

SERVICE OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

Southern Hills United Methodist Church
2356 Harrodsburg Road
Lexington, Kentucky 40503
(859) 277-6176

"A multi-generational community full of the presence and
power of God where all are Loved"



Southern Hills United Methodist Church rejoices in sharing the ceremony of Christian marriage with you. We know that marriage is a beautiful and sacred union that has its beginnings in God's love for us. We celebrate this love with you.

There is a distinct difference between a civil wedding ceremony and holy matrimony in the Christian Church. Our wedding services meet the requirements of civil law, but, more importantly, they are a time of worship with God. In order to have a Christian marriage, a man and a woman need to have faith in Jesus Christ. Through your desire for Christ to be in your lives, a spiritual bond is formed as a lifelong, blessed union.

It is expected that those coming to Southern Hills to be married will have already professed their faith in Jesus Christ. If this is not the case, one of our ordained ministers will talk with you about considering these fundamental decisions before your wedding takes place.

The policies of Southern Hills United Methodist Church are intended to help the engaged couple design a beautiful service that leads to a memorable wedding ceremony with a high level of love and dignity in the custom of Jesus and the United Methodist Church. Southern Hills wants the bride, the groom and the wedding party to be able to abide faithfully by our policies presented here and to be responsible for insuring that these policies are maintained by members of the wedding party, the florist, caterer, photographers, musicians, all vendors, guests, and all participants.

RESERVING YOUR WEDDING DATE

You need to reserve your wedding space with the Southern Hills Administrative Assistant as early as possible, at least three months in advance. Your wedding date will be reserved upon receiving your request form and a \$100 security deposit. The security deposit will be returned within 30 days of the wedding unless damages have

been assessed and necessary deductions have been made. You will be responsible for damages in excess of \$100. You may reserve the sanctuary for the rehearsal and wedding ceremony, Herren Hall for your reception, and our garden courtyard for pictures. Call the administrative assistant at 859-277-6176 to discuss these details and to reserve the facilities you wish to use.

MEET WITH THE MINISTER

All weddings performed at Southern Hills United Methodist Church must involve at least one of our clergy in the wedding ceremony. Permission to involve other members of the clergy must be approved by Rev. John Hatton, Senior Pastor.

Immediately following reserving the date for your wedding with the administrative assistant, you need to schedule a premarital conference with Rev. Hatton or the Southern Hills clergy person who will be officiating your wedding. This must be done in advance of the wedding by at least three months. Your wedding date becomes officially approved after you have met with the Southern Hills clergy person who will be officiating your wedding.

In accordance with The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, all decisions to perform weddings are the responsibility of United Methodist clergy. The determination of what may or may not be included in your wedding rests entirely with the Southern Hills clergy officiating your wedding.

PREMARITAL COUNSELING

All couples marrying at Southern Hills are expected to complete premarital counseling either with the Southern Hills clergy officiating their wedding or with a professional counselor of their choice. If a professional other than Southern Hills clergy leads the counseling, the counselor must submit a letter to our senior pastor stating the couple has completed premarital counseling at least two weeks prior to the wedding ceremony.

SOUTHERN HILLS WEDDING DIRECTORS

Southern Hills requires that one of our wedding directors be used for all weddings at our church who will help you with important aspects of your wedding ceremony at Southern Hills. They will consult with you from the beginning and will coordinate the rehearsal and wedding ceremony. Our wedding directors do not have any responsibility for the wedding reception.

Sandy Copher (859-576-9705) and Linda Little (859-576-0044) currently serve as wedding directors. You should schedule an appointment with them to set up a time to meet with them and discuss your wedding plans no less than four weeks prior to your wedding day. The wedding directors will go over all of the wedding details, becoming sensitive to all your specific wedding needs. This initial conference provides the foundation for a well-thought out rehearsal and ceremony that is smooth and orderly.

SELECT THE WEDDING MUSIC

We encourage you to select music which is appropriate for the church sanctuary as God's holy place, reflecting the dignity and majesty of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Joan Wooden, our director of worship, music, and arts, together with our church organist, can guide your selection of music that is fitting for this sacred and joyous Christian occasion. The Southern Hills clergy officiating your wedding will determine which music is appropriate for a service in our sanctuary.

