

A Guide to Weddings at West End UMC

General Policies & Information

A wedding is a sacred ritual in our church. Members of West End and children of West End members are welcome to be married here. This information is prepared in the hope that it will help you in the planning for one of the most significant events of your life.

- ☒ Our ministers counsel with each bridal couple before the ceremony. You will want to contact the officiating minister early in your planning to schedule counseling at mutually convenient times.
- ☒ The music staff at West End is responsible for all wedding music. Matt Phelps, 615.321.8500 or mphelps@westendumc.org, must be contacted soon after the wedding is scheduled so that ample time is allowed for this important aspect of the ceremony.
- ☒ A member of the Wedding Committee of West End Church will meet with the bride prior to the wedding to provide any assistance and guidance necessary.

A wedding committee member will also be present the day of the ceremony to insure that all the details go smoothly. This eliminates any need for a commercial wedding consultant.

- ☒ The sanctuary seats approximately 800 people, and the chapel accommodates approximately 75 guests.

Scheduling

- ☒ The wedding and the rehearsal must be scheduled through Julie Catterton as to the day and hour of each, 615.321.8500 or jcatterton@westendumc.org. Julie must also be notified if any changes in time occur.
- ☒ No more than one wedding may take place in a day.
- ☒ Weddings will not be performed at West End on these days: New Year's Eve; New Year's Day; Palm Sunday; any day during Holy Week (including the day before Easter); Easter Day; the Fourth of July; Labor Day; Thanksgiving Day; Christmas Eve; Christmas Day; Sundays.

Ministers and Ceremony

- ☒ One of the ministers of West End must perform the marriage ceremony. You may want to include a relative or family friends as one of the assisting ministers. He or she will be invited to participate in the wedding by the officiating clergy from our church.
- ☒ Either the "traditional" liturgy or a "contemporary" service—recently adopted by our denomination— may be used. These services are not interchangeable since the language bases are quite different.

Music

- ☒ A West End organist will provide the music for weddings in the sanctuary or chapel. (Our organ is a very large and complex instrument and not easily accessible to all pianists and organists.)
- ☒ Music selections must be appropriate for a service of worship at West End United Methodist Church and must be approved by the music staff.
- ☒ The music staff member chosen for your weddings will also work with you in the selection of appropriate music as well as engage any soloists or instrumentalist that you may desire.
- ☒ Music must be provided for the rehearsal.
- ☒ Only instruments used in a service of worship may be used. (i.e. bagpipes are not allowed).

Photography

- ☒ There are strict policies regarding photographs, motion pictures, or videotaping in the church.
- ☒ No flash pictures may be taken in the sanctuary or chapel by commercial photographers, family or friends from forty-five minutes prior to the beginning of the service until the entire ceremony is completed.
- ☒ Please ask your ushers to inform guests with cameras of this policy.
- ☒ The photographer will be asked to leave the sanctuary at 45 minutes prior to the service.
- ☒ The photographer may stand only in the balcony in the event of a wedding in the sanctuary, to take photographs or to videotape the ceremony. Such pictures must be made with available light.
- ☒ Photographers may not stop members of the wedding party as they exit the sanctuary or the chapel in order to photograph them.
- ☒ Photographers will not ask members of the wedding party to stand on kneeling cushions for posed photographs, nor will they themselves stand in the pews.

Decorations

- ☒ Please keep decorations to a minimum.
- ☒ All chancel furniture stays in place with the exception of the stewards' chairs.
- ☒ The communion table, baptismal font, altar, cross and paraments remain where they are since they indicate that the sanctuary is a place where worship is conducted. The sexton will make arrangement when the kneeler is used.
- ☒ The two brass urns provided by the church are suggested for flower arrangements. They may be placed on flower stands which match the chancel furniture. Flowers may not be placed on the altar. Flowers near the altar must not extend above the arms of the cross.
- ☒ Only fresh flowers or greenery may be used in altar arrangements.
- ☒ Pews may be marked by bows or flowers and attached with ribbon or special clamps.
- ☒ No tape, tacks, staples, or plastic may be used to secure any decorations in the church.
- ☒ Seasonal decorations remain in place.
- ☒ The church has four seven-branch candelabra and two seven-branch table candelabra available for your use. The candles are provided in the church fee.
- ☒ Other candelabra may be used in addition to ours, though plastic protection must be placed under them to catch the dripping wax.
- ☒ Candles and/or candelabra may be placed only in the chancel area and choir loft.
- ☒ An aisle cloth is not used in West End since it is dangerous for both the wedding party and departing guests.

Receptions

- ☒ McWhirter Hall is the designated area for church receptions. Reed Hall may be available for a small number of guests.
- ☒ Arrangements must be made through Julie Catterton, 615.321.8500 or jcatterton@westendumc.org, for the kitchen and social hall.
- ☒ The church custodian does not work at a reception, moving tables, carrying food, etc. unless he or she has been contracted to do so for an additional sum of money.
- ☒ The Wedding Committee is not involved in the planning of wedding receptions.
- ☒ No alcoholic beverages may be served or consumed on church property.

Fees

☒ You will be given a wedding fee schedule when you schedule your wedding. All fees beyond deposits must be paid two Mondays prior to the wedding date. If not, it will be assumed your wedding is cancelled.

☒ **Please bring to the rehearsal:**

☒ Marriage License -- if not previously given to the minister.

***** Note: Guidelines are subject to change.**

Helpful Telephone Numbers

All ministers, Matt Phelps and Julie Catterton can all be reached at the church: 615.321.8500

Helen Burrus, photographer 356-4172

Jan Giordano, florist 370-8042