

WEDDING POLICY
FRONT STREET UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
BURLINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA

Revised January 22, 2020

* All plans must be approved by the officiating pastor.

A wedding is one of the happiest occasions in life. As a man and woman come to enter into a sacred covenant with God and one another, the Christian community surrounds them with the larger context of faith and calls upon God for his blessing on them and their home. The church is eager to make this occasion beautiful and memorable for Front Street members and their immediate family (children and grandchildren) only.

The wedding ceremony is a service of worship and contains the principal components of such a service. There is a call to worship, a reading of scripture, a pledge of faith and exchange of vows, and a prayer for blessing. The service may also include special music, the singing of hymns, a homily, an affirmation using a creed, and other elements of worship. If the Eucharist or Holy Communion is celebrated, it is to be made available to the whole congregation, not just the couple. (This is usually done by offering the elements by intinction. Worshipers come forward and receive a wafer of bread that has been dipped in the cup. Typically, the couple commune first and remain at the top of the chancel steps facing the congregation as others receive. Those not wishing to receive communion are invited to come forward as a sign of blessing to the couple.)

Because the nature of a wedding is the worship of God, all features including music, dress, procedure and conduct should be appropriate and consistent with the worship of God. What we do as God's people is done in his presence and in the congregation of faith.

Weddings are just as beautiful when only a small amount is spent on decorations as those that are more elaborate. The real beauty lies in the spirit, sincerity and devotion of those who take part. Those seeking a wedding marked by simplicity may discuss how this can be accomplished both in the counseling sessions with the minister and in consultations with the wedding coordinator.

This policy statement should be read carefully. Additional questions should be addressed to the church office, minister or wedding coordinator. Your wedding coordinator will review these procedures with you and answer any additional questions that you may have.

Arrangements and Important Dates

Contacting the Minister

At least eight weeks prior to the wedding an appointment should be made with the senior minister or staff minister of our church to review the details and plans. Except when impossible to do so, both bride and groom should attend this initial interview. The officiating minister will work with you and set additional appointments for sessions. Please bring the marriage license to the church at least one week prior to the wedding, so that it can be put with your file and will be available to be signed after the service.

Confirmation of Date & Time

No date, time, or reception facility is reserved until the sanctuary fee is paid and the wedding reservation sheet has been returned to the church office. If you are reserving a date more than a year in advance, we can reserve a wedding date and defer the payment of the fee until six months prior to the service. Even if you do not have all the details arranged, please get the information sheet to the church administrative assistant at the earliest possible time. You can supply additional information as arrangements are made.

ALL completed forms are to be in the church office no later than 6 weeks prior to the wedding. All fees and honorariums for organist and minister are to be paid when completed forms are submitted. Should you need to change the date or cancel arrangements, the deposit will be returned if no costs have been incurred by the church. The deposit assures you that you have the church reserved for that date.

Participation by Other Ministers

If it is the wish of the bride or groom to invite another minister to assist in the ceremony, the request should be made to the senior minister, who will then extend the invitation to the guest minister. Close friends of the family or relatives who are ministers may be invited to have a significant role in the celebration of the wedding. A minister from the staff of Front Street will be the minister in charge of the celebration of the marriage. The ministers will work out the details of how the service is to be arranged.

Because of the significance of Holy Week, there will be no weddings during this time. Generally, scheduling weddings on Sunday is not possible. Weddings on or near holidays are often difficult to schedule.

Wedding Coordinators

As soon as possible, after the date is reserved, the bride should select and call a consultant from the list in this packet. Front Street Church is very fortunate to have volunteer wedding coordinators to assist you with your wedding. These are members of the church who are familiar with church traditions, etiquette and the policies of Front Street Church. They are trained by the Worship Committee to assist couples and families as they prepare for the wedding and to represent the church and its policies in the coordination of the wedding.

Outside consultants are not used in the direction of weddings at Front Street. The position of the church is that all weddings are services of worship and thus under the direction of the officiating pastor. The wedding coordinators from the church provide direction for the ceremony and coordination of all activities surrounding the wedding itself.

You are not expected to include the wedding coordinator in your social activities, but a fee should be paid (see Fees, page 7). Her only role is to assist you and coordinate details of the ceremony. Your coordinator will meet with you at your earliest convenience to discuss your plans and arrangements. She will ask you to complete the bridal party information sheet so that she will be better able to understand your wishes. If no meeting is possible because of the bride living far away, a telephone conference shall be held at least two months before the wedding so the wedding coordinator and bride can work out the many details of the wedding.