Our church organist plays for all weddings held at Southern Hills. Our organist should be contacted eight weeks before the wedding date to help you select the most appropriate music for your ceremony. Our organist provides a consultation with the bride and groom, rehearsal with a soloist, and music played during the wedding ceremony. Additional responsibilities for the organist can be arranged.

If you would like additional musicians for your wedding, you may contact our director of worship, music, & arts at Southern Hills.

Additional names of people who could provide solo singers, a choir or vocal ensemble, string quartet, brass or woodwind ensemble, or even a small chamber orchestra can be recommended. Fees for additional musicians will vary with the number of musicians that you decide on.

CONTACT YOUR FLORIST

You should contact your florist at the earliest possible date. Plans for your floral decorations in the church should be made prior to meeting with the wedding directors. The florist is responsible for setting up all floral arrangements in the sanctuary. Floral arrangements must not obscure the cross on the communion table. Candles shall not be used in the pews. Nails, tacks, or staples shall not be used to attach decorations to our walls, woodwork, furniture, or floors. The florist must furnish all candelabras and the aisle cloth. Our sanctuary aisle is 44 feet long. Due to the slope of our aisle, a thicker cloth aisle runner is highly recommended. Candles used must be dripless. Designate someone to be responsible for delivering boutonnieres and corsages to the proper recipients of the wedding party. Please do not order a boutonniere for the organist or officiating minister.

The bride must arrange for the removal of wedding decorations, rented or personal (i.e. candelabra, aisle cloth, bases, etc.) and notify the wedding directors and custodian about such removal. Our sanctuary must be cleared of all wedding items so as not to interfere with or detract from our regular Sunday morning worship.

If you would like to leave your floral arrangements in the church after the ceremony, the church administrative assistant should be notified two weeks in advance so that you will receive acknowledgement in our church bulletin.

CONTACT YOUR PHOTOGRAPHER

Plan carefully and well in advance with your photographer to take pictures before, during, and after the ceremony. Your photographer must

check in with the wedding directors and officiating minister when they arrive on your wedding day to take photographs. Posed photographs in the sanctuary should be completed approximately one hour prior to the start of the ceremony. **We prohibit the use of all flash cameras during the ceremony and do not allow photographers on the chancel during the ceremony.** Additional pictures may be arranged for following the wedding ceremony. You may suggest to family and friends that they join the photographer in taking pictures during this time.

Professional photographers and/or videographers should make themselves aware of the available lighting in the sanctuary in advance of the wedding day. They are also required to discuss with the wedding directors where they may set up for the wedding ceremony. It is the responsibility of the photographer and/or the videographer to request permission from the wedding directors to move any and all furniture and fixtures used in pictures and to return such items to their original place. In addition, the photographers and/or videographers are required to obtain permission from the church media/sound technician before connecting equipment and/or altering any of the church media or sound systems. Equipment may not be set up or block any aisles.

HOLY COMMUNION

Please note that if you wish to have communion at your wedding, it must be offered corporately to all in attendance.

USE OF THE SOUND SYSTEM

Our church sound technician will help you with the use of basic sound system needs. This includes the use of the pulpit, lectern, lapel and handheld microphones. Our church sound technician can also assist with playing recorded music and provide a live audio recording of your wedding ceremony if it meets your needs. Southern Hills does not provide video services.

USE OF THE SANCTUARY

Please refer to the Southern Hills wedding fee schedule for more information about the use of the sanctuary.

USE OF KITCHEN AND RECEPTION HALL

Herren Hall is available for your reception for a fee. A damage deposit (separate from the wedding deposit) of \$100 is required.

There is an additional fee for the use of our church kitchen, which can only be rented by members of Southern Hills.

You and your caterer are responsible for setting up and breaking down the reception and for washing, and putting away any items owned by the church that you or your caterer might use.

If, for any reason, you or your caterer are unable to restore the kitchen to a clean and orderly fashion, a \$50.00-per-hour cleanup fee will be charged for the actual time required by our custodial staff to complete this work.

