

OUR BELIEFS

Highlands United Methodist Church affirms that nothing can separate anyone from the love of God. We invite all to worship, wonder, and discover God's grace as we aspire to create a safe space for all to participate fully in the life of this community of faith. We are called to shine as a beacon of hope, grace, belonging and respect for all people. Regardless of age, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, family, financial status, nationality, physical or mental ability, past or future, there is room for you at Highlands.

The service of Christian marriage is a beautiful and joyful covenant between two people who are in love with one another and wish to lead a life together in holy matrimony. We at Highlands United Methodist Church look forward to your wedding day with eager anticipation and desire to work with you. We pray God's blessings on the preparation and the service of Christian Marriage. God instituted marriage, and you have the assurance God will be with you throughout your preparations for your marriage and all the years of it.

As a Reconciling congregation, Highlands United Methodist Church is committed to being a fully inclusive congregation. We practice a non-discriminatory wedding policy at Highlands, and we celebrate the love shared by all couples, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, who desire to be united in marriage.

OUR GOAL

Highlands United Methodist Church desires to provide the best possible services to its members and friends in all their spiritual needs. To accomplish this purpose the church and staff have established the following policies, guidelines and fees relating to your rehearsal and wedding.

SEATING CAPACITY

Sanctuary (including the balcony) 600

Sanctuary main floor seating – 500

Sanctuary balcony seating – 100

Chapel - 50

SCHEDULING YOUR WEDDING

Highlands United Methodist Church does its best to accommodate every party wishing to use its facilities for weddings. All weddings must be scheduled a minimum of six months in advance. Members will have first choice of dates. Non-members may be penciled in on our calendar with a six month waiting period. At six months prior to the desired wedding date, if a member has not requested the date, then any non-members will be permanently added to the calendar after a deposit is made.

Before your wedding can be placed on our church calendar you will need to have confirmation from a pastor of Highlands and a \$500.00 non-refundable deposit is required (which will be applied to your fees). The balance must be received by the church office at least one month prior the wedding. Checks can be made out to Highlands United Methodist Church and fees will be distributed by the Financial Secretary.

DATES AND TIMES EXCLUDED

Because of the increased number of church services and activities during certain times of the year, a few dates are unavailable for weddings. Weddings may be scheduled throughout the year except during the Lenten season, including holy Week (the week before and including Easter), on Sundays and on staff holiday weekends (New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.) Weddings are not scheduled during the Advent Season – the four weeks before Christmas day.

Non-member weddings are to be scheduled between 2:00 and 6:00 pm. This is to ensure that the arrival of the wedding party does not conflict with regularly scheduled Saturday morning activities at Highlands. Access to the church before noon will not be permitted.

RELATIVES OF MEMBERS

The fee for non-member use of the sanctuary will be waived for children and grandchildren of active and contributing members of Highlands United Methodist Church.

CLERGY

A pastor of Highlands or a licensed staff member will officiate the wedding ceremony. Counseling and planning sessions will be scheduled between one of the pastors of Highlands and the couple to be married. These sessions will serve to enable our clergy to become acquainted with the couple, to discuss the nature of Christian marriage, to explore the marriage expectations of the couple, and to examine the wedding service.

WEDDING DIRECTORS

A Highlands' wedding director is required and will be chosen based on availability. Once the wedding is confirmed and the date is set, the director will contact you approximately six months in advance to assist in the details concerning the wedding.

WEDDING SUITE

A wedding suite is available for the couple and their attendants to use. A secondary space is also available should each person prefer to prepare for the ceremony in a separate area with their attendants. It is advised that someone is assigned to monitor, collect and remove your personal possessions because the church cannot accept responsibility for clothing, jewelry or other valuables left at the church.

RECEPTIONS

The Highlands fellowship hall is available for wedding receptions for members only. The fees for the reception hall may be found on the fee schedule page. No alcohol is permitted.

GENERAL

The use of alcohol, drugs, tobacco products, and vaping on church property is strictly prohibited.

Highlands is unable to provide a nursery for rehearsals and weddings.

The sanctuary does not have a piano. Pre-recorded music is not allowed.

CHECK LIST

What to do first

1. Check with church office about available date
2. Line up Highlands' clergy
3. Set up counseling with clergy
4. \$500 Deposit turned into church office to secure the date

6 months out

Wedding information form completed, signed, and returned to church office

5 months out

Wedding director will contact you and set up a meeting with him/her and Choir Master/organist

2 months out

First draft of wedding bulletin to the church office

1 month out

Remainders of fees are to be paid in full

Photographer, Videographer, and Florist consent forms due in church office

10 days out

Final draft of bulletin into the church office

1 day out

Marriage documentation brought to rehearsal. Church will provide a Certificate of Christian Marriage following the service

MUSIC

The Choir Master and Organist plays for all weddings and will play for 20 minutes prior to the wedding ceremony, will accompany any vocal solos, and will play all music that is a part of the service. He will schedule a consultation with the couple for the purpose of selecting organ, additional instrumentalists (e.g., string quartet, trumpeter) and vocal music. All wedding music (organ, instrumental and vocal) needs to be selected from the approved list and/or approved by the Choir Master and Organist.