Receptions

Wedding receptions may be arranged for Aldersgate Hall, Reading Area or the Heritage Center. Please notify the church administrative assistant or wedding coordinator if you plan to reserve one of these facilities as soon as possible to assure its availability. A request for these facilities is included in the Wedding Reservation Sheet. The wedding coordinator will advise caterers in the use of kitchen facilities. Plates and other utensils are not provided by the church. All washing of dishes must be done at the caterer's facilities. The Wedding Coordinator will be happy to discuss any questions you may have.

Seating Capacity

Weddings are performed at Front Street for members of the church and their families. Front Street United Methodist Church seats approximately five hundred and fifty (550) people in the nave and one hundred (100) people in the chapel.

Rehearsal

The minister, organist and wedding coordinator will be present for the rehearsal. Rehearsals begin promptly. **Punctuality is important.** Often the staff has other commitments following the rehearsal (or

another rehearsal scheduled). The bride and groom should encourage their wedding party to allow sufficient time to arrive at the church at the appointed hour.

The bride and groom are also requested to advise members of the wedding party that appropriate behavior is expected by all who are part of the wedding. The use of alcoholic beverages both before the wedding rehearsal and before the wedding is prohibited. There will be no alcoholic beverages allowed on church property. Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the church. The wedding rehearsal will be conducted by the pastor. There will be a brief word of greeting and a prayer. Following this, the wedding coordinator will direct the members of the wedding party in the responsibilities of the ceremony.

Responsibility for Safekeeping of Personal Items

The church discourages bringing valuables to the church, since they will be left unattended. We will make every reasonable effort to protect personal items such as wedding dresses, purses, or silver brought to the church to be used in a wedding or a reception. The church regrets that it cannot be liable for items lost, stolen or damaged. Please notify members of your wedding party that they bring valuables to the church at their own risk.

Dressing at the Church

For your convenience, the church provides a dressing room for the bride and her attendants. Your consultant will acquaint you with these facilities. Please remove all articles of apparel, boxes and other items immediately following the wedding. Consult with the coordinator if the groom and his attendants would like to dress at the church.

Flowers and Other Decorations

The nave and the chapel are places of aesthetic appeal, beauty and inspiration. The following suggestions are given to preserve the spiritual atmosphere in the church and safeguard the furnishings.

The church will be opened two hours before the service unless special arrangements are made. No decorations are to be placed on the altar other than the regular altar appointments, the cross, altar and wedding candles provided by the church and flower arrangements in the two vases. The flowers must never be higher than the crossbar of the cross (sanctuary - 33" from bottom of vase; chapel - 24" from bottom of vase). None of these appointments may be removed. We ask that you do not use artificial flowers or artificial greenery on the altar. Due to other church functions, no decorations can be placed in the sanctuary before the reserved wedding date. The flower girl may use silk rose petals. All flowers for the wedding party should be left by the florist in the narthex of the church.

If the bride would like to have the altar flowers used for the following Sunday morning services, this request should be made to the church administrative assistant as early as possible after the church is reserved. If there is any change in your plans, please notify the church administrative assistant as soon as possible so that flower arrangements may be made for the Sunday church service. If altar flowers have already been provided for that Sunday, the wedding flowers may be placed in the narthex with an appropriate notice in the bulletin concerning their placement and the couple they honor.

Altar candles are provided by the church. The Paschal Candle may be used as a memory candle if desired. If candles/globes are to be used in the windows, the church provides a liquid wax candle that will be installed for you by our Candle Committee. These candles are serviced only by this committee. Be sure to notify the florist if greenery or other decoration is to be used around the window candles. The window candles are placed in the corners of the windows because the air conditioning and heating vents are in the center of the window. All arrangements for candles will be the responsibility of the wedding coordinator or church staff. If acolytes or ushers are to light these candles, it must be done with the supervision of the wedding coordinator. There is a fee for the use of the liquid wax candles and your Wedding Coordinator will answer any further questions that you may have.

Front Street United Methodist Church has a Unity Candle and stand available for weddings. This stand requires two 9" X 1 ½" candles and one 9" X 2" candle. Candles are provided by the church. If you

choose to use a Unity Candle (whether provided by your florist or the church) protection must be placed underneath the stand to catch wax drips and spills. The Unity Candle uses the base of the Paschal Candle, so the Paschal Candle isn't available for a memory candle. Your florist is responsible for providing this protective floor cover.

