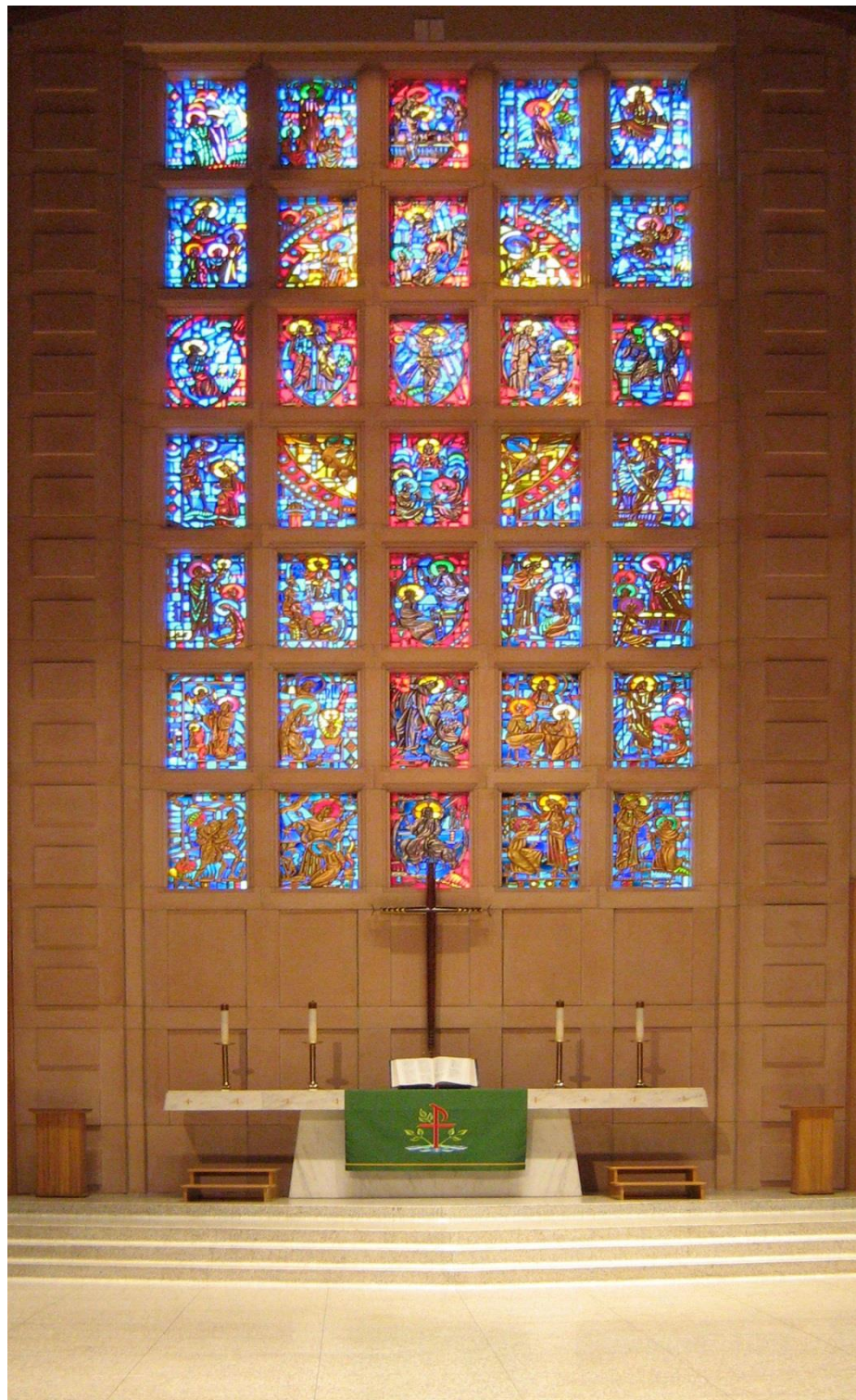


Wedding Policy and Procedures



FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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WEDDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

First United Methodist Church (FUMC) is a beautiful place of worship and is the “church home” of a congregation of more than 2,400 family members. Our facilities are constantly in use by the church and other members of our community. The following procedures are established as church policy to ensure that weddings and related celebrations may be properly “folded-into” the regular activities of the church. Our aim is to help you celebrate your wedding as a joyous event to long remember and to avoid schedule conflicts and last-minute “surprises.”

Marriage ceremonies in the church are worship services and are one of the most sacred rites a pastor performs under church authority. The pastors and staff of FUMC wish to extend you every courtesy and strongly urge you to make thorough preparations so that your church wedding may be a glorious spiritual experience.

The following FUMC wedding procedures require your careful review and faithful compliance. Scheduling your wedding at FUMC indicates you have read and understand all the provisions of this “Wedding Policy.” It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to advise the florist, photographer, videographer, caterer and any other outside service/equipment provider of the church’s policies and procedures. By signing the covenant sheet, you agree to comply with the policies and procedures in their entirety.

The FUMC Clergy, Wedding Secretary, Staff Members present at the rehearsal and wedding, or the FUMC Wedding Coordinator are responsible for the administration and their decisions must be respected by all involved in the wedding ceremony.

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RESERVATIONS

You **may begin the reservation process** by inquiring about available dates and times for facilities and pastors **through the wedding secretary** at the church office, submitting a completed application form, paying the deposit of \$250.00 and paying the building use fee for the Sanctuary, Chapel and/or any room used for your reception.

NOTE: The deposit and building use fee does not guarantee a wedding date. It is only the first step in the application process.

If a **wedding is canceled** with 30 or more days' notice a full refund of deposit and fees will be made to the bride/groom. With less than 30 days' notice, the following fees will be retained: \$25 processing fee, \$25 organist consultation fee, and \$25 FUMC Wedding Coordinator consultation fee. Remaining deposit and fees will be refunded to the bride/groom.

To qualify for member fees and donations, an individual (bride or groom, parents/guardians or grandparents of bride or groom, or children of the bride or groom) must be a member of FUMC for a period of no less than six months prior to the ceremony. Members submitting applications more than 12 months in advance of the requested wedding date will receive confirmation of wedding date and time 12 months prior to the ceremony.

Persons who have been members for less than six months may schedule their wedding 6 months prior to the ceremony. **Nonmembers** may schedule their wedding (6 months) prior to the ceremony.

A FUMC Pastor will be present at the wedding and all rehearsals. Should a bride or groom from another United Methodist church desire to use the facilities, the **pastor of said church may make written request** for use of our facilities, directed to and to be approved by the FUMC Senior Pastor. The Senior Pastor will then confer with the visiting clergy about officiating at the ceremony. All weddings will require the leadership of the FUMC wedding coordinator.

Wedding announcements and other types of **public announcements** indicating use of FUMC facilities should be released only after the wedding date has been confirmed on the church calendar by the wedding secretary. **The bride/groom will receive written confirmation.**

Weddings, rehearsal, and receptions will normally be scheduled on any day except the following days: **Sundays**, Friday and Saturday before Palm Sunday, Holy Week, Friday and Saturday before Easter Sunday, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving week, Christmas Eve/Day, New Year's Eve/Day, or Rio Texas Annual Conference (mid June).

Weddings and receptions at FUMC may be **scheduled to start** between the hours of 9 a.m. and 8 p.m. All wedding reception events must be completed by 10 p.m. (Weddings with receptions at FUMC must start no later than 7 p.m.).

After the application has been submitted and a confirmation has been received by the bride/groom, **requests for any change(s)** (date or time of rehearsal or wedding, pastor or organist, and/or facility) **must be submitted to the wedding secretary.**

FACILITIES AVAILABLE FOR SCHEDULING

<u>Wedding Facilities</u>	<u>Capacity</u>
Sanctuary	1,000
Chapel	100
Prayer Chapel	12

<u>Reception Facilities</u>	<u>Capacity</u>
Fellowship Hall	400
Parlor	60
Chapel Parlor	40
Bay Room	75

FACILITY RESTRICTIONS

- No smoking in any room of the building. Doing so will result in loss of deposit.
- No alcoholic beverages (including liquor, beer, champagne, wine) on the premises or in the building. Doing so will result in loss of deposit.
- Hats may not be worn in the Sanctuary or Chapel during rehearsal or wedding service by the groom or members of the groom's party.
- **No flower petals, rice, confetti, birdseed, etc.**, may be thrown inside any part of the building. Birdseed may be thrown outside the building. Silk flower petals may be used inside the building.
- Candlesticks and altar Bibles in the Sanctuary or Chapel may not be removed.
- Furniture in the Parlors may not be removed.
- FUMC recommends that **children** participating in the wedding ceremony **be 5 years of age or older.**

WEDDING STAFF:

PASTOR

A FUMC Pastor will be present at the wedding and all rehearsals.

One of the pastors from FUMC will officiate and be the "clergy in charge" at every wedding. Visiting clergy may participate at the request of the couple, after consultation with the officiating pastor, and will assist in the service at the direction of the host officiating pastor.

During the application process, the FUMC (Officiating) Senior Pastor must approve visiting clergy (assisting) participating in the wedding ceremony.

The FUMC Officiating Pastor will review with the visiting or assisting clergy their participation in various parts of the wedding ceremony.

All couples to be married at FUMC are required to consult with the pastor performing the ceremony regarding the **pre-marital sessions**.

Scheduling of the pre-marital sessions is the responsibility of the couple being married. The Pastor may request multiple counseling sessions and reserves the right to decline performing the ceremony if the situation warrants.

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH Wedding Coordinator

The bride/groom are required to be assisted by a FUMC Wedding Coordinator for **all** weddings. The bride and groom must consult with their FUMC Wedding Coordinator at least 30 days prior to the wedding. The bride and groom are required to provide the FUMC Wedding Coordinator with a floor plan from the florist at this consultation.

Use of a professional consultant does not preclude the need for a FUMC Wedding Coordinator as described in the previous paragraph.

MUSIC – Director of Music, Worship and Arts, 884-0391.

The Service of Christian Marriage is a part of the ritual of The United Methodist Church, and as such, all music should be chosen to reflect an attitude of **worship and praise of God**. Music from the secular “chart,” “top ten”, and Broadway are considered inappropriate and may not be used.

It is the responsibility of the bride and groom to contact and consult with the Director of Music, Worship and Arts at least 30 days prior to the wedding concerning both the selection of all music and soloist(s) and/or other musicians for their wedding.

Guest musicians (organists, pianists, soloists, instrumentalists) are certainly welcome but may be used only with approval of the Director of Music, Worship and Arts. **No recorded music may be used.**

A pipe organ is available in both the Sanctuary and Chapel, and **the FUMC Organist normally plays** for all weddings. If a guest organist is requested, the Director of Music, Worship and Arts will determine if the guest qualifies to play the church organs.

If a guest soloist is used, we recommend you select someone who has musical experience. Vocalists/Instrumentalists shall provide the original copies sheet music if approved and not in the FUMC library. (NOTE: Plan ahead, as it may take some weeks to get music which has to be ordered.) Vocalists are expected to know the music before rehearsal with the organist.

Use of various other instruments are encouraged and may be used as a part of the ceremony upon approval by the Director of Music, Worship and Arts.

RECEPTIONS – Director of Food Ministry, 884-0391.

FUMC offers several rooms suitable for wedding receptions. The Church requires that you request a bid for catering services from our Director of Food Ministry for any reception scheduled at FUMC. After a review of that bid, you have the right to select an outside caterer. **As soon as the caterer is selected, it is the responsibility of the bride or groom to advise the Wedding Secretary of that choice for the Church records.**

FUMC reserves the right to approve the caterer. Any outside caterer is required to meet with the Director of Food Ministry at least 30 days prior to the wedding and should call the Director of Food Ministry for an appointment. Outside caterers must provide the appropriate Food Manager and Food Handler permits to the Director of Food Ministry and proof of insurance for all of their employees.

- Use of the kitchen requires the caterer to use properly certified kitchen personnel. There is a charge of \$100.00 if the caterer wants access to the kitchen and a charge of \$50.00 for a church employee to oversee the kitchen use.
- The caterer will provide linens, plates, cups, serving trays, punch bowls, etc., and make all arrangements required by the bride and groom.
- The caterer will provide necessary maid service for washing dishes as well as any kitchen-cleaning incidental to the reception itself.
- **Immediately following the reception, the caterer or wedding family members must remove all decorations, linens and/or table coverings, dishes and serving trays, equipment and supplies, and clear all tables so that church custodians may clean the reception room.**
- The caterer must be out of the building by 11 p.m.

If audio or visual equipment in the Fellowship Hall is used, a FUMC technician must be used.

REHEARSAL

- The rehearsal will be scheduled at the time the completed application is submitted. All rehearsals will begin at 6:00 p.m.
- **The rehearsals will begin promptly at the time scheduled** in order to avoid conflicts with other scheduled church events. Rehearsals shall be conducted in a dignified and reverent manner.
- The bride and groom shall ensure their entire wedding party (bridesmaids, groomsmen, parents, ushers) is present for the rehearsal at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled time.
- **One hour is reserved for the rehearsal.** This time line must be honored, as the facilities and staff need to be available for preparation for other scheduled events.
- **There will be no stand-ins for the bride during the rehearsal.**
- The marriage license should be delivered to the Pastor **at the rehearsal.**

FLOWERS AND DECORATIONS

- Furniture/furnishings **shall not** be moved in the Sanctuary or Chapel.
- Candlesticks and altar Bibles in the Sanctuary or Chapel **shall not** be removed.
- Decorations and/or arrangements **shall not be permitted** to interfere with a full view of the altar area.
- Because of safety and insurance considerations, candles and lamps **shall not** be used on any railings or outside the communion rail.
- The Sanctuary and Chapel seasonal decorations shall not be removed.
- Consult diagram (last page of this booklet) of **acceptable locations for floral arrangements, candles, and unity candle**. Placement of flowers and decorations shall not obscure Christian symbols in the chancel area.
- **Flower petals, rice, confetti, birdseed, etc., shall not** be thrown inside any part of the building. Birdseed may be thrown outside the building. Silk flower petals may be used inside the building.
- Tacks, pins, nails, tape, and glue **shall not** be used to fasten any decorations or flowers to the furniture or walls of the building.
- The church will provide a **kneeling bench**.
- Pew bows may be used but **shall not** be attached by tape, glue, or any means detrimental to the pews. (Ribbons and protective hangers may be used.) There are 68 pews in the Sanctuary and 20 in the Chapel.
- To eliminate any fire hazards the florist is required to **use permanent (no wax) candles in all candelabra or altar arrangements**. Wax pillar candles of at least 2" in diameter may be used on the altar or in arrangements.
- A unity candle may be used. Wax tapers may be used for lighting the unity candle. FUMC will provide a unity candle holder.
- Because of safety considerations, an aisle cloth shall **not be** used.
- **Decorating may start 2 hours before the wedding**. If other arrangements need to be made, please contact the Wedding Secretary at 884-0391 one week before the wedding.
- **The florist or wedding party must remove all decorations and equipment promptly following the ceremony**. The church does not assume responsibility for any equipment left after the ceremony.
- The florist shall be responsible for any damage done to the building or furniture due to the florist's actions or those of his/her employees.
- The bridal couple often requests to leave the wedding flowers for use in Sunday morning worship as a floral dedication. This desire will be accommodated if it does not interfere with an already scheduled floral dedication. Please make your request as far in advance as is possible. If this is your desire, please consult with the Wedding Secretary regarding size requirements of those arrangements.

PHOTOGRAPHS & VIDEO CAMERAS

At the latest revision of these policies, the church has installed camera and video equipment, which may be used for recording weddings. If you are interested in using these services, please contact Director of Music, Worship and Arts, 884-0391, for information.

- All pre-service photographs in the Sanctuary or Chapel must be completed no later than **30 minutes** before the ceremony begins. The photographer may take flash pictures at any time **after** the wedding ceremony is complete.
- **Flash picture taking** of the wedding party by the official photographer is permitted **in the Narthex and first eight rows from the back of the Sanctuary during the processional and /or recessional**. Pictures may not be taken in the Sanctuary or Chapel during the ceremony except time exposures (non-flash) **taken from the balcony in the Sanctuary**.
- Consult diagram (last page of this booklet) of acceptable locations for photography and video equipment.
- It is the responsibility of the **bride and groom to inform friends, family and photographers that no pictures are to be taken during the ceremony**.
- Video camera equipment must be set up and all adjustments completed at least 45 minutes prior to the scheduled beginning of the ceremony. If a remote microphone is to be used with the video camera, the videographer must check with the FUMC custodian on duty to make sure the signals do not conflict with our wireless microphones.
- The camera must be on a tripod and shall not be attended during the service. The camera **must use available light**. No additional lighting source may be used.
- Do not sit, stand or pose anyone on furniture or musical instruments.
- **There will be no movement of cameras, photographer or videographer during the ceremony nor will the photographer stop the processional or recessional for photographs.**

COMMUNION

If the bride and groom wish to have communion served they must first make arrangements with the pastor. Since the United Methodist Church believes that all are welcome at the Lord's Table and Holy Communion is celebrated in community, it is understood that all who are present at the wedding celebration will be offered the opportunity to be served. Communion will only be served by intinction.

