

**VERONA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
WEDDING POLICY**

Marriage is a gift from God, given for the well-being of the entire human family. Christian marriage is a covenant through which a man and a woman are called to live together, before God, lives of faithful discipleship. During a service of Christian marriage a man and a woman make a lifelong commitment to each other. Their vows are publicly witnessed and acknowledged by the community of faith. In sum, Christian marriage involves a man and a woman making promises to God and to each other, and God's act of making promises to them.

All weddings conducted at Verona United Methodist Church are expected to be distinctly Christian.

1. Arrangements for the celebration of a wedding should be made at least six (6) months prior to the intended date of the ceremony. This will ensure scheduling conflicts are avoided, and will allow necessary flexibility in scheduling required pre-marital counseling sessions [usually a minimum of two (2)].

a. The Facility Use Review Team is the only persons authorized to reserve church facilities. The church office is staffed Monday through Friday, 8:30a.m. – 3 p.m. The church office telephone number is (540) 248-7777; the administrative assistant may be contacted via e-mail at: www.veronaumc.com.

b. The decision to celebrate a wedding is the pastor's prerogative.

c. The pastor appointed to serve Verona United Methodist Church is the *only* clergy person authorized to celebrate services of Christian marriage at this church; *any* requests for the inclusion of additional or alternate clergy as celebrants or officiates *shall be approved by the pastor*.

d. Premarital counseling is a firm requirement; the number and length of such sessions will be determined by the pastor. Attempts will be made to conduct counseling at dates/times convenient to the couple; however, the pastor's schedule may dictate that accommodations be made – flexibility and cooperation on the part of the couple is expected and required.

e. Christian marriage involves *a covenantal relationship*; all couples preparing for marriage are highly encouraged to participate regularly in the worship life of a Christian congregation of their choosing, and to begin the process of selecting a “church-home.” The deliberate practice of a Christian lifestyle will help ensure the success of the marriage covenant.

f. It is the couple's responsibility to obtain a valid marriage license issued by the Commonwealth of Virginia (please note that such **licenses are valid for 60 days** from date of issuance).

g. A valid Virginia marriage license *shall* be presented to the pastor at the time of the Rehearsal or *a minimum of 24 hours prior* to the wedding ceremony whichever is earlier.

2. All Christian weddings are, first and foremost, services of worship.

- a. Flash photography is **NOT** permitted at any point *during* the wedding ceremony.
- b. Non-flash photography is permitted during the wedding ceremony *only* if such photography can be conducted in a manner that does not interfere with, or detract from, the worship service.
- c. Video recording is permitted during the ceremony *only* from a stationary position assigned and/or approved by the church's wedding coordinator.
- d. It is the couple's responsibility to inform photographers, videographers, musicians, family, and friends of these policies.
- e. In order to ensure a worshipful attitude will be maintained throughout the ceremony, a wedding rehearsal *is required*; such rehearsals are normally conducted within **24 hours** of the wedding ceremony and last approximately one hour.

3. Use of the church's wedding coordinator is required. The pastor directs the wedding. The wedding coordinator assists the pastor and is responsible for ensuring the rehearsal and wedding ceremony are conducted in a worshipful manner in accordance with current church policies. The use of an additional ("personal") wedding consultant is permissible; however, this person is expected to work cooperatively with, and to be responsible to, the church's wedding coordinator.

- a. The church's wedding coordinator must be informed as to participating musicians *a minimum of 30 days prior* to the ceremony.
- b. The church's wedding coordinator must be informed of *all* music to be played during the service *a minimum of 30 days prior* to the ceremony.
- c. *Sacred* music is most appropriately played/sang during a Christian wedding; if in doubt as to the appropriateness of music you are considering, *consult the church's wedding coordinator*.
- d. Only *dripleless* candles may be used in the sanctuary.
- e. Furniture may be moved only with the permission of the church's wedding coordinator.
- f. Fresh *or* silk flower arrangements may be used. *Please note* the church is *not* equipped to refrigerate flowers; arrangements for refrigeration should be made with a florist or other facility. Flowers on the altar must be living; those off the altar may be silk
- g. The church's sound system may only be operated by a technician certified by Verona United Methodist Church. The specified fees for such services will apply and shall be paid when the Facility Use Agreement is approved.

4. Additional rules pertaining to the use of church facilities.

- a. Nothing (e.g., rice, confetti, etc.) is to be thrown *inside* the church building.

b. Rice/birdseed may be thrown *outside* the church building provided it is removed prior to the conclusion of the day's events. **Removal is the responsibility of the bride/groom or their designated agent(s). The church's custodial staff is responsible *only* for the church interior.**

c. The possession and/or use of alcohol and/or the use of tobacco products anywhere within church facilities is *strictly prohibited, and will result in forfeiture of ALL security deposits.*

d. The possession and/or use of alcohol anywhere on church grounds are *strictly prohibited, and will result in forfeiture of ALL security deposits.*

e. *ALL specified fees MUST be paid-in-full at the time of rehearsal. Separate checks are required for the wedding coordinator, facility rental, custodial services, and musicians.* Checks for the rental of facilities should be made payable to "Verona United Methodist Church."

5. For an explanation of the Fee and Security Deposit Schedule, see the Facility Use Agreement at Appendix A.

6. The following information is presented to help the bride and groom understand what is included in the list of services.

a. Custodial services for the rehearsal and wedding include the sanctuary, narthex, men's/ladies' rooms, and church parlor. *The church will be serviced prior to the rehearsal, prior to the wedding ceremony, and following the wedding.*

b. Custodial Services for the Betty Reeves Memorial Hall (BRMH)/Social Hall include the BRMH and kitchen for the rehearsal dinner and the reception. *The BRMH/Social Hall will be prepared prior to the rehearsal dinner, prior to the wedding reception, and following the reception.*

c. Wedding coordinator from the Verona UMC. *The wedding coordinator will assist the couple in planning the wedding ceremony and wedding reception, will attend the rehearsal, and will be present on the day of the wedding three hours prior to the ceremony. In the event the reception is held at Verona UMC, the wedding coordinator will be present.*

d. Pastor's services include pre-marital counseling, wedding planning, rehearsal, and wedding ceremony.

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ADOPTED BY THE CHURCH COUNCILOF VERONA UNITED METHODIST CHURCH ON May 17, 2011

BY:

Jerry R. VanLear, Church Council Chairperson