Pre-Recorded music is not allowed.

Soloist: If a soloist is desired a member from Highlands' choir may be scheduled to sing upon the request of the couple. Please do not engage guest soloist or instrumentalists for your wedding until you have had a consultation with the Choir Master and Organist. Highlands' Tower Bells are thirteen historic bells that you may elect to be played at your service. The bells are played approximately 20 minutes prior to the wedding, chime the hour before the service begins, chime before the procession, and play for 10-15 minutes following the service.

PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEOGRAPHY

No extra lighting or flash pictures shall be taken in the Sanctuary from the time the guests begin to arrive through the conclusion of the ceremony. During the wedding service, videography and photography, without flash, may be taken from the Narthex and balcony of the Sanctuary. Flash pictures may be taken only as the couple leaves the church.

Because a wedding ceremony is a time of sacred worship, Highlands does not allow photography to be taken by guests. We suggest that in the worship program or bulletin a request be made that no photography should be taken and all cell phones should be turned off.

We encourage all photos to be taken before the ceremony. If there are photos to be taken after the ceremony, the party will have 1 hour following the conclusion of the ceremony. All members of the wedding party must depart the sanctuary no later than one hour following the ceremony to allow for cleanup and reset for Sunday worship.

WEDDING BULLETINS

Wedding bulletins, if you choose to have a bulletin, will be done by Highlands UMC in the format that reflects our worship style.

DECORATIONS

No more than four arrangements of flowers or greenery may be used behind the altar rail. The flowers on the ledge behind the altar will be placed in 5" papier mâché containers and placed in the two urns furnished by the church. The arrangements should not exceed 25" from the top of the urns. These flowers should not hang over the altar where they are a fire hazard and may not soil the Fair Linen altar cloth. Artificial flowers may not be used, except for flower petals used by a flower girl. **Real petals may not be used anywhere on the property of Highlands United Methodist Church.**

The paraments will be changed to coronation for weddings. Candles, other than those on the altar, must be equipped with spring loaded cylinders or be made with wax that does not drip. Highlands does not provide unity candles.

Family pews may be decorated with small arrangements of flowers, greenery, and/or ribbons. No arrangements or draping is allowed on the chancel or choir rails.

All decorations must be removed from the building after the wedding unless special arrangements have been made with the Wedding Director prior to the wedding. The altar arrangements will be left to be a part of the following Sunday's worship service. We are happy to place a notice in the Sunday bulletin noting that the flowers are from and in celebration of your wedding or are in honor or memory of someone you hold dear.

**HIGHLANDS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
WEDDING FEES**

SANCTUARY

*Sanctuary: rehearsal and wedding (non-member fee)	\$3000.00
*Minister	\$ 400.00
*Wedding Director	\$ 300.00
*Choir Master and Organist	\$ 300.00**
*Sexton: rehearsal and wedding	\$ 200.00
<small>(Sexton fee (\$200) is for rehearsal and wedding days. This includes up to 3 hours prior to the ceremony and 1 hour after the ceremony. Each additional hour before or after will be \$50/hour.)</small>	
*Security Officers (2 Officers for 2 hours)	\$ 200.00
*Sound Technician	\$ 100.00
Optional:	
Wedding Bulletins (up to 200, each additional 50 add \$25)	\$ 150.00
Bell Chimer	\$ 100.00
Highlands' Acolytes, crucifers, banner and torch bearers	\$ 50.00 each

CHAPEL

All Highlands UMC wedding policies and procedures apply to chapel weddings

*Chapel Wedding (non-member fee)	\$1000.00
*Minister	\$ 400.00
*Wedding Director	\$ 300.00
*Sexton: rehearsal and wedding	\$ 200.00
<small>(Sexton fee (\$200) is for rehearsal and wedding days. This includes up to 3 hours prior to the ceremony and 1 hour after the ceremony. Each additional hour before or after will be \$50/hour.)</small>	
*Security Officers (2 Officers for 2 hours)	\$ 200.00
Optional:	
Pianist	\$ 200.00
Wedding Bulletins (up to 50)	\$ 50.00

RECEPTION

FELLOWSHIP HALL – *Members only*

Outside caterers will not have access to the kitchen.

All music will need to be approved through the Church Administrator

*Sexton: rehearsal and wedding	\$ 400.00
*Church Administrator	\$ 300.00
*Security Officers (2 Officers)	\$ 50.00/hour/officer
Pianist	\$ 200.00

*required fee

**fee may increase depending upon scheduling of soloists or instrumentalists. All arrangements should be made through the Choir Master and Organist.

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