WEDDING BULLETINS

Service bulletins for the entire congregation are a wonderful way for the worshipping congregation to participate in the service of Christian marriage. The pastor and/or Director of Music & Fine Arts can help you in organizing the service for printing. Printing and reproduction of the bulletins will be the responsibility of the couple. The Order of Service and all music listings shall be proofed by the Pastor and Director of Music, Worship and Arts before printing.

PROTECTING YOUR PERSONAL VALUABLES

The church is not responsible for any items brought to the church for use in a wedding or reception and will not be liable for such items if lost, stolen, or damaged. The bride/groom or their designated representative must receive items scheduled for delivery to the church. Security personnel can be provided and may be requested from the FUMC Wedding Secretary. The wedding party will assume any and all costs for such services.

FEEES AND HONORARIUMS

A fee/honorarium schedule will be provided to the bride/groom on their initial visit to FUMC. The letter of confirmation from the Wedding Secretary will include a list and due date of fees. Wedding fees pay for a portion of the maintenance, operation, and upkeep of the building and pay for specific services required or requested.

All fees and honoraria must be paid and submitted to the Wedding Secretary not later than **30 days prior** to the wedding ceremony. Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday excluding holidays.

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Policies and procedures prepared by a committee of laypersons, reviewed by pastors and staff, and approved for implementation by the Worship and Celebration Work Area on September 28, 1993, and revised on September 17, 1996, April 23, 1998 and December 1, 1998, February 22, 2000, October 11, 2000, February 1, 2001, February 9, 2005, March 26, 2007, and January 7, 2015.

ROLE OF THE WEDDING COORDINATOR

The Wedding Coordinator will not take the place of any wedding consultant, but rather will serve as liaison between the Church and the Wedding Party. It will be the Coordinator's responsibility to uphold the policies of the Church, to facilitate the needs of the Wedding Party, and to assist the presiding Minister. She will be present at both the rehearsal and the wedding.

The Wedding Coordinator assists in these ways:

CONSULTATION: Meets with Bride 3-4 weeks before wedding to discuss ceremony and answer any questions relating to Church policies, procedures, special family considerations, i.e. seating, etc. It is suggested that the florist attend this meeting or provide a sketch of his design for the wedding.

WEDDING REHEARSAL:

- Explain the lighting of candles
- Order, timing, and spacing of procession
- Order, spacing, and movement of wedding party at the altar
- Ushering of guests (how, when, turning, etc.)
- Seating of family (how, where, when, etc.)
- Escorting of family following the ceremony (how, when)
- Coordinating of timing with organist
- Schedule for day of wedding: when wedding party, florist and photographer will arrive

WEDDING DAY/CEREMONY:

Will arrive at least two hours prior to the ceremony

Checks on various elements of the ceremony (flowers, corsages, boutonnieres, candles)