We ask that your florist fully protect the furnishings and floor from moisture and candle wax. Persons responsible for decorating will also be responsible for any damage done to the building or furniture. The chancel area does not lend itself to multiple candelabra and greenery. Please keep flowers and decorations to a minimum. The florist should check with the wedding coordinator or organist on placement of decorations. In order to protect the furnishings of the sanctuary and comply with fire codes, no decorations of any kind may be used in the aisle or attached to the pews, communion rail or wedding kneeler, with the exception of pew markers for reserved seating. They should be attached to the pews in a way that causes no damage. All decorations should be removed immediately after the wedding so that the sanctuary is in readiness for other church functions.

Birdseed and bubbles are permitted outside the church.

Music

The church considers the wedding ceremony to be a sacred service. Therefore, only music suitable for a worship service at Front Street should be selected and must be approved by the organist/choirmaster. The organist/choirmaster will gladly assist in the musical selections. Normally, our organist plays for all weddings in the church. Any request for an organist other than the church organist must be approved by the organist and he/she must approve the musical selections even though he/she is not playing. Taped music is not allowed in the service.

The use of soloists should be discussed with the Organist/Choirmaster at the initial interview regarding music. Please understand that adequate time for rehearsals with soloists must be planned well in advance of the date of the ceremony.

It is desirable for the soloist to attend the wedding rehearsal. His/her attendance helps participants become familiar with the service. However, if the organist and soloist can practice at some other time, it will save time for the wedding party to rehearse its part in the wedding during the designated wedding rehearsal time. If for some reason it is necessary for the soloist to actually practice his/her music during the rehearsal time that can be arranged.

Photography

Please advise your photographer and guests that respect and reverence for this religious ceremony is very important. We ask that photographers or guests not make pictures in the sanctuary once the wedding processional has begun or during the ceremony which includes the recessional and exiting of guests. No photographs will be taken in the chancel area at any time during the service.

Your professional photographer may make a limited number of time exposures with silent shutters from the balcony during the ceremony. When the service is completed, the wedding party will be escorted to the chancel area for wedding pictures.

You will need to arrange for your own video photographer. Equipment must be stationary in the balcony for the entire service and set up prior to the wedding. No special arrangements with regard to lighting or outlets can be provided for video equipment, so the video photographer should come prior to the wedding to locate outlets and bring their own extension cords if needed.

To have a close-up video of the ceremony, a very small video camera may be placed in the choir loft before the wedding ceremony begins. It must be placed in such a way as to be "invisible" from the congregation. It must be turned on before seating and turned off after the church has emptied. Your wedding coordinator can give you the name of a church member who is familiar with these proceedings and can be employed to do this for you for a small fee.

Guidelines for Use of The George Anthony Heritage Center

All requests for use of this area should be made to the Church Administrative Assistant. Folding chairs and tables are available to be set up by the custodial staff if requested when the room is reserved.

The Trustees have approved these Guidelines for Use of The Heritage Center that should enable us to use it often and fully but with due care:

- a. While food may be served and eaten in The Heritage Center, the kitchen is equipped to serve only small groups. The User is responsible for cleanup.
- b. All serving tables should be set up on the marble area. No hot dishes may be placed on the glass topped tables. Red punch is NOT to be used in this area (there is no way to get those stains out of the carpet - a rule we already have in place for the Reading Area.)
- c. Flower arrangements may be used on the tables with glass tops.
- d. The basic furniture pieces should remain in place and not be moved. Too, the memorabilia on the shelves, along with accessories, are to remain in place (being moved only by authorized persons at scheduled times).
- e. Receptions will require the use of The Heritage Center, the Reading Area, and the kitchen. This will necessitate a cleaning fee of \$175 for such events.

Nursery

Front Street United Methodist Church will provide a nursery for weddings when there is a need. Your wedding coordinator will arrange for childcare under the Safe Sanctuaries guidelines.

Childcare will be provided for preschool children only (infants through 5 years in age). The fee is \$100. This is for up to ten (10) children. If there are more than ten children the fee will be \$150.

In order to allow sufficient time to schedule the nursery workers, your wedding coordinator should be given at least ten (10) days notice of the number of children expected.

Parents of children should arrive early enough to allow time to complete an information form (available in the nursery) for each child. This information is required before a child can be left in our care.