If you intend to use our kitchen, including our sanitizer, refrigerators, or freezers, you must obtain permission two weeks prior to the wedding day by filling out a work order/service request form available from the church's business office.

USE OF CUSTODIANS

During the rehearsal and wedding ceremony, our custodian will be on duty to assist in setup and cleanup. For you or any of your vendors to have access into the church, please make all arrangements with the church administrative assistant, who will make arrangements for the doors to be unlocked when you arrive.

If your reception is to be held at Southern Hills, you must fill out a work order/service request form. This request form is available in the church's business office. For reasons of safety, you may use birdseed (no rice) to throw on the bride and groom on the outside of the building only. Blowing bubbles of any kind is not permitted anywhere inside the building. We also cannot allow glitter to be used in decorating any of our facilities.

ADVANCE PAYMENTS

All wedding fees must be mailed or delivered to the church office two weeks in advance of the wedding rehearsal. You may pay all of the fees for those affiliated with SHUMC to the church directly in one check. If you prefer to pay the minister's fee directly to the minister, it must be paid no later than on the day of the wedding rehearsal.

If your reception will be at Southern Hills, request forms for custodial services and use of the kitchen must also be in the church office no less than two weeks in advance of the wedding rehearsal.

THE WEDDING REHEARSAL

The wedding rehearsal must begin and end on time. To accomplish this, all participants must arrive fifteen minutes prior to the scheduled rehearsal time. The directors request that you not plan to begin the rehearsal before 6 p.m. The wedding rehearsal should be scheduled before the rehearsal dinner. The marriage license should be brought to the rehearsal and given to the minister. The rehearsal lasts between 45-60 minutes.

The rehearsal will not be delayed for members of the wedding party who are late. Our wedding directors will be present to coordinate the rehearsal and answer any questions that may arise.

THE WEDDING DAY

Adhering to the following timeline will help to ensure you of a successful wedding day:

The Wedding Countdown

2.5 Hours Before the Ceremony:

The flowers arrive at the church at least 2.5 hours before the wedding. Once the floral decorations are properly placed in the sanctuary, the photographer can begin taking posed and/or candid

shots of the wedding party.

The bride and her attendants arrive at the church to dress and have informal pictures taken. The bride and her attendants dress in Room 120 (Bonus Room). The groom and his attendants dress in Room 251 (business office). Both rooms have electrical outlets and trash receptacles.

1 Hour Before the Ceremony:

Ushers report to the church and go to the narthex to prepare for early arrival of guests.

The photographer finishes in the sanctuary before the start of the ceremony (this should be 30 minutes before the music begins).

30 Minutes Before the Ceremony:

The music begins and the candles are lit. If there is a soloist or reader, they must be in place before the music begins.

15 Minutes Before the Ceremony:

The groom and best man meet with the minister in the business office.

YOUR PERSONAL ITEMS

The church is not responsible for any items lost or stolen. We suggest you take personal items to your car and store them in the trunk at least 15 minutes prior to the ceremony.

Responsibility for the safekeeping of personal items is yours.

After the wedding ceremony, the bride should designate someone to gather up belongings from dressing areas during the post-ceremony photography session. This may include but is not limited to: cosmetics, clothing, shoes, hair dryers, curlers, cameras, etc. All collected items should be packed prior the photography session. **The dressing rooms must be left in a clean and orderly fashion. Anything left behind will be discarded.**

**GENERAL FACILITY AND CHURCH GROUNDS
RESTRICTIONS**

- 1) Use of alcoholic beverages is strictly prohibited.
- 2) Smoking, vaping, and/or the use of tobacco products of any kind are strictly prohibited.

MISCELLANEOUS

The church is available for the wedding party for two and a half hours prior to the wedding. If you need to be inside the building earlier than that, please make arrangements with the church Administrative Assistant.

Room 120 (Bonus Room) is strictly for the bride and her attendants and is to be used for dressing and waiting for the wedding hour; please discourage family, friends, and others not in the wedding processional from going in and out of this room.

Room 251 (business office) is assigned for the groom and groomsmen. Both of these rooms should be cleared of any and all personal belongings as soon as the wedding is over.