

# *Wedding Policy*



*First Congregational Church*

*United Church of Christ*

*865 Lincoln Lake SE*

*Lowell, Michigan 49331*

*616-897-5906    [lowellucc@gmail.com](mailto:lowellucc@gmail.com)*



# First Congregational Church of Lowell United Church of Christ

## Wedding Policy

Thank you for your interest in First Congregational Church of Lowell, UCC as the site for your wedding. We look forward to working with you as you plan for your memorable day!

To help you prepare, the following guidelines have been adopted.

### FACILITIES

- Our **Sanctuary** seats 225 people.
- It is carpeted down the main aisle. You may choose a floor runner (which you supply), but it is not necessary.
- The adjoining **parking lot** to the north provides ample parking for all guests.
- There are two spacious **rest rooms** for your guests.
- The wedding party will have use of two rooms in which to **dress**, one of which has a private bathroom.
- Our church's **sound system** (operated by *our* Sound Technician) will provide amplification for the officiant (lapel microphone) and can play CDs, which can be amplified throughout the building. Hand-held and stand microphones are also available.
- We have an **electronic organ** and an **electronic keyboard** in our sanctuary. If you choose to have live music at your ceremony, we will provide an organist or pianist. *This fee is negotiated separately from the flat fee and is decided by the musician.*
- Our entire facility is **air conditioned** and **handicapped accessible**.

### STAFF

#### **PASTOR**

- The Pastor of the church will officiate at all weddings of our members, members' family, and regular attendees at First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, of Lowell. If members desire to have the participation of another officiate, an invitation to share in (or officiate at) the service would be given by our Pastor. Our Pastor will consult with guest officiants.
- If being married by our Pastor, then premarital counseling is a requirement. Generally, this means three one-hour sessions with the pastor. The basic purposes of these sessions are (1) for the pastor to come to know the couple, (2) for the couple to examine their relationship, and understand God's design for a successful marriage, (3) to plan a Christian ceremony tailored to be especially meaningful for them.
- If you are supplying your own officiant, he/she is asked to be sensitive to and considerate of the beliefs, positions, and policies of the United Church of Christ. To ensure that we have an understanding of what is expected, a consultation with our Pastor is required with the guest officiant before arrangements can be made.
- If you wish to have our Pastor and his/her guest at a rehearsal dinner or at the wedding reception, please notify them with an invitation well in advance. It will be up to the availability of the Pastor and our Pastor's guest as to whether or not they can attend.

## **WEDDING COORDINATOR**

- The Wedding Coordinator will be your contact person throughout the entire process. The Wedding Coordinator is the church representative for all the logistics of your ceremony. This person will be available by phone, email, text, and/or by appointment to give you a tour of the facilities, answer your questions, be available to open the building for the rehearsal and ceremony, to receive flowers, and to work with your photographer. If you choose a Master/Mistress of Ceremonies, they will be under the direction of our Wedding Coordinator prior to and during the wedding ceremony, and at the reception if you are having one at our church. Members of the wedding party, including the parents of the couple, will communicate their needs to the Wedding Coordinator so that the wedding couple may enjoy their special day.

## **CUSTODIAN**

- A church custodian will ensure that our facility is clean before your wedding ceremony, as well as cleaning the church afterwards. It is expected that the wedding party respect our building, property, and furnishings and act accordingly, leaving the facility in good order (placing trash in proper receptacles, clearing out all personal belongings, returning items to their original locations, etc.) *before* leaving the building on the day of the wedding ceremony.

## **SOUND TECHNICIAN**

- Our Sound Technician will be onsite for your wedding rehearsal and ceremony and will operate the church's sound system. This person will ensure that the officiant has use of our lapel microphone and will play your recorded music (CD) at the request of the wedding couple.

## **MUSICIANS**

- We can supply you with an organist/pianist. If you are bringing your own musicians to play either our organ or keyboard, we must ensure that they know how to operate these instruments; therefore, a consultation is required before a guest were to play our organ and/or keyboard. *Musician fees are not included in the package price. You must negotiate with and pay them independent of the wedding ceremony package fees.*

## **PLANNING YOUR WEDDING**

### **SCHEDULING**

- Wedding dates are to be made through the church office and the Wedding Coordinator as soon as possible. The wedding date **MUST** be scheduled a minimum of three months prior to the wedding to accommodate counseling sessions if appropriate. Special circumstances will receive consideration.

### **DÉCOR**

- We wish to maintain the beauty and simplicity of First Congregational Church. Please keep decorations for the ceremony simple and dignified. Our sanctuary is a worship space; therefore, the décor of that space will be dignified and reverent. If you wish to have any of our church banners or other vestments removed or changed, you must consult with our Pastor or the Wedding Coordinator.
- All wedding décor must be removed from the building before the wedding party leaves.
- Furniture and/or furnishings can only be moved from their present location with the permission of the Wedding Coordinator. We will be as accommodating as possible, remembering that this is our worship space and should reflect our mission, beliefs, and values.