Payment for the childcare should be made at least 10 days prior to the wedding. Childcare providers are employees of Front Street Church and will receive their payment through our regular payroll.

Fees:

Custodial Service/Sanctuary	\$150
Custodial Service/Chapel	\$ 50
Globes and wax for Window Candles (18)	\$ 50
Reception - Heritage Center/Reading Area/Kitchen	\$175
Reception - Aldersgate Hall/Kitchen	\$130
Organist	\$400, payable to Front Street United Methodist Church. (Additional musicians hired by the wedding couple are paid privately.)
Minister	Honorarium is \$150, payable to Front Street United Methodist Church.
Video/Sound	\$100
Wedding Coordinator/Assistant	\$150/\$75

The \$150 Custodial Service/Sanctuary fee or the \$50 Custodial Service/Chapel fee is to be paid at the time the church is reserved for the wedding and the date placed on the calendar. All other fees should be paid prior to the wedding.

Please make checks payable to Front Street United Methodist Church.

Wedding Coordinators:

Mary Holden Burke 547 Tarleton Ave. Burlington, NC 27215 Home Phone Number – 336-226-5105	Lisa Thomas 411 Billingham Dr. Burlington, NC 27215 Home Phone Number - 336 570-337
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Wedding Reservation Sheet

** RETURN SHEETS (pages 8-10) TO THE CHURCH ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT**

(This sheet must be completed and returned with custodial service fee in order to reserve the date for your wedding on the church calendar.)

Wedding Date	Time
Rehearsal Date	Time
Minister	
Wedding Coordinator (chosen from list)	

Wedding to take place in Sanctuary or Chapel

Are flowers to remain on altar for Sunday Service? Yes , No If yes, state information for bulletin.

Are the window candles being used? Yes , No , Number being used? (18 = 2 in each window) _____

Is the kneeler to be used? Yes , No

Reception to be at the church: Yes , No (If yes, where _____.)

Bride's Full Name			
Address		Email:	
City, State, Zip			
Phone Numbers	Home: ()	Cell: ()	
Church Affiliation			
Bride's Parents	Phone No. ()		
Address			
City, State, Zip			
Groom's Full Name			
Address		Email:	
City, State, Zip			
Phone Numbers	Home: ()	Cell: ()	
Church Affiliation			
Groom's Parents	Phone No. ()		
Address			
City, State, Zip			
Couple's Address after ceremony, if known.	City	State	Zip

For Office Use:

Date Custodial Service Pd.: _____, Sanctuary - \$_____, Chapel - \$ _____, HC/RA/Kitchen - \$_____, AH/Kitchen - \$ _____

Date Other Fees Pd.: _____, Candles - \$_____, Minister - \$_____, Nursery - \$_____, Organist - \$_____,

Wedding Coor. - \$_____, Wedding Coor.Assistant - \$_____ Video/Sound - \$_____

Wedding Coordinator Information Sheet

Bride	
Groom	

Wedding Date	Time
Rehearsal Date	Time

Maid of Honor	
Matron of Honor	
Best Man	

Bridesmaids

Groomsmen

Other Attendants

Other Persons Having Part in Ceremony (If minister(s), give address and phone number)

Name	Role

Procession:

Who is to accompany the bride down the aisle? _____

Grandparents to be seated:

Bride's	Groom's

Other persons to be seated:

Is the Bride to dress at the church? Yes No

Is the Bride's room to be used? Yes No

Are the church candles and globes to be used? Yes No

Unity candle being used? Yes No

Wedding kneeler to be used? Yes No

Is the Wedding Banner to be used? Yes No

Are flowers to remain on altar for Sunday Service? Yes No

Special Instructions for the Ceremony (In Consultation with Minister)

Photographer		Phone No.
Videographer		Phone No.
Florist		Phone No.
Caterer		Phone No.

Organist Information Sheet

Bride's Full Name			
Address			Email:
City, State, Zip			
Phone Numbers	Home:()	Cell:()	
Groom's Full Name			
Address			Email:
City, State, Zip			
Phone Numbers	Home:()	Cell:()	
Couple's Address after ceremony, if known			

Wedding Date	Time
Rehearsal Date	Time

Minister _____

Wedding Coordinator (chosen from list) _____

Wedding to take place in Sanctuary __ or Chapel __

Organist	
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Name, Phone Numbers, and Email of other instrumentalists:

Name, Phone Number, and Email of Soloist(s):

Other Information:
