



*Weddings*

**SAINT STEPHENS**  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
903 East 2nd Street | Merrill, Wisconsin | 54452

## ***Weddings At Saint Stephens United Church of Christ***

### ***You Have Requested a Wedding***

Since you have come to Saint Stephens United Church of Christ for your wedding, we are sharing these policies with you. You will need to schedule with one of our current Pastors first, then with the Church Office/Administrative Director for the sanctuary. Our pastors do not keep all events in their calendars.

A request to reserve the date involves a signed and partially completed (couple's names, day of wedding, contact information) Wedding Information Form turned in to the Church Office/Administrative Director with the reservation fee of \$100.00. Request are granted on a first come first served basis, based on pastoral approval and payment received. **Oral requests or confirmations do not constitute reservations.**

Our weddings are characterized by dignity, reverence, joy, and the spirit of Christ. It is, first and foremost, an act of worship.

### ***The Focus is on God***

The focus of what happens should be on God, especially as revealed through Jesus Christ. The congregation that will gather with you on your wedding day also has reason to thank and praise God on your behalf. It is easy for details surrounding a wedding – the flowers, wedding dress, reception, and so on – to crowd out the central focus. In coming for a Christian wedding, it is your responsibility to see to it that God is uppermost in your wedding and in the hearts and minds of those who will attend.

### ***Decorum***

Alcohol and other drugs are not allowed anywhere on church grounds including the parking lot. Likewise, throwing of rice, flower petals, bird seed, confetti, etc., is PROHIBITED on church property.

### ***Meeting with the Minister***

All couples planning a wedding at Saint Stephens UCC will meet with the Pastor who will conduct the service at least three times prior to the wedding. Since a wedding is an intimate and enduring act, it is important that the officiant have an opportunity to become acquainted with you and discuss some of the deeper meanings of this most significant step of your life.

### ***Invitation for the Minister***

If you would like the Officiating Minister to say a prayer at the reception dinner, please send a formal invite to the Pastor. **The Officiating Minister does not assume an automatic invitation to rehearsal dinners, wedding dinners, or reception, nor is it always possible to attend. Should the wedding couple desire the Minister's presence at any such event, a written invitation should be sent to the Minister. Please also specify whether the spouse or family are included in the invitation.** He or she will make every effort to attend; however, there may be circumstances the Minister cannot accommodate. This also applies to the organist, soloist, and any other musicians or participants.

### ***The Marriage Service***

The Minister will provide an order of service, but will consider suggestions made by the couple, as well. The service should always have the worship of God as its central focus.

### ***The Rehearsal***

Unless yours is to be a small wedding attended by only a few friends or your immediate families, a rehearsal will be scheduled prior to the actual service. All members of the wedding party should be present. This includes the ushers, parents and grandparents of both bride and groom, soloist, musicians, as well as any children acting as ring bearers, flower girls, etc. The rehearsal will last about an hour. **Because of time limitations, please ensure that everyone is at the church on time.**

NO MATTER WHO YOU ARE, OR WHERE YOU ARE ON LIFE'S JOURNEY,  
YOU'RE WELCOME HERE!

## ***Flowers & Bulletins***

### ***Flowers:***

As soon as you have set the date for the wedding, you will probably want to contact a florist to discuss floral arrangements. Most florists in Merrill are familiar with Saint Stephens UCC and can provide appropriate arrangements.

### ***Bulletins:***

You may purchase bulletin covers and bring them to the church office 14 days prior to the service. Otherwise, we are happy to design a bulletin here. Bulletin printing is included in the Wedding Fee if you are holding a wedding here at Saint Stephens at which one of our pastors will officiate. All information must be provided at least two weeks prior to the wedding date to allow ample time for designing and creating the bulletins.

## ***Photography / Videotaping***

Because a wedding is a worship experience and therefore sacred, it should not be interrupted, nor should the congregation be distracted, by photographers or guests calling attention away from the service. It is understood, however, that you may want to have a record of this special day. Accordingly, prior to the actual beginning of the service, during the processional, one photographer may be in the center aisle, no more than 2/3 of the way down the aisle to photograph the entrance of the wedding party. Once the service begins, one photographer may take a few non-flash photographs from the balcony or from the rear of the center aisle. Please check with the officiating minister about the use of flash photography. Regarding videotaping: a video camera may be used from the sacristy. From this position, the altar area and the bride and groom are in full view. A video camera may also be used in the balcony. Any variance from these locations must be approved by the officiant. As many photographs as you wish may be posed after the service. You are responsible for advising your guests, photographers, and/or video tapers of these policies.

## ***The Marriage License***

Because marriage is a civil matter as well as a spiritual one, a marriage license must be obtained before a wedding can be conducted at Saint Stephens Church. A license is obtained from the office of the County Clerk in the county in which one of the parties resides. If one or both of the parties is a resident of Lincoln County, it should be obtained at the Register of Deeds office on Sales Street. There will be a fee and a waiting period of 5 business days after the license is applied for and before it is issued. The license is then good for 30 days after the date of issue.

In applying for a marriage license:

- The couple must provide an official birth certificate issued by the county or state of birth (hospital birth certificates or baptismal certificates are not accepted.)
- Each party must show proof of residence, and one must live in the county in which application is being made. Drivers license, rent receipt, utility bills are acceptable proof.
- Each party must be over the age of 18 or have written parental consent on a form provided by the County Clerk's office.

Please bring the license with you to the rehearsal so you will not have to be concerned with it the day of the wedding.

The minister will then complete the appropriate section and have it ready for you and your witnesses to sign the day of the wedding. The license will then be mailed into the County Register of Deeds. Official copies can be obtained through their office.

## ***Wedding Receptions***

It is recommended that wedding receptions be held at one of the many halls available for this purpose in the Merrill area. In the event a church member wants to use the Fellowship Hall for this purpose, special arrangements can be made with the church office. Saint Stephens is not in a position to offer food service.

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### ***Music for the Service***

It is your responsibility as a couple to arrange for the music for the service, subject to the approval of the Officiating Minister. Usually organ music is used at weddings, and Saint Stephens has a professional organist on staff that is thoroughly acquainted with the practices of the church and our complex instrument. If she is not available, a list of other pianists, along with possible soloists, is provided later in this booklet. Instruments other than the organ can also be used at weddings. Piano, flute, trumpet, harp, and violin are among these. Appropriate music for guitar can also add much to this special event. Congregational singing has recently gained popularity as a way for guests to participate in a service of marriage.

As you plan for music, please keep in mind that wedding music is to be appropriate for a service of the worship of God. Saint Stephens Church Council has stated: "A wedding is a worship service. It should, therefore, honor God, the creator of the marriage relationship. In keeping with the mood of worship, it is important that the music be of a religious, inspirational, and worshipful nature." Other music is certainly usable, but must be approved by an organist from Saint Stephens Church or the Officiating Minister.

### ***Officiating Minister***

It is policy for one of our current Minister(s) to officiate at weddings here at Saint Stephens. This is in accordance with the United Church of Christ policies. On the occasion that the minister(s) is/are not able to officiate, the minister(s) will recommend another minister from the community. An honorarium for the Officiating Pastor is included in the wedding fees set forth in this booklet.

### ***Organists***

Individuals who are familiar with the organ at Saint Stephens Church include:

Darlene Johnson	715.536.2226
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### ***Pianists***

Individuals who are familiar with the piano at Saint Stephens Church include:

Darlene Johnson	715.536.2226
Marlene Graap	715.218.5779
Ann Applegate	715.302.2230
Faye DeLosh	715.536.6017

### ***Soloists***

Individuals who have performed solos at Saint Stephens Church and may be available for weddings include:

Jim Bjorklund	715.536.3442
Andy Ament	715.218.0890
Terry Krueger	715.536.1204

Please contact soloists and pianists individually to inquire about availability, music selections, and fees. Each soloist and pianist determines his or her own fees, and you will need to work with them directly to make the necessary arrangements. Other soloists or pianists of your choosing are also welcome here at Saint Stephens.

## ***FEE SCHEDULE***

### **Member Weddings are \$425**

This includes use of the sanctuary, dressing rooms, rehearsal time, pew candles or lanterns and communion ware, an honorarium for the minister, bulletin printing, and an organist. (Fees for members of the church or children of church members.)

### **Non-Member Weddings are \$600**

This includes use of the sanctuary, dressing rooms, rehearsal time, pew candles or lanterns and communion ware, an honorarium for the minister, bulletin printing, and an organist.

### **Pastor Officiating at Off-Site Wedding: Suggested honorarium is \$250**

**\*\*A reservation fee of \$100 is expected to hold your date but will be applied to your wedding total.**

These fees allow wedding parties access to the building 2 hours before the wedding and 2 after wedding start time for a total of 4 hours. If you would like additional time or would like to decorate the day before, please check with the church office for availability.

If any of this presents a financial hardship, please talk with the officiating minister.

***Please note that smoking, alcohol consumption and throwing of rice, flower petals, bird seed, confetti, etc., is PROHIBITED on church property.***

Reservation Fee of \$100: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

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

Cash or Check # \_\_\_\_\_

**You Agree To Pay All Remaining Applicable Fees At Least 7 Days Prior To The Rehearsal.**

Fees remaining to be paid \_\_\_\_\_

**We have read and understand the Wedding policy at Saint Stephens UCC and accept these policies.**

BRide: \_\_\_\_\_

Groom \_\_\_\_\_

Signature

Date

Signature

Date



SAINT STEPHENS  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
715.536.7322

WEDDING INFORMATION FORM

WEDDING DATE \_\_\_\_\_ TIME \_\_\_\_\_  
REHEARSAL \_\_\_\_\_ TIME \_\_\_\_\_

**BRIDE**

**GROOM**

_____	NAME	_____
_____	ADDRESS	_____
_____	CITY/STATE	_____
_____	HOME PHONE	_____
_____	WORK PHONE	_____
_____	EMAIL	_____
_____	BIRTHDAY/AGE	_____
_____	FATHER'S NAME	_____
_____	MOTHER'S NAME	_____
_____	CHURCH MBRSHIP	_____
_____	BAPTISM— CHURCH/YR	_____
_____ YES _____ NO	PREVIOUSLY MARRIED	_____ YES _____ NO
_____	CHILDREN	_____
_____		_____

*THE WEDDING PARTY*

MAID/MATRON OF HONOR

BEST MAN

BRIDESMAIDS

GROOMSMEN



## WEDDING INFORMATION FORM CONT.

FLOWER GIRL

RING BEARER

USHERS

OTHERS

APPROXIMATE NO. OF GUESTS? \_\_\_\_\_

UNITY CEREMONY: \_\_\_\_\_ CANDLE \_\_\_\_\_ SAND \_\_\_\_\_ OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

BULLETINS – ARE WE PRINTING? \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO

PEW CANDLES NEEDED? \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO

DO YOU NEED A PIANIST/ORGANIST? \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO

SCRIPTURE SELECTION: \_\_\_\_\_

### MUSIC SELECTIONS

PRELUDE \_\_\_\_\_ COMPOSER \_\_\_\_\_

PROCESSIONAL \_\_\_\_\_ COMPOSER \_\_\_\_\_

BRIDE'S PROCESSIONAL \_\_\_\_\_ COMPOSER \_\_\_\_\_

SOLOIST \_\_\_\_\_ COMPOSER \_\_\_\_\_

RECESSIONAL \_\_\_\_\_ COMPOSER \_\_\_\_\_

POSTLUDE \_\_\_\_\_ COMPOSER \_\_\_\_\_

NEW ADDRESS OF BRIDE AND GROOM:

PASTOR'S SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

NOTES: