



Meridian Street United Methodist Church Wedding Policy

Congratulations on your engagement! We are delighted that you are considering Meridian Street United Methodist Church for your Christian wedding ceremony. We hope the beauty of the Sanctuary and Chapel will be just the sacred setting that you are seeking for your wedding covenant. The members and staff welcome the privilege of sharing in this profound experience in your life. A Christian wedding is a covenant relationship between the couple and God. For that reason, we welcome and encourage you to participate in the life of the Meridian Street congregation.

The following policy has been prepared to give you as many details as possible as you plan for your wedding ceremony. **This policy must be read in full prior to booking your wedding as these policies outline the ways in which you, your vendors and the church will work together.**

SCHEDULING

- Complete the online inquiry submission form or contact our wedding coordinator to schedule your wedding. Once church availability is determined, the coordinator will hold that date for 10 days. Upon receipt of the signed contract and deposit, your date will be secured on the church wedding calendar.
- Weddings will not be scheduled during Holy Week (Palm Sunday through Easter) and between December 24-January 1.
- Each wedding party will have a maximum of 3 ½ hours use of the church: **2 hours before the ceremony and 1 ½ hours following the start of the wedding service. Hair/makeup need to be done prior to arrival at the church as we are not equipped to accommodate these services.**

PERSONNEL

- **Officiant:** A Meridian Street staff pastor will officiate at your wedding ceremony. Guest pastors, who are ordained United Methodist clergy, may be invited to officiate at the invitation of the senior pastor of Meridian Street UMC. Following the assignment of the officiating pastor, it is your responsibility to contact the pastor and arrange a time to meet to discuss the details of your ceremony. The meeting with the pastor should precede the final meeting with the church wedding coordinator.

- **Coordinator:** A church wedding coordinator will be present at the wedding rehearsal and wedding ceremony and will oversee all aspects of the ceremony.
- **Organist:** The church organist will play at all weddings and will work with other soloists and ensembles.
- **Custodian:** The church custodian will set up prior to and clean up after your wedding. All items that appear to be disposable will be cleared from the dressing areas of the couple as well as the Sanctuary and Chapel. Should the clean-up time exceed 3 ½ hours, and addition of fee of \$25.00 per hour will be charged.

PREMARITAL COUNSELING

Participation in our Marriage Preparation program is expected of all couples married at Meridian Street UMC. Upon receipt of the counseling fee, couples will partake in an online program and then meet with our in-house counselor. Upon approval of the wedding coordinator, couples may choose to participate in premarital counseling with their own certified counselor, personal pastor/clergy member or other premarital class offered through another church or counseling service. A signed document of completion is required 60 days prior to the wedding.

MUSIC

The music selected for the wedding ceremony along with the prelude and postlude music is highly regarded as an integral part of the ceremony. The Christian wedding ceremony is a religious service conducted in the presence of God, in God's house and with the prayer for God's blessings. The selection of music must be appropriate to a service of traditional worship. **Therefore, all music selections will be sacred music (hymns or classical). Pop/love songs do not have a place in our marriage worship service.**

The organist will be happy to confer with you in choosing music. Music for the wedding ceremony must be approved by the wedding coordinator in consultation with the organist. The couple is responsible for setting a consultation time with the organist. **All music selections must be confirmed no later than 6 weeks prior to the wedding.**

- Hired musician such as string ensembles or vocal soloists may be used during your wedding ceremony.
- Solo instruments such as flute, trumpet or violin may be used in conjunctions with the organ as appropriate.
- Processional and recessional music must include the organ or piano.

- Vocal music should be limited to trained voices. The organist will accompany soloists and should not be expected to “train” the soloist on site. Soloists should arrange a rehearsal time with the organist **prior** to the actual rehearsal or plan to rehearse ½ hour **prior** to the start of the rehearsal.
- All solo music should be approved by the wedding coordinator for appropriateness, duration and placement in the ceremony.
- We do not have the capacity for pre-recorded music.

SMOKING, ALCOHOL, DRUGS

Use of any tobacco product, alcoholic beverage or chemical substance is **STRICTLY PROHIBITED** in the church building or on its premises. **Upon detection of the presence, use or symptoms of use of alcoholic/drug products by members of the wedding party (including family), the officiating pastor has the discretion to refuse to perform the wedding, and/or ask participants to not participate. If this is the case, all fees paid will not be refunded.**

