCH:	_____

*The church provides oil burning candles for the aisle posts and the large candelabra. As a result, no other candles may be used.

Soloists and/or instrumentalists may be contracted through the Minister of Music at 476-9933. The fees will be determined by the Minister of Music in consultation with the soloists/instrumentalists.

Sample Order of Service

Included is a template of a wedding service for your planning. However, at First-Plymouth, we want your wedding to be as unique and reflective of your faith and values as possible. Each couple, in concert with the Minister, can design their own elements of the service if they wish.

Order of Service (Sample)

Preludes

Processional

Greeting

Opening Prayer

Readings

Reflection on Marriage

Wedding Promises and Vows

Exchange of Rings

Lighting of Unity Candle

Pronouncement of Marriage

Introduction of Newly Married Couple

Recessional