- No decorations are to be attached to the walls, woodwork or furnishings in a manner that will scar or mark them.
- Candlelight services are permitted in the sanctuary. Contained candles in glass globe holders are permitted. The candle holders must be free standing and not attached to furnishings. A Unity Candle may be used; however the wedding couple must provide their own stands for these. We do have a small table which can be used if desired. All candles used must be dripleless and a plastic protection mat must be in place. The wedding couple must supply the candles.

## **FLOWERS**

- Your florist will be helpful in recommending floral arrangements for your wedding. A single, low arrangement for the center of the altar is often sufficient. You are welcome to leave this floral arrangement for our Sunday worship service if you choose. Real flower petals are not allowed on the floor covering; you may choose silk flower petals instead. Floral arrangements are not allowed on the piano or organ.

## **PHOTOS**

- The Wedding Coordinator will work with your photographer(s) to help capture your special day.

## **REHEARSAL**

- The usual custom is to schedule the rehearsal a day or two before the wedding. It is important that all persons of the wedding party taking part in the service become acquainted with their role in the service. The officiant will guide the wedding party through the rehearsal. The rehearsal is the culmination of planning the wedding and is intended to be approximately 60 minutes.
- The Wedding Coordinator and the Sound Technician will also be present at your rehearsal.
- Rehearsals will NOT be scheduled on Thursday evenings.

## **ATTENDANTS**

- A minimum of two attendants are required to sign the proper legal documents. In large weddings, at least two additional people are needed to serve as ushers.

## **MARRIAGE LICENSE**

- The wedding couple will present their marriage license to the officiant no later than the time of the rehearsal.

## **POLICIES**

- No food or drink is allowed in the sanctuary. No drink with red coloring is allowed in the entire church. You are encouraged to bring water and a few light snacks to have in your respective dressing rooms before the ceremony. Consider snacks which will not soil any of your wedding clothing or our furnishings/carpeting should someone spill. You will be responsible for cleaning up your snacks.
- Smoking is allowed in designated area only, which is outside of the building on the south side (the exit door near the bathrooms) of the church.
- Alcoholic beverages are not to be brought to, served, or consumed on the church property, which includes the building and grounds. No member of the wedding party should indulge in the overuse of alcoholic beverages before either the rehearsal or the wedding. The abuse of alcohol is grounds for canceling the rehearsal or the wedding service.
- No rice or confetti may be used. If bird seed is used, it should be used **outside only**.
- The wedding party is responsible and liable for all breakage or damage done by the florist, photographer, caterer, baker, members of the wedding party and participants. First Congregational

Church, United Church of Christ, of Lowell, will not be held responsible for public liability or property damage incidental to this agreement.

## **WEDDING FEES:**

**MEMBERS/ REGULAR ATTENDEES (ONE YEAR OR LONGER): \$700**

**NON-MEMBER: \$1,100**

ALL FEES MUST BE MAILED TO THE CHURCH OFFICE NO LATER THAN THREE (3) WEEKS PRIOR TO THE WEDDING.

The fee includes the following:

- **Pastoral Services:** Two hours of counseling, Rehearsal, and Wedding. If using our own officiant, you are responsible for providing your guest officiant an appropriate fee for their services in addition to the fees stated above.
- **Wedding Coordinator** at the rehearsal and wedding ceremony, plus consultations prior to the wedding date.
- **Sound Technician** at the rehearsal and wedding ceremony.
- **Custodial** services.
- **Building use** for rehearsal and wedding ceremony.

**DEPOSIT:** A deposit is required in order to reserve your wedding and rehearsal dates. The deposit will be refunded within ten (10) business days after the wedding date only if the rented spaces are left in acceptable condition. If physical damage to the building or its contents occurs in the rented space, the cost to repair such damage will be deducted from the deposit (materials plus labor @ \$25/hour). If the space is left in disarray or requires extra and/or extensive cleaning after the building use (beyond what is normally anticipated: trash removal, cleaning the bathrooms, vacuuming, etc.), the cost to clean the space (\$25/hour) will be deducted from the deposit. In the event the cost of damage or cleaning exceeds the amount of the deposit, the building user agrees to reimburse the church for costs incurred to repair the damage and/or clean the space.

**MEMBERS/REGULAR ATTENDEES: \$100.00 deposit**

**NON-MEMBERS: \$300.00 deposit.**

In the event of cancellation, a portion of the deposit may be retained in order to compensate any staff who may have invested their time with regards to your event.

**Please write checks to:**

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF LOWELL  
865 Lincoln Lake SE  
PO Box 234  
Lowell, MI 49331

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF LOWELL,  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
Application for Wedding Ceremony

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

NAMES OF COUPLE: \_\_\_\_\_

Wedding Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Ceremony Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Rehearsal Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Rehearsal Time: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please note: We will NOT schedule rehearsals on Thursdays.)

WEDDING COUPLE CONTACT #1

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

WEDDING COUPLE CONTACT #2

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

OFFICIANT: \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT INFORMATION: \_\_\_\_\_

MUSICIAN: \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT INFORMATION: \_\_\_\_\_

**We have reviewed the First Congregational Church of Lowell, United Church of Christ Wedding Policy and fee structure, and agree to the stated policies and fees.**

Signatures: X \_\_\_\_\_ X \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_