DECORATIONS

- Flowers, candles and other decoration are welcome for the ceremony.
- No tape of any kind is to be used in affixing or hanging decorations from the end of the pew. The attachment of bows, greenery and other floral pieces shall be done with pew clips or through the holder that is affixed to the inside of the pews where aisle candle holders already exist.
- Unity candles or unity ceremony items are welcome. Modest flower arrangements or greenery may be used on the altar to decorate these items. The cross and candlesticks remain in place.
- We do not allow the use of aisle runner in the Sanctuary or Chapel.
- Ten hurricane aisle candles are available for a rental fee. (See fee schedule)
- Immediately following the wedding ceremony, removal of all pew decorations, unity ceremony items, guest book, extra programs etc., is required.
- Liturgical decorations used by the church during Advent, Lent or other special times of year will remain in place and may not be removed for the wedding. The altar cloth will be white for all weddings. No furniture may be moved in the Sanctuary or Chapel.
- Artificial petals must be used by flower attendant.
- As the couple exits the church following ceremony, bubbles, streamers and fresh flower petals are allowed. Balloons, rice, confetti, fireworks/sparklers, birdseed or any product that is not biodegradable are not permitted.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY

Photography may be executed of the processional from the center aisle. Vendors may not remain in center aisle during the service. No photography is permitted from positions within the Chancel area. We expect photography/videography to be discreet and non-obtrusive to guests.

- Video-recording may be done only from the balcony or side-aisles.
- Videographer and photographer must coordinate the spaces they will be using prior to the start of the service.
- The church assumes no liability for damage or loss of equipment.
- No flash photography may be undertaken once the processional is completed.

ACCOMODATIONS

Members of the wedding party who wish to dress in wedding attire at the church are welcome to do so. The wedding coordinator will discuss with you the rooms to be used. No additional rooms are to be used except at the discretion of the wedding coordinator. Meridian Street UMC is not responsible for items left out during the ceremony. You are urged to place valuable items in car trunks and not left out in the open. After the ceremony and following the departure of the wedding party and family, items left in the changing rooms deemed as having no further use or purpose will be disposed of by the custodian.

REHEARSAL

Rehearsals are typically scheduled at 5:30pm the night before the wedding. If you require a different time, simply contact the wedding coordinator as we want to accommodate a time that works for your schedule. Please make all efforts to have the entire wedding party arrive on time for the rehearsal.

Pre-ceremony meetings with the wedding coordinator and the officiating pastor result in the details being in place and hence are subject to only minor modifications. The officiating pastor oversees all aspects of the ceremony and the coordinator oversees all other aspects. On the evening of the rehearsal, please bring with you any items that you might otherwise bring on the day of the wedding, i.e. programs, decorations, unity ceremony items, bubbles etc. For reasons of security and lacking appropriate storage space, we request that all wedding attire be brought or worn to the church on the day of the wedding.

MARRIAGE LICENSE/OTHER

- The couple must meet with the wedding coordinator at least 1-month prior to the wedding. The coordinator will provide a “Wedding Worksheet” to be completed in full prior and returned prior to this meeting. This worksheet provides the details needed to help coordinate the day.
- The couple is responsible for securing the marriage license and must deliver it to the church office at least 1 week prior to the wedding. If you are unable to deliver it in this timeframe, arrangements must be approved by the wedding coordinator. Please visit this website for information regarding obtaining your license – <https://www.indy.gov/activity/the-marriage-license-application-process>

CANCELLATION POLICY

It is never anticipated that there would be a cancellation of a wedding, however, it is understood that there are times when a cancellation is unavoidable. If the wedding must be cancelled, a cancellation fee will apply. A cancellation 3 months or less prior to the wedding date, will result in a \$300 cancellation fee for non-members. A refund of all monies/deposits paid up to the date of the cancellation, less the cancellation fee, will be returned to the parties involved as directed. There will be no refund of fees for the premarital counseling.

WEDDING FEES: Meridian Street United Methodist Church

NON-MEMBER RATE:

Use of Sanctuary or Chapel	\$750.00
Premarital Counseling	
\$195 counseling \$35 survey	\$230.00
Church Personnel fees:	
Pastor	\$300.00
Wedding Coordinator	\$350.00
Asst. Wedding Coordinator	\$150.00
Organist	\$350.00
Custodian	<u>\$150.00</u>
	\$1300.00
GRAND TOTAL:	\$2280.00

MEMBER RATE:

Premarital Counseling	
\$195 counseling \$35 survey	\$230.00 Due at booking or shortly after
Church Personnel fees:	
Pastor	\$200.00
Wedding Coordinator	\$350.00
Asst. Wedding Coordinator	\$150.00
Organist	\$350.00
Custodian	<u>\$150.00</u>
	\$1200.00
GRAND TOTAL:	\$1430.00

Optional Decoration Rental Fees:

Aisle candles (10 total)	\$100.00
Candelabras	\$100.00
Discount for rental of both candle options	\$150.00

Please make checks out to Meridian Street UMC. Checks along with the signed Wedding Contract can be dropped off at the church office or mailed directly to the church (address below). Sorry, we do not accept credit cards. Your wedding date is not secured on the church calendar until the wedding coordinator has the deposit and signed contract.

Meridian Street United Methodist Church
Attn: Wedding Coordinator
5500 N. Meridian Street
Indianapolis, IN 46208