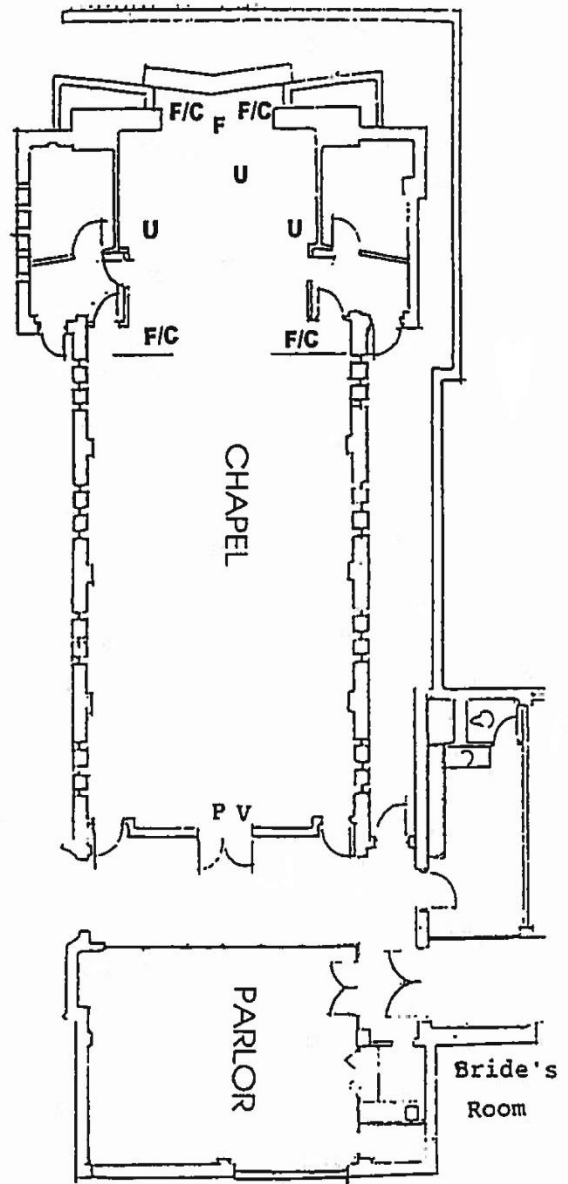
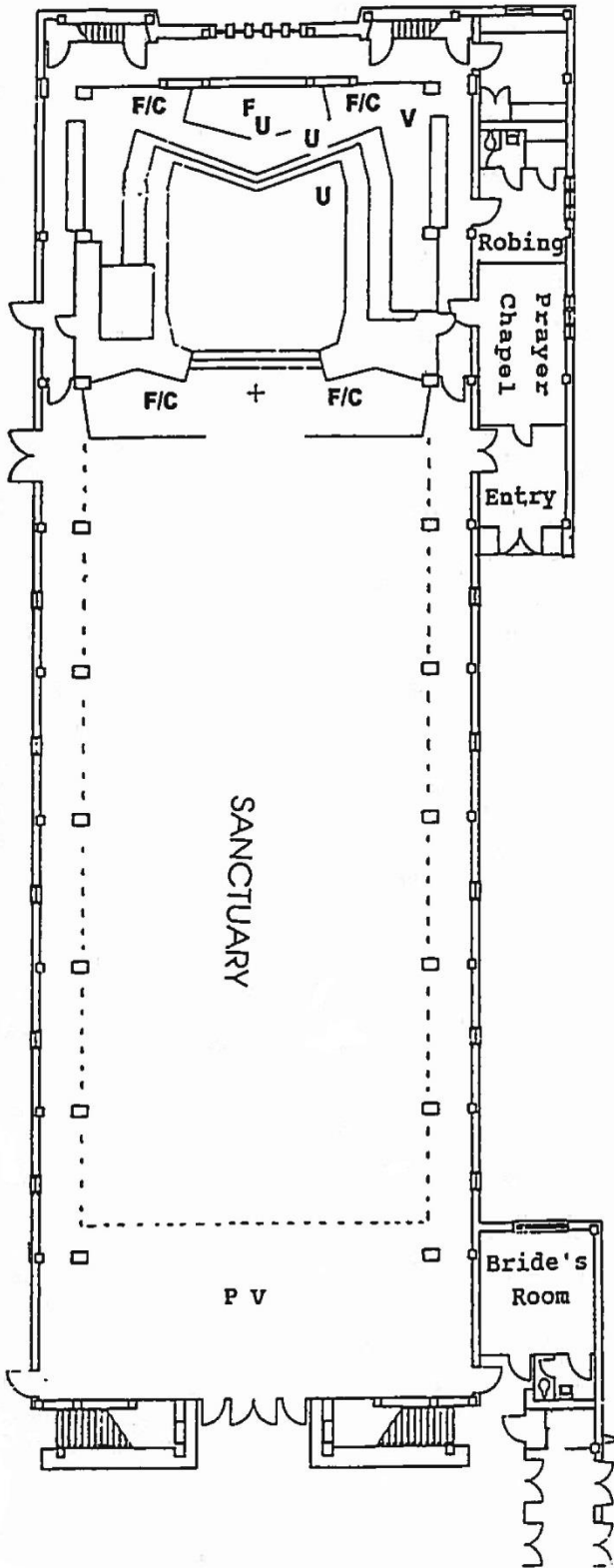
Manages/organizes in such a way to ensure that:

- Photographer understands Church policies
- Candles are lighted
- Ushers are in place to begin seating guests
- Parents and rest of family are ready for entrance
- Groom and attendants are ready for entrance
- Bride and attendants are ready for entrance
- Procession is timed (with minister, organist, etc.)
- Florist's inspection follows ceremony
- Bride's Room is cleared out following ceremony

The Wedding Coordinator is qualified to conduct the rehearsal in the event the Minister is unable to attend. The Coordinator is here to help make your wedding as special and individual as possible. She will be able to answer many of the questions you have about florists, photographers and receptions.

The Wedding Coordinator will contact you as soon as possible after your wedding has been scheduled on the Church Activity Calendar.

DIAGRAM FOR PHOTOGRAPHER, VIDEOGRAPHER, ETC.



- C Candles
- F Flowers
- P Photographer
- U Unity Candle
- V Video Camera